



Isaiah Testifies of Christ

3rd Edition

Gregorio Billikopf

ISAIAH TESTIFIES OF CHRIST

GREGORIO BILLIKOPF

3RD EDITION

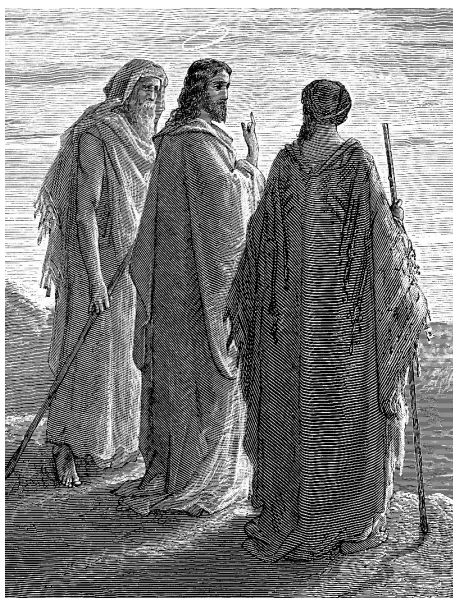
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A study of Isaiah from the perspective of a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. My writings are not endorsed by the Church nor do they claim to represent the Church. If there is anything that is not doctrinally correct, please point it out to me so I can make the corrections. Every effort has been made to stay doctrinally true.

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Cover Art, Doré Bible Illustrations
On The Road to Emmaus

“And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:27).

Surely the words of Isaiah must have played a vital role in such exposition. How I wish I could have been there to hear the words of our Savior and Redeemer.

This book is dedicated with much love

To my Jewish grandparents:

Jacob Billikopf & Ruth Marshall

and Judah and his companions

And to my Chilean grandparents:

Carlos Encina Pinochet & Marta Bezanilla Rojas

and Ephraim and his companions

—Ezekiel 37:16

מִי הוּא זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד
יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת הוּא מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד סֶלָה

—Psalm 24:10

SELECTED KEY TO AUTHORITIES

Here are some of the resources used in the study of Isaiah for this work. Sometimes I utilized multiple versions of the same reference, such as electronic vs. hard copy; or two or more hard copies or electronic copies of a resource. Much of the bibliography is found as footnotes within the text itself. Some of the references do not fit as cleanly or nicely under a specific category, but I wished to refrain from creating additional categories. Since this book is in electronic format, please use the *search* capabilities.

Special thanks to **SIL FONTS INTERNATIONAL** for the use of their fonts throughout this book

SIGLA

Only the most basic and generalized siglum were used. For instance, for the **Q** we indicate separately the Great Isaiah Roll (1QIsa^a) and other rolls utilized (e.g., 1QIsa^b, 4QIsa^c). Peshitta and Syriac share the same siglum.

ⲓ	Pseudepigrapha
Ⲛ	Septuagint, LXX
ⲙ	Masoretic text
Ⲙ	Dead Sea Scrolls, DSS
ⲥ	Peshitta
Ⲥ	Syriac
ⲧ	Targum / Chaldee
ⲉ	Vulgate

ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Pseudepigrapha

- Charles, R.H. (1900) *The Ascension of Isaiah*. From the Pseudepigrapha. Translated from the Ethiopic Version, which, together with the new Greek fragment, the Latin Versions and the Latin Translation of the Slavonic, is here published in full. The Clarendon Press, Oxford. **Asc Isa**

Ⲛ Septuagint, LXX

- A New Translation of the Septuagint: And the other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under that Title*. A new translation of the Greek into contemporary English—An essential resource for Biblical studies. Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright, Editors (2007). **Ⲛ**
- International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies. *Esaias* translated by Moisés Silva. NETS. **Ⲛ**
- Isaiah according to the Septuagint*. Codex Alexandrinus. Translated by R.R. Ottley. 2nd Edition, 1909. Cambridge. (Logos Bible Software) **Ⲛ**
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- Tan, R., & deSilva, D. A., Logos Bible Software. (2009). *The Lexham Greek-English Interlinear Septuagint*. (Logos Bible Software) **Ⲛ**
- The Old Testament Greek Interlinear. Esaias Septuagint begins on page 912 out of 1242. Author not mentioned. URL <http://septuagint-interlinear-greek-bible.com/OldTestament.pdf> **Ⲛ**
- The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament and Apocrypha with an English Translation and with Various Readings and Critical Notes*. Also known as Brenton's 1851 translation of the LXX. Zondervan Publishing House, Second Zondervan printing, 1975. **Ⲛ**

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- Ziegler, J. (Ed.). (1983). *Isaias* (Vol. XIV, Is 36:13–16). Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. Hard copy as well as Logos Bible Software. Also electronic Göttingen Septuagint collection including critical apparatus. 📖

㊦ Masoretic or related texts

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- *Biblia Hebraica*, Editor, Rud Kittel. Privilegierte Wurtembergische Bibelanstalt, Stuttgart. 1929–1937. ㊦
- Boothroyd, Benjamin. *Biblia Hebraica, or, the Hebrew scriptures of the Old Testament: without points, after the text of Kennicott, with the chief various readings, selected from his collation of Hebrew mss., from that of De Rossi, and from the ancient versions: accompanied with English notes, critical, philological, and explanatory*.
- *Hebrew Bible* (BHS). (Accordance Bible Software) ㊦
- *Hebrew Bible* (Biblia Hebraica). (Accordance Bible Software) ㊦
- Jay Green, *The Interlinear Hebrew-English Bible* (3 Volumes), APGA Associated Publishers and Authors, Wilmington, Delaware, 1976. ㊦
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- Van der Merwe, C. (2004). *The Lexham Hebrew-English Interlinear Bible*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press. (Logos Bible Software) ㊦
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📜 Dead Sea Scrolls, DSS

- *Dead Sea Scrolls Biblical Corpus in Canonical order*. (Accordance Bible Software) 📜
- *Dead Sea Scrolls Biblical Corpus in Manuscript order*. (Accordance Bible Software) 📜
- *Discoveries in the Judean Desert, XXXII, Qumran Cave 1, II, The Isaiah Scrolls* (Part 1: Plates and Transcriptions; Part 2: Introductions, commentary and textual variants), by Eugene Ulrich, Peter W. Flint and contributions by Martin G. Abegg (2010), Jr. Oxford, At the Clarendon Press. 📜
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§ Peshitta / Syriac

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- *Old Testament in Syriac* (1913). Trinitarian Bible Society. §
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- *Syriac Peshitta Old Testament* (Peshot T) (Accordance Bible Software) §
- *The Aramaic-English Interlinear Peshitta Old Testament* (2013). An Interlinear Translation Translated (with notes and commentary) by Rev. Glenn David Bauscher. Lulu Publishing. §

ⲧ Targum / Chaldee

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- *The Chaldee Paraphrase of the Prophet Isaiah*, translated by the Rev. C.W. Pauli (1871). London Society House. ⲧ
- *The Isaiah Targum: Introduction, Translation, Apparatus and Notes* by Bruce D. Chilton (1987). Volume 11 in *The Aramaic Bible: The Targums*, series. A Michael Glazier Book: The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota. ⲧ
- *The Targum of Isaiah*, edited with a translation by John F. Stenning (1949). Oxford, At the Clarendon Press. Printed in Great Britain. ⲧ

¶ Vulgate

- Bibbia. La Sacra Bibbia (Italian, Tradotti da Giovanni Diodati). Cambridge. La Societa Biblica Americana di New York. ¶
- *Biblia Sacra*, Vulgatae Editionis, Sixti V. et Clementis VIII, Jussu Recognita Atque Edita, Editio Nova, Londini: 1857. ¶
- DRB – 1899 Douay-Rheims Bible (e-Sword) ¶
- *La Biblia ó El Antiguo Testamento traducidos al Español de la Vulgata Latina* por el RMO. P. Phelipe Scio de S. Miguel de las escuelas pias, obispo electo de Segovia. Londres: Impreso 1823. ¶
- *The Holy Bible Douay Version*. Translated from the Latin Vulgate (Douay, A.D. 1609: Rheims, A.D. 1582. London Catholic Truth Society (14 Septembris 1955). ¶
- Vulgate – Latin Vulgate (e-Sword) ¶
- Weber, R., & Gryson, R. (1969). *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam versionem* (5th revised edition). Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft with critical apparatus. (Logos Bible Software) ¶

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• AAT	American Translation, J.M. Powis Smith, U. of Chicago Press 1951 𐤀
• AMP	Amplified Bible, Frances Siewert (e-Sword) 𐤀
• AMPC	Amplified Bible Classic (e-Sword) 𐤀
• ASV	American Standard Version (e-Sword) 𐤀
• BBE	Bible in Basic English (1965) (e-Sword) 𐤀
• Berkeley	The Berkeley Version in Modern English – Zondervan 1959 𐤀
• Bishops	Bishops' Bible (1568) (e-Sword) 𐤀
• Brenton	Brenton's English Septuagint (e-Sword) 𐤄
• CEV	Contemporary English Version (e-Sword) 𐤀
• CJB	Complete Jewish Bible (e-Sword) 𐤀
• Darby	1889 Darby English Bible 𐤀
• DRB	1899 Douay-Rheims Bible (e-Sword) 𐤃
• EMTV	English Majority Text Version (e-Sword) Greek New Testament
• ERV	Easy to Read Version (e-Sword) 𐤀
• ESV	English Standard Version (e-Sword) 𐤀
• FDB	French Darby Bible (e-Sword) 𐤀
• FLS	French Louis Segond (e-Sword) 𐤀
• Geneva	Geneva Bible (1587) (e-Sword) 𐤀
• GLB	German Luther Bible (e-Sword) 𐤀
• GNB	Good News Bible (e-Sword) 𐤀
• GW	God's Word (e-Sword) 𐤀
• HCSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible (e-Sword) 𐤀
• HNV	Hebrew Names Version 𐤀
• ISV	International Standard Version (e-Sword) 𐤀
• JPS	Jewish Publication Society Bible 1955 (e-Sword) 𐤀
• JUB	Jubilee Bible (e-Sword) 𐤀
• KJV	King James Version (AV) 𐤀
• KJV1611	King James Version 1611 (e-Sword) 𐤀
• KJV1900	1900 Cambridge Edition of the King James Version 𐤀
• KoJB	Koren Publishers, The Jerusalem Bible, Jerusalem, 1998 𐤀
• LBLA	La Biblia de las Américas (e-Sword) 𐤀
• LBP	The Holy Bible from the Ancient Eastern Texts – Peshitta (e-Sword) 𐤄
• LEB	Lexham English Bible (e-Sword) 𐤀
• Leeser	Leeser Old Testament (e-Sword) 𐤀
• LITV	Literal Translation of the Holy Bible (e-Sword) 𐤀
• Moffatt	The Books of the Prophets (1939) Hodder & Stoughton: London. 𐤀
• Murdock	James Murdock New Testament (e-Sword) Greek New Testament
• NAS77	1977 New American Standard (e-Sword) 𐤀
• NASB	New American Standard Bible (e-Sword) 𐤀
• NBLH	Nueva Biblia Latinoamericana de Hoy (e-Sword) 𐤀
• NVI	La Santa Biblia: Nueva Versión Internacional (1984) (e-Sword) 𐤀
• Rotherham	Rotherham Emphasized Bible (e-Sword) 𐤀
• RV	Revised Version (e-Sword) 𐤀
• RV1865	Reina Valera 1865 – NABC 𐤀
• RV1865	Reina Valera 1865 (e-Sword) 𐤀
• RV1906	Reina Valera 1906 – Sociedad Bíblica Americana 𐤀
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- TLV Tree of Life Version (e-Sword) [TLV](#)
- TS2009 The Scriptures 2009 (e-Sword) [TS2009](#)
- WEB World English Bible (e-Sword) [WEB](#)
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Great are the Words of Isaiah

*AND now, behold, I say unto you, that ye ought to search these things.
Yea, a commandment I give unto you that ye search these things
diligently; for great are the words of Isaiah*

—Words of the Savior in His visit to the ancient inhabitants of America, 3 Nephi 23:1

I have always had a curiosity for the scriptures, especially the Hebrew Scriptures (or the Old Testament). My paternal grandfather was a Lithuanian Jew and grandmother a German Jew. My maternal grandparents are both Chilean. I was converted and baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1974, when I was 19, after reading the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Christ. It was the Book of Mormon that compelled me to go back and become more interested in my Jewish roots.

Between my first reading of the Book of Mormon and my baptism three months later, the missionaries encouraged me to write my questions on the margins. I accepted that challenge and filled my Book of Mormon with questions and notes. I am a very slow reader but over the years devoured the writings of as many of the modern-day prophets as I could get my hands on, as well as the scriptures. It did not take long to fill the margins of my scriptures with notes, quotes and testimonies.

My interest in the Hebrew Scriptures grew after I joined the Church. In my personal journal I talk about studying the *great Prophet Isaiah* as early as 1983. While the writings of Isaiah and the Prophets have always held a special appeal for me, it was in 1996, while reading the Book of Mormon, that the words of our Savior sank deep into my heart: “And now, behold, I say unto you, that ye ought to search these things. Yeah, a commandment I give unto you that ye search these things diligently; for great are the words of Isaiah” (3 Nephi 23:1). I was somewhat surprised and asked myself: why did the Lord want me to study Isaiah? The Savior also admonished: “Search the prophets” (3 Nephi 23:5b), **נְבִיאִים** or NEVI’IM (the Jewish Scriptures are divided into three major categories, the *law*, the *prophets* and the *writings*).

These admonitions turned into a labor of love. I wrote this book, above all, as one of reflections for myself. When the margins of my scriptures could no longer hold my notes, my wife suggested that I keep a separate journal. These notes represent my electronic Scripture journal. I finished my handwritten journal on Isaiah on 6 October 1999. I finished my first electronic chapter in my Isaiah study on 12 March 2000; and the last on 7 May 2017. My next steps, beginning with 7 May 2017, are to edit each chapter and then compile these into book form. It is my hope to revise this book from time to time, as I gain additional insights.

This book reflects my own understanding and does not represent the views of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Having said that, if there is anything that seems contrary to the teachings of the Church, I hope you will point these out to me so I can make the necessary corrections.

There is quite a bit of repetition in these pages. This is in part because similar topics rise from time to time. I have even thought of someday producing an electronic version with special links to these repetitive topics. I have also included parts of my journal entries as well as testimonies along the way. You will also notice that some of the topics that were prominent at the time I was writing find themselves into these pages.

This book is written directly to members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who have an interest in the Prophet Isaiah. It is hoped that both members, as well as our friends from other faiths, may find some value in these pages. I have a deep and abiding testimony of our Heavenly Father; His Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; the Prophet Joseph Smith; and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the living prophets.

Great effort required

The first thing I learned was that this labor would be demanding. Like Oliver Cowdery, I had supposed that all I had to do was ask. When Oliver could not

carry out the work of translation, the Lord said, “Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought save it was to ask me” (D&C 9:7).

Elder B. H. Roberts taught that “It requires striving—intellectual and spiritual—to comprehend the things of God—even the revealed things of God. In no department of human endeavor is the aphorism ‘no excellence without labor’—more in force than in acquiring knowledge of the things of God. The Lord has placed no premium upon idleness or indifference here ... the truth here contended for—achievement in divine things, progress in the knowledge of them, comes only with hard striving, earnest endeavor, determined seeking.”¹

For the first several chapters of Isaiah, I kept telling myself. “I will *never* understand this chapter.” Yet eventually I would get an understanding of sorts. I eventually changed my notion to: “This chapter is just as hard as the ones I have completed, yet with work and God’s help I will, in time, come to an understanding.”

Towards the end of the project I was surprised when on occasion I received guidance from the Lord *before* I had put in the effort to understand.

This effort would take over two decades of joyous enterprise. Not to finish or complete, for I can see how I could profitably spend the rest of my days cherishing the words of Isaiah and continually revising what I have written.

At first it was taking me seven months to complete a chapter and post it on the Internet. This was when I was limited to about two or so hours of study per day. I have become more efficient and now that I am retired, have more time to devote to the work.

Scripture study is much like entering a room and finding that there are adjoining doors and windows that offer additional insights. And those new rooms have yet more doors and windows, and so on.

“For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little” (ISAIAH 28:10).

It seems that almost every time I reread a scripture I find additional meaning and inspiration. I particularly love reading and rereading the same passage over and over throughout several weeks. The scriptures seem to form one eternal round.

As I got ready to post each chapter on the Internet in PDF format, I included two dates. The *first posted* date as well as a *last revised* date. I have accurate first posted dates for some of the chapters but for others, approximations. Some of these posting dates are wrong. These dates are sometimes important as I was working on these chapters during 11 September 2001 or some other important event that often had some relation to

what was happening in the world around me and what I was reading in Isaiah.²

The last revised date is particularly important because it sends the message that I plan to keep correcting, adding and changing what I have written as I continue to learn. While these dates have been removed from the book, the idea that I am going to be continually learning and revising has not disappeared.

Some of my notes from the handwritten journal have worked themselves into the main text; most have not.

Because so few people, relatively speaking, are interested in Isaiah, I found that writing was a little like talking to myself when nobody else might want to listen.

Prayerful analysis has been the key to this study, especially as I am exposed to so very many perspectives.

Scripture and Teachings of the Brethren

Gladly, we have both other Scriptures and the teachings of the Brethren on many of Isaiah’s writings. There are several sources I have used to find these. At first I made special use of the LDS Library, getting each new edition until the last one in the series, the *LDS Library 2009*. I was very sad the software was discontinued.

I have kept my old Windows XP computer just so I could use this library as well as a program where I can “fly over the Holy Land,” the *Holy Land Satellite Atlas and CD* (produced by Rohr Productions).

More recently, I have made constant use of the *LDS Scripture Citation Index*. In this way I can see what has been said in the *Journal of Discourses* as well as in the General Conferences, on every verse in Isaiah. It is a wonderful resource—so much so that I also use it in my daily study of the Book of Mormon. It also includes the Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, but unfortunately at this time the Index makes no

² I put aside my Isaiah project for about 30 months (around 2004–2006) to translate the prophetic books into Spanish as a help to the translation committee of the Church, for the LDS Reina Valera 2009. I think the only contribution that was mine, at the end, was the pronunciation guide I provided for the Sister who read the Hebrew alphabet included in Psalm 119. This translation exercise was of great learning value to me and I am grateful for the opportunity.

¶ **IMPORTANT NOTE:** The Spanish LDS version, Reina Valera 2009, did not set out to give the literal meaning of the Hebrew Bible, but rather, to generally follow the text of the 1909 Reina Valera with as few changes as possible. While the LDS edition is a remarkable and beautiful translation, especially given the speed with which it was accomplished, Church members should *not* think that it is better than the KJV or that it automatically renders better translations than the Reina Valera 1960 in every instance. The greatest contribution of the LDS edition, in my mind, was to have the priceless JST notes and LDS chapter headings. Contrary to the KJV, Reina Valera 1960 was copyrighted material and as such could not be used.

¹ Elder Brigham Henry Roberts, *The Seventy’s Course in Theology* (1907-1912). Fifth year, p. iv.

differentiation between the Prophet's use of scriptural expressions and his comments on the scriptures.

The Book of Mormon, the *Inspired Version* or JST, and the explanations of the Brethren constitute the best commentaries on Isaiah.

You will note that I have carefully compared the King James Version (KJV, also known as the Authorized Version or AV) with both the Book of Mormon and the Inspired Version and noted every change in the body of this work, through a color coding system.

There are numerous verses where the Brethren have made no comments on Isaiah. Had this not been the case, this tome probably would not have been needed.

I am also grateful for the LDS *Library App*. I no longer have to worry about margins! Under every word I can add extensive commentaries and testimonies; link verses to other Scriptures; and tag certain types of contents for quick study and comparison. I can also bookmark important scriptures. Finally, all of my work on my phone can be transferred easily to my iPad and vice versa. It took me several years to transfer my notes from the margins of my English and Spanish Scriptures to the electronic version but it has been wonderful to have them handy.

Hebrew Masoretic text (מ)

My next effort was to compare the Hebrew Masoretic text (מ) to the KJV. I was most likely to do this when the text of the KJV seemed difficult to comprehend.

I should quickly note that in my opinion, the KJV is the best translation into English from the Hebrew Masoretic text (מ). There are other translations that from time to time, in my opinion, have a better translation of a particular verse or clause, but these improved translations tend to come from various English versions rather than from the same one.

I have a particular like for translations that are more literal, such as the KJV, NASB, LITV, ASV, HCSB, Rotherham, and I have a special affection for Leeser. Please note that I am speaking of the Hebrew Bible. Some of these same translations are quite unfortunate in terms of how they handle the New Testament.³

The KJV preserves the Messianic testimony of Scripture more than any other version I have encountered, and that is another reason why I love it so much.

Other ancient Scriptures

While we can well assume that the Hebrew was the original text for most of the Jewish Bible, we do not have any extant original signatures of any of these Scriptures. What we have are copies of copies of copies. So it is possible, for instance, that in some instances another *ancient manuscript* will have preserved the original meaning more accurately than the Hebrew Masoretic text (מ).

Beside the Masoretic text (מ) we have a number of important translations of the Old Testament including the Syriac (ܣ), Peshitta (ܫ), Targum (ܬ), LXX (Λ), Vulgate (V), and Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) (Q)—as well as their translations into English or Spanish. I love the contributions of the *Inspired Version* or the Joseph Smith Translation (JST) and have given them the highest priority in this study while recognizing that the KJV is our official Bible.

I spend a considerable amount of time comparing the DSS (Q) to each other as well as to the Masoretic text (מ). One of the great interests for this effort was to see how frequently there are small changes of the type that the Prophet Joseph Smith included in both the Book of Mormon and in the Inspired Version (no, I am not suggesting that these changes frequently agreed with these version, but rather, that these changes were quite typical). With this edition, however, I realized that most readers will not want to read each and every one of the changes I noted, so I have deleted most of them, leaving only a few samples here and there. In ISAIAH 30:19, for instance, I had originally included this note: The Masoretic text (מ) is usually translated as “He will be gracious &c.” while the DSS 1QIsa^a (Q) adds YHWH, יהוה, or LORD so it reads, “The LORD will be gracious &c.”

Lexicons

I am grateful for the extensive collection of Hebrew-to-English Lexicons (dictionaries that translate foreign words) that are available to us. These vary in their thoroughness but are a great help in working through and comparing difficult translations.

Commentaries and other books

There are dozens of commentaries—or exegetical works—on Isaiah. Some of them specialize on Isaiah, some on particular portions of Isaiah and others cover larger portions of Scripture and include Isaiah. These include books written by Jewish authors or by Christians of other faiths.

Among the exegetes, or Biblical scholars, we often find excellent insights. I have come to expect these pearls of wisdom from several of them. In some instances observations are mentioned as an aside—or

³ I particularly recommend Elder J. Reuben Clarke's book, *Why the King James Version* when considering Biblical versions of the New Testament. And even in the Old Testament, the KJV best preserves the Christ-centered meaning of the scriptures.

even *when arguing an opposite perspective*. Even these contrary perspectives are often quite useful.

In ISAIAH 9:1, the KJV speaks of “the way of the sea.” The Prophet Joseph Smith, in the Inspired Version has “the way of the Red Sea.” Most all exegetes think the reference is to the Mediterranean or the Sea of Galilee—and do not even mention the Red Sea—so it is interesting to have someone *mention* the Red Sea even if it is to discard the idea. I am pleased to have found a defense for the Prophet Joseph Smith and for the Book of Mormon in the ancient Targum Jonathan (Ⲯ).

Or, take ISAIAH 52:15. The word ⲙⲓⲣⲓⲛ is translated as *sprinkle* in the KJV, and even in the Book of Mormon. Almost all exegetes and translators think of the word as *sprinkle*. When a Biblical scholar, seemingly out of nowhere, *rejects the idea* of translating it as *gathering*, as we find it in the Inspired Version, I find this worth noting. I have found additional support for the Prophet’s translation in these two instances.

I found that I am not alone in making such arguments on the usefulness of contrary opinions. For instance, Jenour has, in his notes on ISAIAH 59: “To use the words of Vitranga (although his view of the general meaning of the prophecy is entirely different from that which I have taken),” after which he goes on to make a point.

And of course there are those instances where there seems to be no backing of the Inspired Version or of the Book of Mormon alternate renderings. I have a testimony of both the Book of Moron and the Inspired Version and am not concerned when we cannot find additional confirmation at this time. My testimony is not based on scholarly proofs.

There have been Bible dictionaries and atlases, as well as other books that have also been most useful. Finally, at times LDS scholarly authors have contributed brilliant observations to my study.

Where all these books and resources are found

I began collecting books by frequent visits to used bookstores. Then I was able to use electronic computer programs such as e-Sword. E-Sword makes available numerous translations for easy comparison as well as commentaries. Most of the materials are free but I have also purchased many of their modules.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints produced an excellent program entitled *LDS Scriptures Resource*. For basic scripture look-ups I have used a number of programs, some of which are no longer available. The latest I have settled on for quick searches is WORDSearch. I also use Accordance for work on the Dead Sea Scrolls (Ⲯ) and other ancient languages.

I lean most heavily on *Logos Bible Software* for my day-to-day analysis, even though some of their books have been sloppily reproduced and are filled with

typos. Logos has been a wonderful time saver and I have purchased hundreds of titles from them. These include Lexicons as well as commentaries and Bible versions.

I have found a treasure in the thousands of Biblical books from the *Internet Archive*. Among these books one can find lexicons, commentaries, atlases, dictionaries, ancient language grammars and LDS references. Two other sources of note include the Christian Classics Ethereal Library and Google Books in PDF format.

Transliterations or Hebrew

I have noticed that a great number of works use *transliterations* to represent the letters or characters of the Hebrew language. I have an antipathy for transliterations and use them very sparingly. I have been successful in teaching most people to pronounce Hebrew in less than two hours, and it is so easy to learn the basics of pronunciation, that there is really no need for transliterations. There are now wonderful apps that you can use to learn how to pronounce words in Hebrew, build your vocabulary, and much more. In some instances I have color coded words in Hebrew to the corresponding English words to facilitate understanding.

Specific dates, tree and animal names

This work does not attempt to make out specific dates, nor distinguish between precious stones, species of trees, or names of animals. When I deal with these subjects, no accuracy is implied.

Multiple frames of reference

Some of the prophecies of Isaiah had their fulfillment at the time of Isaiah or soon thereafter; others are intimately related to the restoration of the Gospel; yet others have reference to the Millennium and thereafter. Many of the prophecies are to be fulfilled at various times in history. A focus on one particular timeframe in this work is not intended to deny fulfillment at other times.

The Holy Temple

As we study Isaiah we will note multiple occasions where there are allusions to sacred temple ordinances. As you study Isaiah, keep these things in mind because we will *not* speak about them in this book—unless they are direct quotes from the mouth of the Brethren. President Boyd K. Packer taught: “We do not discuss the temple ordinances outside the temples. It was never intended that knowledge of these temple ceremonies would be limited to a select few who would be obliged to ensure that others never learn of them. It

is quite the opposite, in fact. With great effort we urge every soul to qualify and prepare for the temple experience.”⁴

Unity of Isaiah

Originally, I had planned to write a chapter on the Unity of Isaiah. There has, however, been so much wonderful material written on the unity of this great book that I hardly find it necessary.

The arguments against its unity border on the absurd. For instance, in one chapter assigned to second Isaiah by the critical school, one such author is overwhelmed by the similarities in writing with the first Isaiah. So, he suggests, it must have been an *imitator* of the first Isaiah!

Those from the critical school, by the way, agree very little between each other: each one trying to outdo the next in their bizarre propositions.

I was 42 when I began in earnest to write the first edition of this book, and I am now an old man of almost 63. I do not know how many more years the Lord will grant me to live upon this earth, and I rather spend them studying the scriptures. Perhaps my next book will be on the Prophet Zechariah. I have a great desire to study Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Minor Prophets yet I realize that I am unlikely to get very far using the careful and methodical approach I have so much enjoyed. So I do not wish to waste my time defending the unity of Isaiah with intellectual arguments.

It reminds me of the great words of Nehemiah, who did not wish to be distracted from building the walls of Jerusalem: “I *am* doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?” (Nehemiah 6:3b).

Not only are there excellent books written on the subject of the unity of Isaiah, but it all boils down to one single point—one admitted by *both sides* of the controversy: *the existence of divine inspiration*. I testify that the Lord speaks to mankind through living prophets, through inspiration, and through the scriptures. I testify that divine inspiration exists and that prophets of old as well as modern-day prophets speak by divine inspiration.⁵

Divine Investiture

A careful reading of the Old Testament seems to indicate that the word *Elohim* is often used as an exalted title for deity as well as a noun meaning God or angels. It is at times also used to speak of pagan gods. Both

titles, *Elohim* (אֱלֹהִים) and *Adonai* (אֲדֹנָי) have been applied to each God the Father and God the Son. In the Old Testament, it needs to be pointed out, *Elohim* is almost always associated with Jehovah or Yahweh (JHVH or YHWH). For instance, in the KJV, we frequently encounter the expression LORD God, which literally, in Hebrew, would be rendered *Jehovah Elohim* (יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים). Furthermore, we come across scriptures that say that the “LORD he is God,” (Deuteronomy 4:35), יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים. Or rather, the more literal rendition is “*Jehovah, He the God.*” This last statement is given a double emphasis in 1 Kings 18:39:

יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים.

Once again, it becomes clear that when *Elohim* is used as an *exalted title* in the Jewish Holy Scriptures or Old Covenant, and that it *almost always* refers to Jehovah, Jeshua, or the promised Messiah, Jesus the Christ. This does not mean that God the Father is absent from the Old Covenant. As we shall see, he is intimately present.

In Genesis 1:1 we read: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” Or rather, “In the beginning *Elohim* created the heaven and the earth.” Analyzing the Hebrew for the expression ‘in the beginning’ (BERESHIT, בְּרֵאשִׁית), the Prophet Joseph Smith taught us that בְּרֵאשִׁית, based on the word ROSH (רֹאשׁ), head, originally was missing the BETH (ב) and meant “The Head One of the Gods.” This is interesting to me because—although I realize Brother Joseph was not speaking of *Elohim* the FATHER here—the expression *Elohim* has been defined precisely as the head God in the Ugaritic tradition (TWOT).

Lest anyone be confused, the word *Elohim* does not appear in our Standard Works in English. It emerges hundreds of times in Hebrew and almost always represents the LORD God, or Jehovah God, the Christ. In General Conference and LDS writings (including the LDS Topical Guide and the writings of the Brethren), when the exalted title *Elohim* is used, it almost always *represents the Father*.

But returning to the topic of Divine Investiture, the Savior makes it clear that none of His words are His own, but rather, He glorifies the Father: “For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, *what I should say, and what I should speak*” (John 12:49, emphasis added). We also read: “Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me...” (John 17:7–8a).

The Sweetness of the Unity between the Godhead. The Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are three

⁴ President Boyd K. Packer, “The Holy Temple,” October 2010 General Conference.

⁵ “The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that ‘a prophet [is] a prophet only when he [is] acting as such.’” The Doctrine of Christ, by Elder D. Todd Christofferson, April 2012 General Conference.

distinct beings who are one in purpose. There is no envy between them. They are of one mind. This truth was powerfully revealed to me by the Holy Spirit on the way home from school, as a young boy of thirteen or so, years before I ever saw, heard of, or handled the Book of Mormon (or any literature published by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints).

It is understandable that some—when taking the scriptures out of context—are confused: “Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works’ sake” (John 14:8–11).

As LDS we believe that the Savior of mankind, Jehovah, was made in the similitude of Elohim, God the Father. The person who has seen the Son has also seen the Father because of their likeness. But the primary purpose of these verses are not to speak just of the physical similarity between the Father and the Son, but to make it clear that the Father and the Son are one in purpose—despite being different individuals. The next verse makes this plain: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it” (John 14:12–14). In other words, just as the Savior does the works of the Father, we can do the works of the Savior, which in turn are the works the Father would have us do.

So also we have the words of the Savior: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, this is my gospel; and ye know the things that ye must do in my church; *for the works which ye have seen me do that shall ye also do*; for that which ye have seen me do even that shall ye do; Therefore, if ye do these things blessed are ye, for ye shall be lifted up at the last day” (3 Nephi 27:21–22, emphasis added).

This is essentially a message of unity of purpose, as we find in D&C 50:43, “And the Father and I are one. I am in the Father and the Father in me; and inasmuch as ye have received me, ye are in me and I in you.” And John 17:11b; 17:21–22 make this point even clearer, beyond any doubt, that the question is one of unity of purpose: “Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are,” and “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent

me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.” Well is it said that “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one” (1 John 5:7).

Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “All revelation since the fall has come through Jesus Christ, who is the Jehovah of the Old Testament. In all of the scriptures, where God is mentioned and where he has appeared, it was Jehovah who talked with Abraham, with Noah, Enoch, Moses and all the prophets. He is the God of Israel, the Holy One of Israel; the one who led that nation out of Egyptian bondage, and who gave and fulfilled the Law of Moses. The Father has never dealt with man directly and personally since the fall, and he has never appeared except to introduce and bear record of the Son” (*Doctrines of Salvation* 1:27).

Elder McConkie explains: “*How does God reveal himself?* Though the ways may be infinite, the perfect and crowning way is by direct revelation, by visions, by personal visitations. According to the laws of mediation and intercession which the Father himself ordained, he has chosen to reveal himself through the Son, ordaining that all revelation shall come through the Son, though that holy personage frequently speaks in the Father’s name by *divine investiture of authority*; that is, he speaks in the *first person as though he were the Father*, because the Father has placed his name upon the Son.”⁶

Except for those times when the Father is introducing the Son, then, the words of the Father are pronounced and brought to us by the Son. The Son delights in giving all honor and glory to the Father. For instance, in the Book of Mormon, when referring to words given by Jehovah to Malachi, the Savior reminds us that these words, the words spoken in the Old Covenant by the Holy Prophets, are truly *the words of the Father*—even if delivered by the Son: “And it came to pass that he commanded them that they should write *the words which the Father had given* unto Malachi, which he should tell unto them ... Thus said the Father unto Malachi—Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant ... ” (3 Nephi 24:1, emphasis added).

As disciples of Christ, we pray to the Father, in the name of the Son. We receive an answer through Christ who manifests it unto us by the power of the Holy Ghost. Note the perfect pattern of prayer: “And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in

⁶ McConkie, Elder Bruce R. *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*. The Epistle of Paul to Titus – God has a body of flesh and bones.

Christ, he [I interpret this to mean, He, Christ] will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost” (Moroni 10:4). The revelations received by the Prophet Joseph Smith in the Doctrine and Covenants were given by the Savior (either directly, or through the Holy Ghost).

For example, “listen to the words of Jesus Christ, your Lord and your Redeemer” (D&C 15:1b, also see D&C 6:21; 10:57; 14:9; 16:1; 17:9; 18:47; etc.). Nephi, similarly, explains that the words he has spoken come from the Son: “if ye shall believe in Christ ye will believe in these words, for they are the words of Christ” (2 Nephi 33:10b). We might well say that the Holy Ghost speaks for the Son as the Son speaks for the Father. Each of these represents instances of Divine Investiture.

And so also when a Prophet speaks, he speaks through Divine Investiture. We read: “And, behold, and lo, this is an ensample unto all those who were ordained unto this priesthood, whose mission is appointed unto them to go forth—And this is the ensample unto them, that they shall speak as they are moved upon by the Holy Ghost. And whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost shall be scripture, shall be the will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation. Behold, this is the promise of the Lord unto you, O ye my servants. Wherefore, be of good cheer, and do not fear, for I the Lord am with you, and will stand by you; and ye shall bear record of me, even Jesus Christ, that I am the Son of the living God, that I was, that I am, and that I am to come” (D&C 68:2–6).

It follows, then, that when a Priesthood holder gives a blessing, he speaks the words of Christ as received through the power of the Holy Ghost, through Divine Investiture. So also, when members deliver a talk or give a lesson as moved by the Holy Ghost. This is why it is so vital to teach by the Spirit and bless by the Spirit and live by the Spirit. Each one of these will be justified by the Holy Spirit of Promise when we so act, and be brought to the hearts of the people we teach, serve and bless.

Divine Investiture, then, is like a power of attorney: “Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled. What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, *whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same*. For behold, and lo, the Lord is God, and the Spirit beareth record, and the record is true, and the truth abideth forever and ever. Amen” (D&C 1:37–39, emphasis added).

In Isaiah we hear the Son speaking about His own mission as the mortal Messiah as if it was the Father who was speaking. Thus we have Jehovah speaking in Isaiah 53:6 and 53:10, “and the LORD (Jehovah, יהוה) hath laid on him the iniquity of us all,” and “Yet it pleased the LORD (Jehovah, יהוה) to bruise him.” It is the Lord speaking, but He (Jehovah, Christ) is speaking for the Father in first person about Himself (Christ) in his future Messianic role.

When I am asked to be a *language interpreter* at a meeting, when the speaker says, “I have a testimony,” I do not say, “*He* has a testimony,” but rather, “*I* have a testimony” (not, *él tiene un testimonio* but rather *yo tengo un testimonio*). The Son, as our advocate before the Father, likewise speaks the words of the Father precisely as spoken by the Father.

So it is in the Book of Moses: “And I have a work for thee, Moses, my son; and thou art in the similitude of mine Only Begotten; and mine Only Begotten is and shall be the Savior, for he is full of grace and truth; but there is no God beside me, and all things are present with me, for I know them all” (Moses 1:6). Once again, it is the Son who speaks the words of the Father throughout the book of Moses.

There are notable exceptions, where the Father is introducing or bearing witness of the Son. For instance, in the New Covenant, when Christ is upon the earth, we hear the Father glorifying the Son (e.g., Matthew 3:17, John 12:28). In Joseph Smith History—1:17b, Elohim the Eternal Father introduces the Son to the boy Prophet Joseph Smith: “When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!”

The Book of Revelation gives a perfect example of Divine Investiture. In this case, an angel speaks the words of Christ. John distinctly hears the words of the Savior in first person from the angelic messenger who is clothed in great glory (see a similar event in the *Ascension of Isaiah*): “Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book” (Revelation 22:7). John thought himself in the presence of our Redeemer. Scripture tells us that he fell down to worship, but was prevented from doing so: “Then saith he [the angel] unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God” (Revelation 22:9).

It is not possible to understand Isaiah without understanding that the Savior often explicitly speaks to Isaiah as if He were the Father. And even when He does not appear to be speaking for the Father, the Savior is still speaking for the Father. “Jesus ... said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing

of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth ... That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him” (John 5:19b–20a, 23).

In summary, the principle of Divine Investiture is everywhere in our lives as followers and disciples of Jesus Christ. We speak in His name often, as moved upon by the Holy Ghost. In the Hebrew Bible, in almost every instance that the word Elohim is used, it is used as a title of honor for Christ, who “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God” (Philippians 2:6).⁷

Hosea Principle

In essence, the Hosea Principle is the idea that the Lord is filled with compassion towards us, and after speaking words of reprimand, He is filled with love. See *notes* in *Rain in Due Season*, our second introduction.

How Beautiful upon the Mountains Principle

The Lord frequently shares his *titles of honor* with his servants. For more details, see *notes* under ISAIAH 52:7.

Ezekiel Principle

If a person is warned and repents, then both the one giving warning and the one warned have reason to rejoice. However, if a person is not warned, he who should have warned his brother is also condemned (see Ezekiel 3:16–21).

Biblical Text Evaluation

The field of *Biblical criticism* or is often divided into (1) *lower criticism* or *textual criticism* (we will prefer the latter term) and (2) *higher criticism* or *literary criticism*. In these contexts, the word criticism means *analysis* or *evaluation* (as compared to censure and disapproval).

Textual criticism is the attempt to determine what the *original* Scriptures (also called an *autograph*) may have looked like. No autograph of any portion of the Bible exists today. Instead, we have copies of copies of copies, etc. These copies are corruptions of the original autographs.

The Prophet Joseph Smith explained: “I believe the Bible as it read when it came from the pen of the original writers. Ignorant translators, careless transcribers, or designing and corrupt priests have committed many errors” (*History of the Church* 6:57.),”

The textual critic is interested in comparing ancient manuscripts or textual variants in an effort to improve the text, through such ancient resources as the Masoretic text (ⲙ), Syriac (Ⲥ), Peshitta (ⲩ), Targum (Ⲫ), LXX (Ⲭ), Vulgate (ⲱ) and Dead Sea Scrolls (DSSB) (Ⲙ). Such records are not composed of a single representative text, but of multiple sources or variants.

The Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price are priceless sources of more accurate texts.

If someone wished to come to a better understanding of what the Prophet Joseph Smith meant regarding the flawed transmission of the Biblical text in the quote above, I would recommend *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* by Emanuel Tov (Judah Leon Magnes⁸ Professor of Bible at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem). I also commend *Invitation to the Septuagint* by Karen H. Jobes and Moisés Silva, for a book focused on the LXX (Ⲭ).

Emanuel Tov well says about textual criticism: “This procedure is subjective as subjective can be ... In modern times, scholars are often reluctant to admit the subjective nature of textual evaluation, so that an attempt is often made, conscious or unconscious, to create a level of artificial objectivity by the frequent application of abstract rules” (2nd Edition, p. 310). Elsewhere he notes that “textual traditions have all been influenced by abstract assumptions and prejudices” (2nd Edition, p. 181). Tov speaks extensively about textual corruptions, false conclusions, dogmatic approaches, subjective opinions and the like.

Much scholarship is affected by personal opinion. I do not claim that *Isaiah Testifies of Christ* is free from these. We simply cannot get away from bias in translating or analyzing Scripture, any more than we can in conducting most scholarly work.

In contrast to textual criticism, *higher criticism* deals with the authenticity, inspiration and genuineness of these Biblical texts. Some higher critics, though not of our faith, are faithful believers in God and strong advocates for the divinity of Jesus Christ and the inspiration of Scripture. I have a large collection of such books and love reading them.

There are other higher critics—often wolves in sheep’s clothing—that do not believe that God reveals Himself to humans—not now, not then, not ever. What is worrisome is that their theories are making their way

⁷ Adapted from my blog, *Elohim, Adonai and Divine Investiture*, 24 July 2010. Also see, McConkie, Bruce. *The Promised Messiah*. Deseret Book Company, 1978. Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Doctrines of Salvation*. Talmage, James E. Jesus the Christ. (Including notes from The Father and The Son: A Doctrinal Exposition by The First Presidency and The Twelve, set forth in 1916).

⁸ My great grandmother’s sister (or great grandaunt) on my Jewish side of the family, Beatrice Lowenstein, was the wife of Judah Magnes.

into the homes of Christian families and even into the hearts of some members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

When it comes specifically to Isaiah, I have gained much from books written from multiple perspectives. When comments were made against our beliefs as LDS by any Gentile or Jewish author, I have discarded these.

There is safety in holding on to the Standard Works and the words of our Prophets, Seers, and Revelators—that is *my* bias. Always pay attention to what the Prophet, the First Presidency, and the Quorum of the Twelve have to teach us. Never cease to call upon God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, pouring out your questions and letting Him know of your desire to learn. And remember, some things we not know now: “Yea, verily I say unto you, in that day when the Lord shall come, he shall reveal all things—Things which have passed, and hidden things which no man knew, things of the earth, by which it was made, and the purpose and the end thereof” (D&C 101:32–33).

I have made every effort to make *Isaiah Testifies of Christ* an uplifting, faith-promoting experience. There is much I have to learn.

Isaiah in the Book of Mormon

In 1903 President Joseph F. Smith received an inquiry as to why there were portions of the Isaiah chapters in the Book of Mormon that were identical to those in the King James Version. The letter came from a Mr. H. Chamberlain, of Spencer, Iowa. Chamberlain noticed that even the words “supplied by the translators” were included in the KJV. (In the *Rain in Due Season* introduction we review the fact that italics in the Authorized Version stand for words or expressions not found in the Hebrew text but that are supplied by the translators to help us understand the Bible. Chamberlain rightly points out that it is unimaginable for two translators of the *same text* to coincide perfectly with each other—and even more improbable when we are dealing with *different* text sources (i.e., the Book of Mormon plates vs. the Masoretic text **מ**). Chamberlain fittingly maintains that the only way that this could be so was if the Prophet Joseph Smith made use of the KJV in translating the Book of Mormon.

President Joseph F. Smith delegated the task of answering Mr. H. Chamberlain’s concerns to Elder B. H. Roberts who agreed with Chamberlain’s concerns and deductions. Elder Roberts responded in part: “while Joseph Smith obtained the facts and ideas from the Nephite characters through the inspiration of God, he was left to express those facts and ideas, in the main, in such language as he could command; and when he found that parts of the Nephite record closely paralleled passages in the Bible, and being conscious that the

language of our English Bible was superior to his own, he adopted it, except for those differences indicated in the Nephite original which here and there make the Book of Mormon passages superior in sense and clearness. Of course, I recognize the fact that this is but a conjecture ...”⁹

Dr. Sidney B. Sperry likewise wrote: “There are 433 verses of Isaiah in the Nephite record. Of these, 234 verses were changed or modified by the Prophet Joseph Smith so that they do not conform with the King James version. Some of the changes made were slight, others were radical. However, 199 verses are word for word the same as the old English version. We therefore freely admit that Joseph Smith used the King James version when he came to the text of Isaiah on the gold plates. As long as the familiar version substantially agreed with the text on the gold plates record he let it pass; when it differed too much, he translated the Nephite version and dictated the necessary changes.”¹⁰

Dr. Sperry elsewhere elucidated: “When Joseph Smith came to these quotations he very wisely followed the King James Version except in points where the record before him differed sufficiently, whereupon he made the appropriate changes to conform to the ancient version. The fact that he made changes is in itself quite remarkable. No real evidence exists that he had at that time been expertly taught about textual criticism and the history of the Bible text. My own experience has been that very few intelligent people in the Church even today recognize fully the implications that follow from the presence of Isaiah texts in the Book of Mormon. Any Bible scholar knows the text followed by the King James Version contained corruptions.”¹¹ Brother Sperry goes on to give numerous examples of how the Prophet Joseph Smith’s translation is supported either by other ancient manuscripts or by more literal translations.

BYU Professor Daniel H. Ludlow also explained: “When Joseph Smith translated the Isaiah references from the small plates of Nephi, he evidently opened his King James Version of the Bible and compared the impression he had received in translating with the words of the King James scholars. If his translation was essentially the same as that of the King James Version, he apparently quoted the verse from the Bible; then his scribe, Oliver Cowdery, copied it down. However, if Joseph Smith’s translation did not agree precisely with that of the King James scholars, he would dictate his

⁹ B. H. Roberts, *Defense of the Faith and the Saints*, 2 vols., 1:269–274.

¹⁰ Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, The “Isaiah Problem” in the Book of Mormon by Dr. Sidney B. Sperry), *Improvement Era* 1939-1

¹¹ Sidney B. Sperry, Evidence of Translation: Comparison with Ancient Versions, *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 4/1 (Spring 1995): 211–14.

own translation to the scribe. This procedure in translation would account for both the 234 verses of Isaiah that were changed or modified by the Prophet Joseph and the 199 verses that were translated word-for-word the same. Although some critics might question this procedure of translation, scholars today frequently use this same procedure in translating the biblical manuscripts among the Dead Sea Scrolls.”¹² And may I suggest that this is the very procedure adopted in most if not all Biblical translations, such as the recently produced LDS Spanish Reina Valera 2009. The same technique was also clearly used by the Authorized Version translators as they compared the text of previous Bibles to the Hebrew.

Contact

I have included my e-mail address in case you wish to engage in conversation on any related topic, suggest corrections or offer other perspectives. I rejoice in being rectified. Over the years I hope to keep making improvements. I would be particularly honored to be able to share my testimony of Jesus Christ, the Book of Mormon or of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, answer any questions or put you in contact with Elders or Sister Missionaries who might visit you in your home. No joy has been greater in my life than that of membership in the Lord’s Church.

Why did the Lord want me to study Isaiah?

I am not entirely certain why the Lord wanted me to study Isaiah and the Prophets. Elder Bruce R. McConkie wondered: “If our eternal salvation depends upon our ability to understand the writings of Isaiah as fully and truly as Nephi understood them—and who shall say such is not the case!—how shall we fare in that great day when with Nephi we shall stand before the pleasing bar of Him who said: ‘Great are the words of Isaiah’ (3 Nephi 23:1)?”¹³

While I am not entirely sure how to interpret Elder McConkie’s quote, I am certain that I needed to engage in this lifelong study of Isaiah and the prophets. Some of the benefits I have derived so far, almost all related to being a defender of the faith, include a:

1. Better appreciation of how the scriptures testify of the divinity of Jesus Christ. And how specific Scripture in the New Testament speaks of Christ as being the very Jehovah mentioned in Isaiah (see ISAIAH 6:9–10; Matthew 13:10–15).

2. Understanding of how Scriptures are sometimes distorted by those who do not believe in the divinity of

Jesus Christ or do not believe in prophecy—as well as by those who have not accepted the restoration of the Gospel in these, the latter days.

3. Ability to stand firm and confident in the teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the Brethren—and withstand philosophical idolatry. And finding external evidences of the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ, as received by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

4. Increase in my love for the Book of Mormon and the rest of Scripture, as well as the teachings of the Brethren. Throughout the years I have discovered “wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures” (D&C 89:19b) in both of these. They have brought me joy untold and a sensing of the thinness of the veil.

5. Coming to an enhanced understanding that the gifts that God has given us need to be developed—they are not poured out on us without effort. As Elder B.H. Robert teaches, “[It] requires striving—intellectual and spiritual—to comprehend the things of God.”

6. Intensifying of my understanding of eternal and spiritual matters so I can better withstand the fiery darts of the adversary.

7. A hope that this book will help Judah and Ephraim come unto Christ, both on this and the other side of the veil.

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¹² Daniel H. Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon*, p.141.

¹³ Elder Bruce R. McConkie, “Ten Keys to Understanding Isaiah,” October 1973 *Ensign*.

Rain in Due Season

“What was the object of gathering the Jews, or the people of God in any age of the world? ... The main object was to build unto the Lord a house whereby He could reveal unto His people the ordinances of His house and the glories of His kingdom, and teach the people the way of salvation ... It is for the same purpose that God gathers together His people in the last days, to build unto the Lord a house to prepare them for the ordinances and endowments, washings and anointings” —Joseph Smith the Prophet, HC 5:422

The subject of the gathering is a thrilling and glorious one and has occupied my mind for much of the last few decades, especially as I embarked on writing *Isaiah Testifies of Christ*. The Book of Mormon, according to the Old Testament (as well as the Book of Mormon itself), will play a vital role in the gathering of Israel in the latter days. Here we look at a few of the prophecies regarding the gathering of Israel as they relate to the Book of Mormon. The Old Testament has much to say about the Book of Mormon and these words are but a brief overview.

In order to understand the promises made to the twelve tribes of Israel we will set off on an exciting journey with some terrain that must first be traversed in order to come to a better understanding of these glorious prophecies. We will review some of the most pertinent aspects of the history of Israel, come to an understanding of multiple prophecies as well as the prophetic voice. I have come to love the Holy Scriptures, Hebrew Bible or Tanakh, as the Old Testament is called by the Jews. As we begin, some of the topics will not immediately seem connected. I will attempt to tie the loose ends before we are done.

Truth is *one eternal round* (D&C 35:1) and so we shall begin with the quote given by the Prophet Joseph Smith, above, about the importance of temples, and end with this very concept as it relates to the Book of Mormon as an instrument to help Israel (1) gather back unto Christ, (2) be restored to the Abrahamic covenant, and (3) be brought to the temples of our God. The Holy Scriptures truly testify of Jesus Christ. The Hebrew Bible also testifies of the role the Book of Mormon would play in the gathering of Israel from spiritual Babylon unto Zion.

“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people” (Revelation 14:6).

Ellipses

A few years before I retired from the University of California, my supervisor and I were both putting our lunches in the office refrigerator. Noting there was little space she laughingly commented: “It must be the end of the month.” It took me a moment to realize what she was saying before I could join in the laughter.

An *ellipsis* is something that is understood even though it is not said. They are present in all of our conversations and in everything we read or hear. Much of humor relies on people understanding the gap between what is expressed and what is implied. An ellipsis consists of an omission of one or more words. It is sometimes reflected in writing by three points (...). In Spanish, they are called *puntos suspensivos*.

Martha Koln suggested, “When well used, ellipses can create a bond of sorts between the writer and the reader. The writer is saying, in effect, I needn’t spell everything out for you; I know you’ll understand” (*Rhetorical Grammar*, 5th ed. Pearson, 2007).

As we fall in love with the scriptures, we begin to see more and more of these elliptical points that are not written, but whose meanings we must prayerfully discern ourselves. Not just words, but often much more.

The elliptical expressions included in my supervisor’s humor required an understanding that: (1) people often go out to lunch; (2) individuals are paid at the beginning of the month; (3) people live from paycheck to paycheck; (4) individuals have less disposable money towards the end of the month because few budget carefully; (5) going out to lunch is more expensive than bringing something from home; and *therefore*: (6) people have brought in their lunches because it is the end of the month. This is a cultural ellipsis.

Someone in a biblical agrarian society might not get this at all. And conversely, there are many cultural ellipses in Scripture that we do not easily understand—especially if we have been raised far removed from an agrarian society.

New wine in new bottles

In Matthew 9:17 we read: “Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.”

To understand this verse we must comprehend that (1) grape juice turns into wine through a primary and a

secondary fermentation process; (2) new wine has not totally finished fermenting (i.e., the secondary fermentation has not yet taken place); (3) and that old bottles (rather, animal skins or leather used as containers) have previously been expanded to their limit.

If new wine is put in these old wineskins that cannot stretch any further, they burst, spilling out all of their contents. New skins, on the other hand, can stretch along with the secondary fermentation process, and are well suited to new wine.

It has been said that Joseph Smith, the young boy prophet of the restoration, was like a new bottle into which the Lord's doctrine could be poured.

To understand ellipses, then, we must understand the culture, the theology, and the language. When the Bible was translated from the ancient languages into our modern texts, such as the King James Version, they did much to fill in the gaps for us. In other words, the translators gladly provided much of the missing text we would need to understand. Even so, there are plenty of areas that require further understanding.

Italics in the Bible

We can open our KJV of the Bible to almost any page and find that some of the text is in italics. (Some Biblical translations do not show these italics in the text but rather give the illusion that the whole text is part of the original. Other versions provide additional expansions, such as the Amplified Version.)

Without the ellipsis being filled in for us, ISAIAH 2:12 would read: "For the day of the LORD of hosts upon every proud and lofty, and upon every lifted up; and he shall be brought low." With the ellipsis filled in, we have: "For the day of the LORD of hosts *shall be* upon every *one that is* proud and lofty, and upon every *one that is* lifted up; and he shall be brought low."

Genesis 30:30 would read: "For little which thou hadst before I, and it is increased unto a multitude; and the LORD hath blessed thee since my coming: and now when shall I provide for mine own house also?" With the ellipses filled in: "For *it was* little which thou hadst before I *came*, and it is *now* increased unto a multitude; and the LORD hath blessed thee since my coming: and now when shall I provide for mine own house also?"

There are many ellipses in the Bible and the book *Figures of Speech used in the Bible* by Ethelbert W. Bullinger, D.D. is quite interesting and instructive.¹ The problem, of course, is that ellipses are subject to interpretation. Not all of the ellipses, as they are filled in our KJV, are correct. The same can be said of other Biblical translations. Furthermore, even though I have

recommended Bullinger, I have filled the margins of the book with differences of opinion.

The Prophet Joseph Smith approved many of the elliptical expressions we find in our KJV, but not all. Ellipses may be completely misunderstood and become false ellipsis. There really is a danger that translators and interpreters of Scripture will misunderstand ellipses. Even though the *Inspired Version* is not the official Bible for English speakers, gladly we can lean heavily on the Joseph Smith Translation (JST) as we study the word. In some instances, we may even think of the JST as elliptical expressions used by the Prophet to help us understand the text.

Theological ellipses

Besides missing words or expressions there are also theological ellipses. In these cases, instead of a few words that are missing, only a few are provided. These expressions are codes for expanded meaning. In prophecy, one often sees the development of ideas, line upon line, and precept upon precept. We will be particularly interested in these theological ellipses that are loaded with meaning, as they appear throughout the Holy Scriptures, especially as touching the Abrahamic covenant and the ingathering of Israel.

Abrahamic Covenant

The Lord offered Abraham many wonderful blessings. These would include a large posterity as well as an inheritance in the Holy Land. Among the many promises made to Abraham, particularly mark the following: "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, *to be a God unto thee*, and to thy seed after thee" (Genesis 17:7, emphasis added).

I am your God, ye are my people

We will be particularly interested in the chapters I have nicknamed *Rain in Due Season*. Oftentimes, when one verse of these chapters is quoted or alluded to, *these stand for all of the blessings and cursing promised therein*. And most importantly, they are a reminder of some very special promises associated with the gathering in the latter days. Throughout Isaiah, these blessings and cursing are alluded to.

The *Rain in Due Season* promises associated with the scattering and gathering of Israel are found in the Pentateuch, in their most extensive detail, in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 4, 28–30, and 32. I urge you to read and re-read these chapters and become intimately acquainted with them: an understanding of these will greatly facilitate an understanding of a large portion of the Holy Scriptures. At the very least, ponder Leviticus 26 and the first six verses of Deuteronomy 30 before continuing.

¹ <https://ia800204.us.archive.org/1/items/cu31924029277047/cu31924029277047.pdf> (Internet Archive free download).

The Lord invites us to keep His commandments—and especially to *avoid idolatry* and *keep the Sabbath*. The most serious type of idolatry today is *intellectual idolatry*. It is a leaning on the philosophies of men rather than on the word of the Lord.

Such idolatry and pride go hand in hand. President Ezra Taft Benson taught: “The proud cannot accept the authority of God giving direction to their lives (see Helaman 12:6). They pit their perceptions of truth against God’s great knowledge, their abilities versus God’s priesthood power, their accomplishments against His mighty works ... The proud wish God would agree with them. They aren’t interested in changing their opinions to agree with God’s.”² In that same memorable talk President Benson quoted present-day revelation as a warning voice: “... beware of pride, lest ye become as the Nephites of old” (D&C 38:39). Some, then, favoring the wisdom and philosophies of man, have set aside godly counsel. Let us ever remember, instead, to “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths” (Proverbs 3:5–6).

We also live in a day when Sabbath day observance is all but lost among professing Christians. President Russell M. Nelson has encouraged us to remember our covenant to *keep the Sabbath day holy*, and to *make the Sabbath a delight*.³ Keeping the Sabbath and avoiding idolatry, as we shall see, are two key topics in Isaiah. But returning to Leviticus ...

The Lord promises, if we heed the invitation to remove ourselves from idolatry and to make the Sabbath a delight: “Then I will give you *rain in due season*, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit” (Leviticus 26:4, emphasis added). Rain is often associated with blessings in the Holy Scriptures.

In today’s agriculture we often have great reservoirs of water that are accumulated from the winter rains and melted snows in order to water orchards and other agricultural lands during the growing season. In my mother’s farm in San Javier, Chile, we were very blessed to have small water canals to water our vineyards. My uncle, on the other hand, owned property in the nearby town of Villa Alegre, and his watering system was called “*regadío a rulo*,” or non-irrigated land. The only water that falls in this land is the rain the Lord provides.

During Biblical times, much of Israel’s rain was provided in this way. Depending on the crops, there are specific times when rain is needed. Vineyards and orchards also need rain at specific intervals; grains and

annuals need rain to soften the soil for tillage and then at intervals once the plants are growing.

When the Lord says that He would provide *rain in due season*, then, He is blessing us with rain at the precise moment when the plants have a need for it.

In the ancient agronomical societies, then, rain in due season meant the difference between plentiful crops and famine. Rain and blessings are closely associated with each other.

So it is that the Lord promises: “prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it” (Malachi 3:10b).

It requires tremendous faith to plant or grow crops under such a method, especially under *Mediterranean climates*—such as portions of Chile, California and the Holy Land.

I am always touched by the movie, *Windows of Heaven*, which depicts a time of severe drought and the revelation received by President Lorenzo Snow. President Snow was promised that if the Saints would pay their tithing, the windows of heaven would open and rain would come down to bless the crops. The early Saints had to trust this prophecy and plant and then wait for the rain. Their faith was amply rewarded with exquisite rain.

Beside the rain given to those involved in agriculture, rain in due season also implies blessings in general. The Lord’s timing in providing these blessings is always perfect. These miracles, of course, are not only material but spiritual. Above all things, rain in due season represents *revelation*. This is a priceless gift, to have the Lord speak to us through our Prophets, Seers and Revelators and also, for personal matters, through direct personal revelation and divine inspiration.

The Lord promised the children of Jacob rain in due season if she would walk in His paths and turn her heart towards the Holy One of Israel.

“Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out” (Deuteronomy 28:6). The complete list of blessings is extensive and beautiful.

The assurances, in essence, are a review of the promises made to Abraham: “For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you” (Leviticus 26:9).

None of the assertions are more profound and magnificent than the following: “I [the Lord] will *walk among you*, and will be *your God*, and ye shall be *my people*” (Leviticus 26:12b, emphasis added). These words bring tears of joy. Can you sense the greatness of these promises?

These *Rain in Due Season* verses are pregnant with meaning, and are a theological ellipsis for the Abrahamic Covenant, as we saw in Genesis 17:7: “And

² President Ezra Taft Benson, Beware of Pride, April 1989 General Conference.

³ President Russell M. Nelson, The Sabbath is a Delight, April 2015 General Conference.

I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a *God unto thee*, and *to thy seed after thee*” (emphasis added).

Disobedience would bring cursings

If the children of Jacob would be disobedient, on the other hand, unspeakable curses would befall her. As you read about these curses carefully, you will see that these are multiplied to bless Israel, and help her return unto the Lord.

In Leviticus 26 the Lord announces a set of blessings, and then tells us that if these are not sufficient to soften our hearts, then “I will punish you *seven* [שִׁבְעַ] times more for your sins” (Leviticus 26:18b). The next set of consequences is then given and once again the warning of a seven-fold punishment. This happens multiple times throughout this chapter. When we consider that the word *seven* stands for perfection, then we know that the Lord’s punishment will be perfect, or in other words, just right for our needs. Just right to bless us.

For the purposes of this introduction, we shall focus on two of the cursings. First, “And the LORD *shall scatter thee* among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods” (Deuteronomy 28:64a, emphasis added).

Second, there would be a cessation of revelation and the heavens would be shut down: “And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass” (Deuteronomy 28:23a). Elsewhere we read a similar sentiment: “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD” (Amos 8:11).

Drought of rain is a physical manifestation. Drought of revelation is a spiritual one. They both indicate that things are not well between us and the Lord—especially the latter.

After the blessings and the cursing

In his mercy, and foreknowledge, the Lord made provisions for the repentance of the children of Jacob. In one of the most moving verses in Scripture we read: “And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee” (Deuteronomy 30:1), or in other words, when we are brought to a remembrance of these promises after we have been scattered throughout the nations. While we have been scattered by the hand of the nations, we should note that the Lord permitted this scattering.

The Lord is speaking to Israel, regarding what would happen *after* the great majority of the blessings and cursings would take place: in other words, to the time when the gospel would be restored again upon the earth.

“And shalt *return* (שָׁבָתָ) unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul” (Deuteronomy 30:2).

At every moment we continually make the decision to *שוב* (SHUV), that is, to *turn* or *return* towards the Lord, or to give Him our back. In the Holy Scriptures, this is the word that is used to invite people to *return unto Christ* or repent. *שוב* is a frequently utilized word to speak about *repentance* as well as *apostasy*, turning toward the Lord—or away.

Continuing with Deuteronomy 30:2, note that we first come in remembrance of these covenants and then are moved with a great desire to obey and to enter into the waters of baptism to show our determination to obey. Furthermore, we will have a great desire to share these things with others, especially with our families and children. We will prepare our children for baptism at the age of accountability, whenever possible.

“That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee” (Deuteronomy 30:2). To turn thy captivity means to put an end to it. The captivity here mentioned is not just a physical one, but also a spiritual one. We will leave spiritual Babylon and come unto Zion.

The Lord will be filled with His *tender mercies* [חֲסִדִּים] and have compassion toward us. It would not matter where we would have been scattered to, the Lord would have compassion upon us: He will find us even when we did not know we wanted to be found.

“If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee” (Deuteronomy 30:4). None would be forgotten, none would be rejected from coming, and none would be uninvited. No matter where or how far away we would be scattered, it would not be so far that the Lord could not find us—even to the outermost parts of heaven. Either on this side of the veil or the other.

“And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it” (Deuteronomy 30:5a). The Lord would bring Judah back to the Holy Land. The other tribes would have their special lands elsewhere. For instance, Joseph would inherit the American Continent, North and South.

Finally, there is an implication of spiritual Zion—regardless of what nation we find ourselves in, we can leave Babylon and become a Zion people.

“And he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers” (Deuteronomy 30:5b). Those gathered from Israel in the last days will receive blessings even greater than those in former times.

“And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live” (Deuteronomy 30:6). Our hearts will be circumcised as a token of this new covenant—that is, our hearts of stone will be replaced with a heart of flesh. “That thou mayest live” is an allusion to receiving exaltation and eternal lives.

A few weeks after my first posting of this chapter, I found a number of allusions to *Rain in Due Season* in the words of the Savior to His disciples in the American Continent: “And behold, this people will I establish in *this land*, unto the *fulfilling of the covenant* which I made with *your father Jacob*; and it shall be a New Jerusalem. And the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of this people; yea, *even I will be in the midst of you*” (3 Nephi 20:22, emphasis added, note the land, the Abrahamic covenants as well as the Lord walking in the midst of the Saints). Note that the Book of Mormon was written to come forth in the end of days, to us—the followers of Christ regardless of whether they are direct descendants of the Lamanites or of Judah or of any of the other tribes of Israel.

You are of Israel

Few missionaries—or even members—realize that we are gathering Israel back: *literal* Israel. That is, the children of Jacob as scattered throughout the world. Most of Israel—except for the tribe of Judah—does not realize her heritage. And even within Judah, there are other tribes mixed in as we shall see, especially that of Benjamin and Levi.

The gospel of Jesus Christ will be accepted first by Ephraim (and Manasseh is implied also) and eventually by all of the other tribes of Israel, and finally, by Judah. The book of Zechariah speaks much about this.

Brigham Young (*Journal of Discourses* 2:268–269, 8 April 1855) and Joseph Fielding Smith (*Doctrines of Salvation* 3:246) have made it clear that the majority who accept the Gospel are literal descendants of Israel. Is it not thrilling to know, as we do missionary work, that we are literally gathering Israel back in fulfillment of the promises in Deuteronomy 30:1–6? So also as we do vicarious work for the departed?

President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “The Lord said he would scatter Israel among the Gentile nations, and by doing so he would bless the Gentile nations with

the blood of Abraham. Today we are preaching the gospel in the world and we are gathering out, according to the revelations given to Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other prophets, the scattered sheep of the House of Israel. These scattered sheep are coming forth mixed with Gentile blood from their Gentile forefathers. Under all the circumstances it is very possible that the majority, almost without exception, of those who come into the Church in this dispensation have the blood of two or more of the tribes of Israel as well as the blood of the Gentiles.” (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, 5 vols., Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1957–66, 3:63.)

President Joseph Fielding Smith also declared: “The great majority of those who become members of the Church are literal descendants of Abraham through Ephraim, son of Joseph” (Improvement Era, Oct. 1923, p. 1149). While this was especially the case in 1923, the number of converts from other tribes is beginning to grow.

The rare person who is *adopted* into Israel—and I would not assume adoption unless the patriarchal blessing says so—will be just as much a partaker of the blessings given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as those who are direct descendants.

Gentiles, Gentile Nations, Heathen

Words can have multiple meanings. A few have the philosophy that words need to be translated in the same way throughout the Bible. Although this at first sounds quite laudable, the premise is flawed. Words in Hebrew also have multiple acceptations as do words in English, Spanish or any language.

Oftentimes, there are multiple words needed to provide a good translation—this is not an issue limited to biblical translation. Certainly this is the case where words do not have an equivalent in the target language. For instance, the word *sobremesa* in Spanish has no equivalent in English. It means the time spent sitting at the table and chatting even after people have stopped eating. Even where there are translations for a word, where there are multiple choices, the translator has to truly understand the context.

That is why the approach taken by the Amplified Bible (AMP) makes sense in that multiple acceptations of the original word are often used in the target language. But let us return to our topic.

The Hebrew expression **הַגּוֹיִם**, *HA-Goyim*, is variously translated as **the heathen**, **the Gentiles**, or **the nations**. Each of these words—heathen, Gentiles and nations—has a different meaning. The *context* of the word in Hebrew dictates the best translation into English.

The word *heathen* is often thought of as a strange, barbarian, uncivilized people or those who do not accept the God of the Bible (see Webster). A *Gentile*

often means someone who is not a Jew, or someone who is a heathen or pagan (Webster). A humorous archaic definition of Gentile—as it is not used in real life among the Latter-day Saints—is “a non-Mormon.”⁴ I will use the term to distinguish those who represent both non-Jewish and non-LDS authors cited in this book.

There is a difference between *Gentile* and *Gentile Nations*. The word *nation* is often elliptical or implied when the word *Gentile* is used.

We read about the Gentiles taking the Gospel to Israel, but what is really meant is that the *Gentile Nations* will take the Gospel to Israel. The Prophet Joseph Smith was a pure Ephraimite (*Journal of Discourses* 2:268–69.), on the one hand, and a Gentile, on the other. Once again, to understand this we must comprehend that the Prophet Joseph Smith was born in a Gentile Nation. But the Prophet was a descendant of Israel through Joseph of Egypt. Or, when something positive is said about the *Gentiles*, it seems to exclude Judah as a translation. In some instances, I would prefer if it said that these positive things would come upon the *nations*. It seems to me, at least, that it is more inclusive as the *nations* includes both Jew and *Gentile*. Please remember, once again, that it is up to the English translator to decide how to render the word גוֹיִם. This is, for instance, where I appreciate Leiser’s translation. Lest I be misunderstood, there are times when wonderful things are intended for the Gentiles, but more often than not, the *Gentile nations* are intended. And these are the descendants of Israel from the other tribes who are also scattered throughout the nations—but unless they have joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints they know it not.

In the Title Page of the Book of Mormon we read that the Book of Mormon was: “Sealed by the hand of Moroni, and hid up unto the Lord, to come forth in due time by way of the Gentile.” Meaning, by way of the *Gentile Nations*. Joseph Smith was the one who was to bring forth the Book of Mormon to the world.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, after being restored, mostly sent missionaries from the Gentile Nations to the Gentile Nations. But these missionaries would be descendants of Israel who lived among the nations. And who would they go to? To the descendants of Israel among the nations, beginning with the tribe of Ephraim and ending with the tribe of Judah.

The most important point, once again, is that missionaries are going out to the nations of the world to gather Ephraim and his companions first and Judah and his companions next. All of the children of Jacob are to be invited to come unto Christ.

What tribes do the Lamanite nations come from?

According to Elder Erastus Snow, Joseph Smith taught that in the 116 pages of the lost manuscript, that Ishmael was a descendant of Ephraim (JD 23:184). From Alma 10:3 we find that Lehi was a descendant of Manasseh. “And Aminadi was a descendant of Nephi, who was the son of Lehi, who came out of the land of Jerusalem, who was a descendant of Manasseh, who was the son of Joseph who was sold into Egypt by the hands of his brethren” (Alma 10:3).

The American Continent, then, was populated by at least three tribes, Ephraim, Manasseh and Judah. The latter, by way of Mulek, who left Jerusalem eleven years after Lehi had done so, and who formed the community of Zarahemla.

Because the sons of Lehi married the daughters of Ishmael, it follows that the descendants of the Lamanites might receive their blessings through either Ephraim or Manasseh but have both of these bloods running through their veins. The third most common tribe in South America seems to be that of Judah. The tribe of Manasseh seems to predominate in Mexico and the tribe of Ephraim in Chile.

There are at least two sources of Ephraimite blood; that which the Saints receive from (1) the Gentile nations and that which they receive from the (2) Lamanite peoples.

The blood of Ephraim from the Gentile Nations was that which was spread forth after Assyria captured the Lost Tribes. The blood of Ephraim from the Lamanite nations was that which goes back specifically to the descendants of Lehi and Ishmael and their wives—which includes peoples from the American Continent as well as many of the isles of the sea.

In terms of our own patriarchal blessings, as has already mentioned, we most likely have multiple tribes running through our veins. We receive our blessings, however, through the tribe mentioned in our patriarchal blessing.

Israel’s Civil War

For the longest time, the children of Jacob were disobedient to the Lord “for they have turned their back unto me, and not their face” (Jeremiah 2:27b). The Lord even reminds them of the broken Abrahamic covenant: “But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and *I will be your God*, and *ye shall be my people*: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels *and* in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward. Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending *them*: Yet

⁴ Merriam-Webster, I. (2003). Merriam-Webster’s collegiate dictionary. (Eleventh ed.). Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc.

they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers (Jeremiah 7:23–26, emphasis added).

Likewise, in the Psalms: “Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I am God, even thy God” (Psalm 50:7).

At the time of King David’s grandson, that of King Rehoboam, Israel was split in two by a civil war. This sad turn of events was a result of the iniquity that existed from the very top down, from king to dignitary, from the common man to the false prophet. In the words of Isaiah, “Therefore the LORD will cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush, in one day. The ancient and honourable, he is the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail” (ISAIAH 9:14-15).

The story of the actual split is fascinating. Jeroboam came to King Rehoboam and demanded better treatment on behalf of the northern ten tribes. Jeroboam said: “Thy father [i.e., King Solomon] made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee” (1 Kings 12:4).

King Rehoboam acted wisely in asking for three days to think things over and give a proper response. He first sought the advice of the older men. They provided wise counsel: “If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever” (1 Kings 12:7).

Rehoboam forsook the advice of the older men for those of his younger contemporaries. The latter advised that he speak to the people roughly, saying: “My little finger shall be thicker than my father’s loins. And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions” (1 Kings 12:10b–11). Some have suggested that scorpions were whips with sharp flesh-tearing objects embedded in them.

The forceful answer was disastrous: “So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David” (1 Kings 12:16a).

Thus, the united nation composed of twelve tribes ceased to be. The ten tribes to the north were now governed by King Jeroboam, and they retained the title of Israel. They were also known by their most prominent tribe, *Ephraim*, as well as by their capital, Samaria (according to Rabbi Ibn Ezra, another reason for this honor is that **Jeroboam**, its first king, was an Ephraimite).

Meanwhile, King **Rehoboam** was able to retain of the remaining two tribes (Judah and Benjamin and part of

Levi). They were referred to by the name of *Judah*, their most preeminent tribe, and sometimes by *Jerusalem*, their capital. A hatred and jealousy developed between the northern and southern tribes.

In ISAIAH 9:21, we read of the hatred felt by the north for Judah, as well as the internal squabbles between Ephraim and Manasseh. Truly Ephraim hated Manasseh and Manasseh, Ephraim. Both hated Judah and Judah hated them back. The outlook was bleak, to be sure.

Jehovah rejected as King

The downward spiral could be traced to an earlier time. Saul was made king over the twelve tribes during the times of the judges, because the children of Jacob rejected Jehovah as her King in preference for an earthly sovereign. The people wanted to be like all the nations who surrounded them.

Samuel the Prophet felt rejected by the children of Israel in this thing. The Lord permitted the people to have their agency: “And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee [i.e., give them the king that they think they want]: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them” (1 Samuel 8:7).

Why did Lehi and Ishmael live in Jerusalem?

While both nations did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, at first the Ephraimites (northern ten tribes) were much more evil than Judah (southern two tribes). Jeroboam, King of Ephraim, built a false altar and ordained a false priesthood (1 Kings 12:26–31).

Both Lehi and Ishmael belonged to the northern tribes of Israel yet they lived along with the tribes of Judah in Jerusalem. As we said, Lehi’s family heritage was of the tribe of Manasseh (Alma 10:3) while Ishmael’s was of the tribe of Ephraim (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 1:141).

Why is it that they were living in Jerusalem among Judah and Benjamin?

The most righteous who lived within the territories of Ephraim began to migrate south to Jerusalem, and thus we read: “Out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the LORD God of their fathers” (2 Chronicles 11:16b).

We likewise read: “Nevertheless divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem” (2 Chronicles 30:11).

Also, we read: “And in Jerusalem dwelt of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, and of the children of Ephraim, and Manasseh” (1 Chronicles 9:3).

The Bible, then, gives us a very good reason why Lehi and Ishmael were found in Jerusalem. The exodus of the righteous down to Judah left Ephraim (speaking of the ten tribes) in an even more idolatrous state.

Hosea Principle

Among the prophets sent to warn Ephraim (northern tribes), was Hosea. The Prophet Hosea was asked to call his son **לֹא אֲמִי** *Lo-ammi* (**לֹא**, Lo, not; **אֲמִי**, am, people, ammi, my people): “Then said God, Call his name **Loammi**: for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God” (Hosea 1:9).

Mark the words, “for ye are *not my people*, and I will *not be your God*.” This theological ellipsis takes us back to *Rain in Due Season*, and the promise that the Lord would honor our covenant keeping by making us His people and be our God. But now the Lord is telling us that He is withdrawing because the children of Jacob broke the covenant. As much as the original promise makes me full of joy, these words are like a painful sword cutting through me.

There is good news, however, as not all is lost. In the very next paragraph the Lord tells us that in the last days, after the blessings and cursing had taken place (all of this elliptical), the Abrahamic Covenant would once again be instituted:

“Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, *that* in the place where it was said unto them, Ye *are* not my people, *there* it shall be said unto them, Ye *are* the sons of the living God” (Hosea 1:10).

I call it the *Hosea Principle*. Any time that the Lord speaks with strong admonition, it is followed by His **tender mercies** [רַחֲמֵי].

Christ taught His disciples to follow this very approach, “... showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reproved” (D&C 121:43b). The Savior repeatedly gives us the example in the scriptures.

The Lord reprimands: “They were slow to hearken unto the voice of the Lord their God; therefore, the Lord their God is slow to hearken unto their prayers, to answer them in the day of their trouble. In the day of their peace they esteemed lightly my counsel; but, in the day of their trouble, of necessity they feel after me” (D&C 101:7–8). This admonition is followed by a very tender: “Verily I say unto you, notwithstanding their sins, my bowels are filled with compassion towards them. I will not utterly cast them off; and in the day of wrath I will remember mercy” (D&C 101:9).

We might say with Alma, “My soul was filled with joy as exceeding as was my pain!” (Alma 36:20b).

The day would come when once more the Lord would say, “Ye are the sons of the living God.”

Scattering of Israel & Judah: Aholah & Aholibah

Ezekiel speaks of Ephraim and Judah as two wicked sisters, competing to outdo each other. He calls Samaria (capital of Ephraim) Aholah, and Jerusalem (capital of Judah), Aholibah (Ezekiel 23:4 ff.).

Ephraim was now at the verge of being taken captive by Assyria and being scattered all over Europe, Asia and Africa. These individuals would not be returning to the Holy Land but would be scattered all over. They would come to be called the *Lost Tribes*.

So it is that we read that “In the days of Pekah king of Israel came Tiglathpileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abelbethmaachah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria (2 Kings 15:29).

Judah’s capture by Babylonia would follow about 120 years later and last for seven decades. Much of Judah would remain in Babylon and yet a remnant would return to the Holy Land. The promised Messiah would be born from within this returning remnant of the tribe of Judah, even Jesus Christ.

Of the Babylonian captivity of Judah we read: “The cities of the south shall be shut up, and none shall open *them*: Judah shall be carried away captive all of it, it shall be wholly carried away captive” (Jeremiah 13:19).

These scriptures in 2 Kings and Jeremiah are accompanied by many others. These events took place over a number of years.

After Christ’s death, Judah continued to be scattered, yet she was in part able to retain her national identity. Many of Judah—like her sister Ephraim—have lost their identity, however.

From the Book of Mormon, we read that there is a portion of the Lost Tribes who have also kept a record (2 Nephi 29:12–13): one which we will have in due course of time.

Lehi’s family escaped Jerusalem just before Judah was taken captive, and with the help of God, made sea vessels to travel to the American continent.

One way or the other, then, the children of Jacob were scattered to every continent, island of the sea, and corner of the earth. Her blood would be mingled with those of all the people upon the earth.

In Genesis 22:18a Abraham was told: “And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” One of the ways this would take place is that Israel’s blood would run through all the nations.

Early Patriarchal Blessings

The Holy Scriptures contain the patriarchal blessings of Joseph, as well as those of his brothers. We find a very important portion of Joseph's patriarchal blessing in Genesis 49:22–26. Much less often, do we speak of his blessings given by Moses and found in Deuteronomy 33:13–17. I wish to quote the last of these verses: "His glory *is like* the firstling of his bullock, and his horns *are like* the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they *are* the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they *are* the thousands of Manasseh" (Deuteronomy 33:17).

These horns were to be used to gather Israel from all the nations of the earth. One Elder who served in Llanquihue, Chile, and with whom I shared these thoughts added, "Yes, one horn represents Ephraim and the other Manasseh."

It would be the thousands of Manasseh and the ten thousands of Ephraim who would begin this great work. Certainly, with time, missionaries from all of the tribes would be united in this effort. And the work of gathering is taking place on both sides of the veil.

Blessings for Ishmael

The Lord, in his great love, will not leave anyone unbled. We are told that Ishmael, Isaac's half-brother, would not be left without a blessing: "And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac ..." (Genesis 17:20–21a).

Writing to your posterity

If you were given an opportunity to write a letter to your great, great grandchildren and share your testimony of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ—at a time when they had lost knowledge of Him—would not that be wonderful? And would not that be even more wonderful if your readers would be blessed with the Holy Ghost to know of the truthfulness of your testimony? In essence, this is what the Book of Mormon is to the Lamanite nations. But this book is not just a blessing to those of Lamanite heritage, but to the whole world, to all the nations, to both the Jew and the Gentile nations—for the convincing of all that Jesus is the Christ.

Prophets speak of the gathering

The Jews, as we have said, divide the Holy Scriptures or Tanakh (תנ"ך) into three discrete categories: The *Law*, the *Prophets*, and the *Writings*.

The Prophets, נביאים or NEVI'IM, are full of allusions, especially to the Law or Torah, תורה.

Both the law and the prophets particularly testified of Christ. When the Lord visited the American continent He said: "And this is the law and the prophets, for they truly testified of me" (3 Nephi 15:10b). The Prophetic books are particularly important in this respect:

"Verily I say unto you, yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have testified of me. And behold, ye are the children of the prophets; and ye are of the house of Israel; and ye are of the covenant which the Father made with your fathers, saying unto Abraham: And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed" (3 Nephi 20:24–25).

"And whosoever will hearken unto my words and repenteth and is baptized, the same shall be saved. Search the prophets, for many there be that testify of these things" (3 Nephi 23:5).

"AND now, behold, I say unto you, that ye ought to search these things. Yea, a commandment I give unto you that ye search these things diligently; for great are the words of Isaiah. For surely he spake *as touching all things concerning my people which are of the house of Israel*; therefore it must needs be that he must speak also to the Gentiles (3 Nephi 23:1–2, emphasis added).

ISAIAH 18

There are a number of chapters in Isaiah that speak of the Book of Mormon, and we shall see in more detail as we enter our study. One of them is ISAIAH 18:7. We read of ambassadors of truth that have a great work to perform:

"In that time shall the present be brought unto the Lord of hosts." The *present* that is brought to the Lord are the converts from the twelve tribes of Israel.

"Of a people scattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled." These people who have been scattered and peeled, or removed from their land, are the children of Israel.

"To the place of the name of the Lord of hosts, the mount Zion." This place, clearly, is the House of the Lord, even the Temple of our God. Mount Zion stands for the Temple Mount in Jerusalem—and by extension, probably all the temples.

One of the greatest gifts we can give the Lord is to share His word with others and help others come unto Christ. Just as a baptism without confirmation is not complete, missionary work is not completed until the converts partake of the ordinances of salvation in the House of the Lord. Of course, each person has to also endure to the end in righteous living.

A vital part of the gathering of Israel, then, is to help people go to the temple, and as the Prophet Joseph Smith said in our opening quote, to “prepare them for the ordinances and endowments, washings and anointings” (HC 5:422).

Your God, My People

There are multiple references throughout the Holy Scriptures where the Lord reminds His people Israel of the Abrahamic covenant which was reiterated in *Rain in Due Season* and elsewhere. Here are but a few examples. In each of these cases it can be assumed that the readers of the scriptures were intimately aware of the theological ellipsis involved:

“And I will take you *to me for a people*, and I will be *to you a God*: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians” (Exodus 6:7, emphasis added).

Speaking of a day to come: “But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and *will be their God*, and *they shall be my people*” (Jeremiah 31:33, emphasis added).

“That the house of Israel may go no more astray from me, neither be polluted any more with all their transgressions; but that they may *be my people*, and I *may be their God*, saith the Lord GOD” (Ezekiel 14:11, emphasis added).

“And ye shall know that I *am* in the midst of Israel, and *that I am* the LORD your God, and none else: and *my people* shall never be ashamed. And it shall come to pass afterward, *that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh*; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions” (Joel 2:27–28, emphasis added).

“And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they *shall be my people*, and I *will be their God*, in truth and in righteousness” (Zechariah 8:8, emphasis added).

Allusion is made to other portions of the *Rain in Due Season* scriptures, also. For instance, in Daniel 9:7–11, we read Daniel’s acknowledgement that the children of Jacob had failed to keep the covenant and had thus suffered the promised consequences or curses:

“O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee. O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned

against thee. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him; Neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore *the curse is poured upon us*, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him” (Daniel 9:7–11, emphasis added).

Ezekiel 36

I find Ezekiel 36:16 ff. particularly interesting, because it is as if the Lord is reminding the children of Jacob about *Rain in Due Season* before speaking about the vital role to be played by the Book of Mormon in helping to gather Israel from every corner of the globe: a role which is again spoken off in ISAIAH 66, and elsewhere.

“Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man” (Ezekiel 36:16–17a). The Lord shares His titles with His servants. The Savior is the SON OF MAN, for His Father is the MAN OF HOLINESS (Moses 6:57; 7:35). “When the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way and by their doings: their way was before me as the uncleanness of a removed woman” (Ezekiel 36:17b). In other words, the Lord is telling them that they did not keep the covenant.

“Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols *wherewith* they had polluted it: And I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them” (Ezekiel 36:18–19). Because of Israel’s apostasy, she was scattered as promised.

“And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I *am* the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land” (Ezekiel 36:23–24). The Lord is here speaking of the gathering that would come to pass after the blessings and cursing as mentioned in Deuteronomy 30:1–6, *Rain in Due Season*.

Numerous spiritual blessings are enumerated next: “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean [compare to the temple ordinance in Numbers: ‘And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purifying upon them’ (Numbers 8:7a)]: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and

a new spirit will I put within you [possibly an allusion to being confirmed and the reception of the Holy Ghost—GB] : *and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh*, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do *them*” (Ezekiel 36:25–27).

Among the promised blessings will be a return to the lands consecrated to Israel, including the Holy Land, “And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be *my people*, and I will be *your God*” (Ezekiel 36:28, emphasis added).

In the next verses the Lord touches upon other promises made in *Rain in Due Season*, such as crops instead of famine, the reconstruction of the waste places, etc.

The promised Book of Mormon

We finally come to the glorious punchline. How will Israel be gathered in fulfillment of the many promises made in *Rain in Due Season* and elsewhere in the Jewish Bible? Let us move on to Ezekiel 37:15, an often quoted scripture which I hope we will better understand.

“The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, Moreover, thou son of man” (Ezekiel 37:15–16a). Once again, the Lord shares His own title with Ezekiel. “Take thee one stick, and write upon it” (Ezekiel 37:16b). The prophets of God were often asked to act out the prophetic word: for instance, by cooking on cow dung (Ezekiel 4:12, 15); going ‘naked’ or wearing only the undergarments (ISAIAH 20:3); burying a sash or girdle in the river (Jeremiah 13:4) and so on.

Now the Prophet Ezekiel is asked to take a stick, or rather, a piece of wood, and literally write upon it. The word עֵץ translated as stick in our KJV, means tree, or in this context, rather, wood (Gesenius, BDB, HALOT) or tablet {Targum (ט)}.

The LHI Bible (see also 1587 Geneva Bible) translates the word עֵץ as “[a piece of] wood.” In the Targum of Ezekiel the meaning is even clearer, “take one tablet [לִיטָא] and engrave upon it” {Targum Jonathan to the Prophets (ט)}.

It is clear that we have a piece of writing material here, whether wood, metal, or something else. So, “take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions” (Ezekiel 37:16b) is to symbolize that most precious book that would come down to us through Judah, the Holy Bible.

Judah, here, stands for the southern kingdom, or the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, called Judah for the prominent role of that tribe. *His companions* makes it clear that it was not to be for Judah alone, but Judah, Benjamin, and Levi, and eventually, all of Israel.

“Then take another stick [עֵץ, or once again, tablet in the Targum (ט), לִיטָא], and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and for all the house of Israel his companions” (Ezekiel 37:16c).

Beside the Bible we have another book that would be engraved, one that would proceed from Joseph—or *Ephraim*. His companions expands the importance of this book beyond the literal tribe of Ephraim to all of the northern tribes of Israel, and eventually, to the two and a half tribes of the south, named after Judah.

This is the second priceless book mentioned, the Book of Mormon. “And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand” (Ezekiel 37:17). This second book comes with a blessing so powerful, that all who read from its pages—and ask God the Eternal Father in the name of Christ about its truthfulness—will *know* it is from God.

These two books, the Bible and the Book of Mormon would become as one witness. Yes, these two engraved holy books would also come to be carried together. When I joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the 1970s people literally carried these books together, in one hand.

The time will come—and is already here—when electronic versions of these books will replace the physical copies. People in future days may not understand this scripture unless they understand the cultural ellipsis, that people in the old days actually *carried books in their hands*. People who have everything in an electronic or virtual version will need to be told that in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries people carried actual physical copies of these books, the Holy Bible and the Book of Mormon, joined together, in their hands.

When the missionaries introduce the Book of Mormon, they are often asked, “Why do we need another book beside the Bible?” We recognize both the question and the answer here in Ezekiel. “And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not shew us what thou *meanest* by these?” (Ezekiel 37:18). What they are really asking is, once again, “Two books?” The Lord answers through Ezekiel, “Yes, indeed, two books joined together and supporting of each other: two books that do not contradict each other: two united witnesses.”

Note the expression בְּנֵי עַמֶּךָ, the *children of thy people*. This is because the Book of Mormon will be taken to the literal children of Israel—both Ephraim and Judah. Can you feel the increasing thrill of the narrative?

The answer comes in a further repetition of what has already been said. “Oh yes, indeed, you heard correctly. There will be two books: one written by Judah; the other by Ephraim!”

“Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which *is* in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, *even* with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one **in mine hand** (יָדִי)” (Ezekiel 37:19). In whose hand shall these two books be? In the hands of the Lord, for He shall use these as instruments for the gathering of His people, as we shall see.

“And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes” (Ezekiel 37:20). The prophet Ezekiel is commanded to carry these two tablets made out of wood before the people—in representation of these two books that would come forth, the Bible and the Book of Mormon.

The idea is that the people around the Prophet Ezekiel would ask him the meaning of his walking around with two pieces of wood pressed against each other in his hand. The very question, as we saw above, was prophetic of the inquiry in the mouth of those who would listen to the missionaries in the latter days and ask “why do we need two Bibles?”

I have friends and scholars who belong to other churches and they recognize that the Bible can be interpreted in multiple ways. The Prophet Joseph Smith wanted to know which Church was right but concluded that “... the teachers of religion of the different sects understood the same passages of scripture so differently as to destroy all confidence in settling the question by an appeal to the Bible” (JS-History 1:12).

Now we come to the triumphant message, the thrilling message of the Hebrew Bible. Throughout the Holy Scriptures the Lord has promised that He would gather Israel in the latter days. Now the Holy One of Israel is telling us that the gathering will take place through these two books.

These records are the means whereby Israel will be gathered from among all the nations. Both of them are full of wonderful promises to the children of Jacob. The very purpose of the Book of Mormon, as explained by the ancient prophet who inscribed its title page, is for “the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that JESUS is the CHRIST.”

That is also the very message of the Bible even if it has been transmitted to us in an imperfect form. The Prophet Joseph Smith explained, “I believe the Bible as it read when it came from the pen of the original writers. Ignorant translators, careless transcribers, or designing and corrupt priests have committed many errors” (DHC, 6:57).⁵ These two records—or at the mouth of two witnesses—testify of Christ and of His divinity.

The coming forth of the Book of Mormon, intended to work in unison with the Bible, would indicate that the gathering of Israel was about to begin. Elder M. Russell Ballard taught: “I love the Bible, its teachings, its lessons, and its spirit. I love the Old Testament’s compelling, profound stories and its great prophets testifying of the coming of Christ. I love the New Testament’s apostolic travels and miracles and the letters of Paul. Most of all, I love its eyewitness accounts of the words and the example and the Atonement of our Savior Jesus Christ. I love the perspective and peace that come from reading the Bible... Brothers and sisters, I am sure many of you have had the experience of hearing people say that ‘Mormons are not Christians because they have their own Bible, the Book of Mormon.’ To anyone harboring this misconception, we say that we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and the author of our salvation and that we believe, revere, and love the Holy Bible. We do have additional sacred scripture, including the Book of Mormon, but it supports the Bible, never substituting for it. We love the Bible and other scriptures. That may be surprising to some who may not be aware of our belief in the Bible as the revealed word of God. It is one of the pillars of our faith, a powerful witness of the Savior and of Christ’s ongoing influence in the lives of those who worship and follow Him. The more we read and study the Bible and its teachings, the more clearly we see the doctrinal underpinnings of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ... Those who join this Church do not give up their faith in the Bible—they strengthen it. The Book of Mormon does not dilute nor diminish nor de-emphasize the Bible. On the contrary, it expands, extends, and exalts it. The Book of Mormon testifies of the Bible, and both testify of Christ... I bear solemn witness that we are true and full believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and in His revealed word through the Holy Bible. We not only believe the Bible—we strive to follow its precepts and to teach its message. The message of our missionaries is Christ and His gospel and His Atonement, and the scriptures are the text of that message.”⁶

The resurrected Lord spoke to a remnant of Joseph in the American continent: “Ye remember that I spake unto you, and said that when the words of Isaiah should be fulfilled—behold they are written, ye have them before you, therefore search them—And verily, verily, I say unto you, that when they shall be fulfilled then is the fulfilling of the covenant which the Father hath made unto his people, O house of Israel. And then shall the remnants, which shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth, be gathered in from the east and from the west, and from the south and from the north; and

⁵ Robert J. Matthews, “Joseph Smith’s Inspired Translation of the Bible.” December 1972 *Ensign*.

⁶ Ballard, M. Russell. The Miracle of the Holy Bible. April 2007 General Conference.

they shall be brought to the knowledge of the Lord their God, who hath redeemed them” (3 Nephi 20:11–13).

Furthermore we read: “And I will remember the covenant which I have made with my people [i.e., all of Israel]; and I have covenanted with them that I would gather them together in mine own due time, that I would give unto them again the land of their fathers for their inheritance, which is the land of Jerusalem [for the tribes of Judah], which is the promised land unto them forever, saith the Father” (3 Nephi 20:29).

Here in Ezekiel, the Holy One of Israel ties the gathering, the Book of Mormon and Holy Bible together. These concepts are joined as closely as Ezekiel was to carry the two pieces of wood in his hand, in representation of these future books.

“And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen [הַגִּוִּים], whither they be gone.” As we said earlier, the heathen, הַגִּוִּים can also be translated as the nations [הַגִּוִּים].

The scattering and gathering among the nations is the same as that which is mentioned in *Rain in Due Season*: “And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations [הַגִּוִּים], whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee (Deuteronomy 30:1).

In *Rain in Due Season*, right after this verse, the Lord speaks of gathering Israel from among the nations, “... then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations [הַגִּוִּים], whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee.”

Here, however, the word nations is a translated from a Hebrew synonym, literally, “gather thee from all the peoples [הַעַמִּים].” The Lord is speaking of gathering and fetching Israel back.

“And will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land” (Ezekiel 37:21b). Such words reaffirm what has already been promised, that the Lord would gather Israel from every quarter of the earth and bring them back to the Promised Land. Judah would be especially brought back to the Holy Land, the land of Israel; Ephraim and Manasseh, the children of Joseph, would be especially brought back to Zion, both North and South America. [The word Zion has numerous meanings, depending on the context, and includes Zion in America as well as Zion in representation of Israel.]

The enmity between the tribes of Israel will cease and shall once again become one nation. “And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel” (Ezekiel 37:22). Instead of being divided, as

they were after the civil war,⁷ where Ephraim and Manasseh hated each other, and where both hated Judah and Judah hated them back, there would be great unity between the tribes. Is this not the case in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints today? There is great love between Ephraim and Manasseh and between these tribes and Judah. Not only is there a great abiding love between all the tribes, but also toward the children of Ishmael and to the whole world.

And Messiah their King

“And one king shall be king to them all” (Ezekiel 37:22b). Israel’s true King had been rejected and Saul had been called to be king. At that time Israel had a human king just like all the surrounding nations. The civil war brought two kingdoms and two kings, the kings of Judah in the south, and the kings of Ephraim in the north.

Christ would now once again be Israel’s King and the King of all the nations. “And they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all” (Ezekiel 37:22b).

The next verse speaks of the grace that would be poured upon the children of Jacob, so that they would be able to combat sin and be cleansed and saved through the expiatory sacrifice of the Messiah.

“Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwellingplaces, wherein they have sinned” (Ezekiel 37:23). Through the cleansing of baptism and the unspeakable gift of the Holy Ghost, the Lord has blessed the children of Israel with much strength. His Grace is sufficient for all those who wish to be His disciples.

Note here a spiritual gathering from the “dwelling places wherein they have sinned.” Not only are the children of Israel gathered from every corner under the heavens, but they are gathered away from idolatry and every manner of sin, invited to leave spiritual Babylon and come to spiritual Zion, regardless of where they live.

And now the words which all who have embraced the Gospel of Jesus Christ have been waiting for, the Holy One of Israel says to all His disciples: “And will cleanse them: so shall they be *my people*, and *I will be their God*” (Ezekiel 37:23b, emphasis added, and see also Ezekiel 36:25–27). Note the baptismal cleansing that takes place before the gift of the Holy Ghost is imparted, wherein the Holy Ghost can become our

⁷ I often speak on this subject, and at a fireside yesterday, at the Alerce Ward, Puerto Montt Stake, Sister Marisol Cornejo de San Martín wisely suggested that these mountains themselves also represent the temples of the Lord, where perfect harmony is expected of those who enter therein. 12 June 2017.

constant companion and we can feel that the Lord is truly our God and we are His people. Is this not at least one way in which the promise is fulfilled wherein the Lord walks among us? We can then be cleansed by the Holy Spirit of Promise as we become partakers of the Abrahamic covenant. Do you hear the invitation, oh Israel?

This refers to the principal theological ellipsis we have been speaking off throughout this paper. The person who is familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures will immediately make the connection with the Scriptures which speak about the great blessings and cursing that was to come upon the children of Israel as a result of their obedience or disobedience.

“And David my servant *shall be* king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them” (Ezekiel 37:24). David is here put for one of the many titles of our Lord Jesus Christ.

When we read of this *second David*, we know at once it refers to no ordinary man, but to the Messiah. In Jeremiah we read, “In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land (Jeremiah 33:15, see also 23:5). Furthermore, “But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them” (Jeremiah 30:9); “And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken it” (Ezekiel 34:23); “Afterward shall the children of Israel return (שָׁבוּ), and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days” (Hosea 3:5). This שָׁבוּ is not only a physical one, but a spiritual one in which people return to the Lord.

Why David? King David of old was the first, after Moses and Joshua, to bring the hearts of all the tribes together knit as one. More importantly, of the Davidic line would be born Messiah. Jesus the Christ was often called, “Son of David.” All of these references to a latter-day David who would reign over Israel, then, are allusions to Messiah.

“And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children’s children for ever: and my servant David *shall be* their prince for ever” (Ezekiel 37:25).

So this wonderful promise is repeated, the children of Israel would be restored to their promised lands and they would have the Holy One of Israel or the Holy Messiah, the very Son of God, to be their Prince and their King.

The land spoken of here is the land of Israel, of course. But the land of Israel shall “be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants” (ISAIAH 49:19b). In addition, the Lord would give to Joseph another choice land, in the “everlasting hills” that would be found “over the wall” or the ocean, even the American continent (see Joseph’s patriarchal blessing, Genesis 49:22–26).

Other prophets also bear witness of the same gathering: “Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and *they shall be my people*, and *I will be their God*, in truth and in righteousness” (Zechariah 8:7–8, emphasis added).

It is the thousands of Manasseh and ten thousands of Ephraim who will have the great blessing and responsibility for beginning the process of gathering the rest of the tribes, including Judah. In ISAIAH 18 and 66 we will read in great detail how missionaries will leave the American continent and help gather Israel and Judah back to the land of Israel and back to the temple: “In that time shall the present be brought unto the LORD of hosts of a people scattered and peeled [i.e., scattered and removed], and from a people terrible from their beginning [i.e., this is what Israel was called by the surrounding nations after its return from Egypt] hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled [i.e., a reference to armies that invaded Israel, e.g., see ISAIAH 8:7–8], to the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, the mount Zion [i.e., here a reference to the temple and to *the land of Israel*]” (ISAIAH 18:7).

“Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them” (Ezekiel 34:23). The word *peace* (שָׁלוֹם) is an interesting one. Peace, in Hebrew, means much more than the cessation of war. Among its meanings the idea of salvation is included. So it is that through the Holy Ghost we can be filled with calm and peace and joy, but that is not all, we are lead through this covenant to the way of salvation and eternal lives.

“It shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them” (Ezekiel 37:26b). In the last days the Lord would establish His Church for the last time. It would never fall, as a Church, into apostasy. It would be the last dispensation, or the dispensation of the fullness of times.

“And will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them” (Ezekiel 37:26b–27a).

The Holy One of Israel would establish the House of the Lord, His temple, among the people so that when this gift of a converted scattered Israel would be gathered, they could enter the House of the Lord to make special covenants there.

“Yea, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people*” (Ezekiel 37:27b). This is a double blessing, a sure blessing—one that is repeated twice in these verses.

“And the heathen [or the nations] shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore [לְעוֹלָם]” (Ezekiel 37:28). Once again, the House of the Lord is mentioned and a promise that the Church would not fall away, ever, לְעוֹלָם.

All of the nations shall know that Israel was not discarded by Her Lord, “And the heathen shall know that I the LORD do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.” So, “In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established” (2 Corinthians 13:1). The witness of the Book of Mormon loudly proclaims the divinity of the Savior, and help us better understand many of the promises found in the Bible.

Amidst a world who is attacking the divinity of our Lord, I came across this wonderful quote from Assistant Professor of Ancient Scripture, Shon D. Hopkin, of Brigham Young University, “There is no space in the Book of Mormon for any debate over His identity. He is the Son of God; He is the Savior of the world.”⁸

I cherish my testimony of God, the Eternal Father, and His beloved Son, even Jesus Christ, above all things. It is the Book of Mormon that led me to this testimony. With the Psalmist I exclaim: “Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever (לְעוֹלָם)” (Psalm 106:1).

I was gathered by the Book of Mormon⁹

I was born in Chile in 1954. My parental grandfather was a Lithuanian Jew and my grandmother a German Jew. My mother’s side of the family is Chilean. I was raised Catholic. When I was about thirteen, our religion teacher at Saint George’s College¹⁰ in Santiago taught us that the Trinity was a mystery; that the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit were one and three in a way that could not be explained. In fact, she explained that it would be easier to empty

the Pacific Ocean with a bucket, into the sand by the beach, than to understand this great mystery.

As I rode the trolley bus on the way home, I was inspired by the Holy Ghost whose words came to me something like this: “It is really a simple thing: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are three distinct beings but one in purpose.” While I was still thinking about what all this meant, I saw myself at home, asking my Father for permission to go to the farm in San Javier (then about five hours south of Santiago by train) for the long weekend. While my parents always gave permission, on this occasion my father explained that I could not go and gave several reasons. Then he invited me to ask my mother if I did not like his answer. I turned around to do exactly that, to go and ask my mother, and remembered that she had given me the same answer and invited me to ask my father if I was not satisfied with her response. It was made clear to me, that just as my parents were two distinct individuals yet one in purpose, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost were one in perfect purpose and unity.

I was so excited I could not wait to share my newly gained knowledge with my parents. When I burst with my newly acquired news, my father had been sitting on a rocking chair and had been chatting with my mother while she was in her bed. “If I told you this was the greatest blasphemy against the Catholic Church, would you still say this?” he asked. As much as I looked up to my parents and did not want to offend them I could not deny what I had felt. Later I came to know that I had received a witness from the Holy Ghost. Some of the words that came to me were the same as those expressed by the Prophet Joseph Smith when he said he could not deny that which was of God. So much so, that when years later I read the Joseph Smith account of the first vision, my first reaction was, “He copied me!” No sooner had this thought crossed my mind, I realized that the Prophet had lived over a century before.

In 1970, when I was fifteen, a religion teacher gave us an assignment to write about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Our school was being bought by the Mormons and we were moving to another location in Santiago. This American priest told us, “You Chileans think that the only church is the Catholic Church.” Even though I had once accompanied my father to a synagogue in New York, I thought to myself, “Yes, of course.” “Well,” the Priest continued: “I want each of you to write a report on the Mormons.”

I told my father about this report. He said that I was in luck as the LDS Mission Home was only two blocks from our home. But, he warned, “Be careful, they will try and convert you.” The Elder who answered the door was polite, but to my surprise had me wait outside and did not preach the Gospel to me (later, I found out that it was because of my young age and the

⁸ R. Scott Lloyd, “Sperry Symposium speaker: Book of Mormon written ‘to the convincing of Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ.’” Sidney B. Sperry Symposium (24 October 2015). *Deseret News*, Faith, 12 November 2015.

⁹ See my Mormon.org profile, <http://www.mormon.org/me/G5Y8> and <http://www.mormon.org/spa/me/G5Y8> (English and Spanish, respectively); as well as *On Sacred Ground*, February 1993 Liahona <https://www.lds.org/liahona/1993/02/on-sacred-ground?lang=eng> and January 1992 Ensign: <https://www.lds.org/ensign/1992/01/mormon-journal/on-sacred-ground?lang=eng>.

¹⁰ I attended this school from first grade in Elementary School to tenth grade in High School, in Santiago.

Church's desire not to split families). The Elder soon returned and gave me some nice magazines with photographs, as well as a book. I cut and pasted the photos and wrote a report. I also opened the book but I found it less interesting as it was mostly print matter with little art or photos.

I finished the report and turned it in. To my surprise the Catholic Priest announced to the whole class—in a bitter voice—that because I had done such a good job on the report that I would get a 7 (perfect score in Chile, where 4 is passing) and the rest of the class would get no more than a 5. When I got back home I discarded the magazines and was about to do the same with the book, but I felt prompted to open it one more time.

At that time the Book of Mormon paperbacks had the Angel Moroni on the cover and the promise from Moroni 10:4–5 inscribed in the first inside page. I read: “And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost. And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things.”

As I read these words I was filled with the Spirit of the Holy Ghost. I instantly knew it was the Holy Ghost that was testifying to me of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. The warmest and sweetest feeling overcame me, and enveloped me from the top of my head to the bottom of my feet. Sadly, my reaction was, “But I don't want to be religious.” I really did not comprehend the joy of discipleship. I had a stony heart.

This episode was one of my last memories in Chile before my whole life would be thrown into chaos. Salvador Allende was elected president of Chile and shortly thereafter and my father, as an American born Jew, did not feel we could stay in Chile. Years later I found out that my father's first choice was to go to Portugal but we ended up going to the USA because he could not find a flight to Portugal.

We settled in New Canaan, Connecticut, and after finishing High School I moved to California, to study agriculture. At the University of California, Davis, I met an interesting Latter-day Saint student, Randy Homrig. He gave me another copy of the Book of Mormon which I filed along with my many books. I remember not agreeing with anything Randy had to say—except when he spoke about the Church. Then, the Spirit would bear witness of the truthfulness of my friend's comments.

During the Christmas vacation of my sophomore year (1973-1974) I returned to Connecticut to spend the holidays with my family. I packed my hand baggage with lots of dressage books (one of the equestrian disciplines). Then I added some textbooks in case I

would finish the horse books. As I was leaving my dormitory, out of the corner of my eye the Book of Mormon caught my eye as if to say, “Take me!” In my mind I thought, “Fine, if I read my horse books, and my textbooks, I will read the Book of Mormon and added it to my carryon handbag.

Once on the plane I pulled out a book, all excited with the prospect of reading about dressage. But the last would be first (Matthew 20:16). As I contemplated what seemed like a mistake, the Spirit said, “Read me!” After four days I finished the Book of Mormon.

My stony heart of three years earlier was softened in the process and I was filled with indescribable joy and a heart of flesh. At one point I felt the presence of the Savior and I imagined Him with outstretched arms beckoning me to come unto Him. His message was something to the effect that He would show me the truth of all things if I would become His disciple. But He also warned me that it would be better if I had never known Him than to follow for a while and then get bored of the Gospel. At that very moment I made the choice of following Christ. I was so thrilled that I ran into my brother Nicolás' room with the Book of Mormon in my hand, telling him this was a true book. My parents later told me that I scared my brother into being a good Catholic.

I called the Stake missionaries when I got back to California. I received the discussions from Randy Homrig and Phil On: two on Tuesday, two on Wednesday, and two on Friday. When they taught me the LDS view on the Godhead and I immediately consented, they exchanged surprised glances. I asked to be baptized, but was informed that I needed to first meet with the Branch President of the UCD Branch. President Hill asked me what my parents thought about my joining the Church. I told him that they had asked that I talk to a Catholic Priest. President Hill invited me to be obedient to my parent's request.

I made the appointment and the Catholic Priest told me that it was so obvious that I believed that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was true, that I was a hypocrite if I did not join the Church.

So, I was baptized and confirmed a member of the Church on 9 March 1974, at the age of 19. My parents returned to Chile soon after. My father went all over Chile saying that the worst thing that could have possibly happened had taken place, that his son had joined the Mormon Church. A year later he told me that he went back and told the same people that this was the best thing that ever happened, so big was the change for good that he saw in me.

My fiancée Linda Marsing and I were married in the Oakland Temple in 1976. And what happened to my school in Santiago, where I had been given the assignment to study about the LDS Church? There, today stands the Santiago, Chile Temple (it was

dedicated in 1983 and became the 24th operating temple).

I worked for the University of California for almost 34 years and my specialty was labor productivity and mediation of deep-seated interpersonal conflicts. I developed several models which I felt were inspired by the Lord. As an academic of the University of California and visiting Professor of the *Universidad de Chile*, I had many opportunities; including travel to speak in all continents save Antarctica. I suppose the penguins did not need any help in either labor productivity or *conflict management*. Linda and I had the opportunity to spend all three of my career Sabbaticals in Chile. After retiring in 2014, I was able to return back to Chile with Linda.

I have loved each one of my jobs and my life's work. I have been a dressage rider and instructor, an amateur radio operator, and a soccer referee. I have always loved the scriptures, but since about 1996 my love for the scriptures has occupied much of my free time.

It was while reading the Book of Mormon that I was prompted to turn to my Jewish roots and search Isaiah and the Hebrew Bible. I am slowly working on both my Biblical and Modern Hebrew skills. My wife and I love traveling together.

As I write this I can look out the window and see Lake Llanquihue and multiple snow covered volcanoes and a rainbow. I feel as if I live in the Garden of Eden. I can see the hand of the Lord and His **tender mercies** [חַסְדֵּי] and how they have blessed my life.

The Book of Mormon originally led me to Christ and to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. No book has had as great an impact for good in my life. Its positive influence has been on-going, most especially since I accepted President Ezra Taft Benson's 1986 challenge to sup daily from its pages.

Today, my most treasured possession is the knowledge that Jesus is the very Messiah that my Jewish ancestors had been waiting for; that Christ has restored His Church once again upon the earth. That it is through Christ that we can return once again to live with our Father in Heaven. As I read the Book of Mormon and see the promises made to my Lamanite ancestors, I am also filled with gratitude untold. I count myself as one who lived "unto the outmost parts of heaven" (Deuteronomy 30:4), when the Lord found me and gathered me. I found Christ while reading the Book of Mormon. God found me when I was not looking.

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Isaiah 1

The time period when Isaiah prophesied is laid out. The Lord established a covenant relationship with Israel, but Israel has not been dutiful. Disobedience led to disastrous consequences as spelled out in the Mosaic law (see *Rain in Due Season* scriptures). If it were not for the mercy of the Lord, Israel would have been entirely destroyed. Nevertheless, a remnant was preserved. The sons of Jacob were guilty of making an external show of piety, yet with no substance. Israel is commanded to repent, and invited to return to the covenant relationship with the Lord. Israel could then be purified by the Redeemer who assured her, “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” A lamentation is offered on the spiritual decay of Jerusalem and a better day of righteous restoration is seen to come at some future date. While the righteous will be purified, the wicked will be consumed. NOTE: Many commentators feel that ISAIAH 1 is a preface or prologue to the whole vision of Isaiah (e.g., Barnes, Delitzsch) and probably written later much like our D&C 1 which was received later by our prophet Joseph Smith (see Nyman).

v. 1. The timeline is given in which Isaiah prophesied.

1 ¶ THE vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, [and] Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

The vision of Isaiah. While the first chapter of Isaiah is considered the preface for the entire work, some consider the first verse to be the title of this preface. Calvin says: “So far as relates to the present passage, this word [vision] unquestionably denotes the certainty of the doctrine; as if it had been said that there is nothing contained in this book which was not made known to *Isaiah* by God himself. The derivation of the word, therefore, deserves attention; for we learn by it that the prophets did not speak of their own accord, or draw from their own imaginations, but that they were enlightened by God, who opened their eyes to perceive those things which otherwise they would not of themselves have been able to comprehend.” The word *vision* חֲזִיוֹן, then, implies a higher testimony of that which the prophet Isaiah saw and heard. The Chronicler uses such a title, “the vision of Isaiah the prophet” to refer to the book of Isaiah (2 Chronicles 32:32b). In the New Testament, the book of Isaiah is referred to as the book, words, prophecy or saying of *Esaias*. The *vision*, or what the prophet saw in vision: thus the word *seer*. In Samuel 9:9 we see this parenthetical explanation: “(Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to enquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer: for *he that is now called a Prophet was beforetime called a Seer.*)” Isaiah, then, *saw* as a prophet and seer to receive divine revelation. The name of the prophet Isaiah¹ in

Hebrew (יְשַׁעְיָהוּ²) is יְשַׁעְיָהוּ, or transliterated, it sounds like *Yeshayahu*. Yahu or Yah stands for Jehovah or *Yahweh* or *Yahve*, which would be pointed as יְהוָה (in order to avoid the profane use of the Lord’s name, some believe that the scribes pointed it so it would read as Jehovah rather than Yahweh, יְהוֹה), while *Yesha* (יֵשָׁע) means, among other significations, *salvation* and *deliverance*. This salvation is brought about by the Lord and can be both expiatory and redemptive as well as provide physical safety. In the Septuagint (6) the prophet is also called *Esaias*. In the Latin Vulgate (7) and its translation to English (Douay), *Isaias* (*Isaias* in Spanish). ¶ *Son of Amoz*, or ben Amotz (בֶּן-אֲמוֹץ). The prophet’s father should not be confused with the Prophet Amos (עָמוֹס). Rabbinic tradition makes Isaiah the nephew of King Amaziah (Seder Mo’ed, Megilah 10b; Seder Nashim, Sotah 10b) and thus a first cousin to Uzziah, giving him an unusual amount of protection for speaking out openly. ¶ *Which he saw*. The word *saw* has the same general significance as the word *vision*, both meaning to see as a prophet, to receive in revelation. ¶ *Concerning Judah and Jerusalem*. This is a summary statement, noting that the main emphasis of the prophecy would relate to the *southern kingdom* in the divided monarchy—that is, the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, as well as some of the most pious members

Hosea’s name in Hebrew is close to that of Isaiah, and essentially means *salvation*. Joshua (who lived at the time of Moses) was also at one time called Hosea (or, Oshea) until his name was changed to Joshua, thus adding the name of Jehovah, resulting in: the *Lord is our Salvation*. The message to Israel and Judah was that salvation could only come as a result of trusting in the Lord.

² יְשַׁעְיָהוּ, we will use this symbol to represent the Masoretic Text of the *Biblia Hebraica*. Generally, the unpointed versions were more ancient than the יְשַׁעְיָהוּ. This and other ancient version fonts, critical apparatus fonts, as well as Hebrew fonts, are copyrighted by SIL Fonts, for whom we extend a note of gratitude.

¹ The prophet Hosea had jurisdiction mainly over the northern kingdom, or Israel, and greatly overlapped in time with Isaiah.

of the northern tribes who immigrated southward.³ The southern kingdom was known by the name of its stronger tribe and its capital where the Temple was built, that is, *Judah* (יְהוּדָה), or Yehudah) and Jerusalem (יְרוּשָׁלַיִם or יְרוּשָׁלָם: Yirushalayim). Jerusalem, in Isaiah, takes on a melancholic tone, as she represents the very core of the covenant between the Lord and Israel. The Savior lamented: “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, [thou] that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not!” (Matthew 23:37). Jewish tradition suggests that Isaiah was among the martyrs, and that he was cut asunder with a wooden saw by Manasseh, king Hezekiah’s wicked son (not to be confused with Ephraim and Manasseh, sons of Joseph, grandchildren of Jacob). Isaiah was voice for the Lord in prophecies not only about Judah and Jerusalem, but also encompassing the northern ten tribes and the *goyim* (גוֹיִם), the *nations* or the *Gentiles*.⁴ The northern tribes were likewise known by their strongest tribe, *Ephraim*, but were also called *Israel*. (In order to avoid confusion, I will avoid using the word *Israel* to represent only the northern tribes.) The apostasy that took place in Ephraim was extreme, and immediate. As a result, they were the first to be carried off captive by the Assyrians. They soon lost their identity as a people and vanished to the world—but not to God—and thus came to be known as the *Lost Tribes* or the *ten lost tribes of Israel*. The apostasy that took place in Judah led to the Babylonian captivity over a century later,⁵ from whence there was a remnant who returned to the Holy Land. Judah’s removal would be longer after the promise had been fulfilled: “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be” (Genesis 49:13). The original split between the ten tribes and the two tribes took place after the death of King Solomon. ¶ *In the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, kings of Judah*. Isaiah served under all these kings of Judah.

vv. 2–9. Despite the Lord’s care, the children of Israel have apostatized. As a result Israel has been punished

³ Among the people who the Lord brought to the American continent with Lehi, where included those of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, not from those taken captive to the north, but from families who dwelt in Jerusalem.

⁴ These two definitions, of course, are not synonymous. They give the English translation a different meaning depending on which is used.

⁵ Both the Assyrian and the Babylonian captivities seem to have taken place in multiple waves. Some have suggested that 120 years passed after the Assyrian captivity and before the Babylonian. Others suggest about 135 years as the median time between both captivities. You may wish to consult a biblical timeline of events.

and would have been exterminated save for the desire of the Lord to preserve a remnant.

2 ¶ Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.

Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth. The heavens and the earth are here called as witnesses (cf. Deuteronomy 32:1 and D&C 76:1). Commentators often suggest that sometimes the writings of the prophets—such as Isaiah and Hosea—can best be understood when viewed in the context of a court or associated legal proceeding, where the Lord brings an accusation or *controversy* against His covenant people. But this is done in tenderness, and one can feel the Lord’s great love for His people Israel. It is always a tender call to *return* (שׁוּב) to God. This is an all-encompassing call to hearken, to pay attention. All are invited and none excluded. In D&C 1, also known as the *preface* to the Doctrine and Covenants, we have: “Hearken, O ye people of my church, saith the voice of him who dwells on high; and whose eyes are upon all men . . . For verily the voice of the Lord is unto all men, and there is none to escape; and there is no eye that shall not see, neither ear that shall not hear, neither heart that shall not be penetrated” (D&C 1:1a,2). ¶ *For the LORD hath spoken. The LORD*, that is, our Savior Jesus the Christ. In the Hebrew Holy Scriptures, it is written either as unpointed, that is, without the Masoretic (מ) points, יְהוָה, or pointed to facilitate the reading, יְהוֹהִי. It is composed of four Hebrew letters, YHVH, or JHVH, and thus called the *Tetragrammaton*. The points provide the vowels and facilitate the reading of the text. The Masoretes added these reading helps hundreds of years after the Holy Scriptures were given to us. יְהוָה is a sacred name: to the Jews, too sacred to pronounce. Instead, when reading the Hebrew text, they substitute the word Adonai (LORD). The Hebrew text (מ), when translated into English in the King James Version⁶ (KJV) is transmitted as follows: (1) **lord** (all in lower case, represents the word *adonai* אֲדֹנָי or *adon* אֲדֹנִי, or any other lord); (2) **Lord** (the first letter is capitalized when the word Adonai is used in Hebrew, but it refers to the Lord); and finally, (3) **LORD** (the word is in all capitals, when the Hebrew was Jehovah, יְהוָה). There is *no distinction* between lower case and capitalized words in Hebrew, however. The word

⁶ KJV is sometimes called the Authorized Version (AV).

Jehovah⁷ יהוה appears in the KJV only four times; two of these in Isaiah. The American Standard Version (ASV) of 1901, on the other hand, renders the word יהוה, as Jehovah, every time we have the word LORD in the KJV. So also in the Spanish LDS Reina Valera 2009, and most of the Spanish translations of the Bible, where the transliteration of יהוה is used throughout—*Jehová*. As latter-day saints we use Jehovah in hymns of praise and certainly modern day revelation includes that holy name. ¶ The word *spoken*, נִדְבַר, in this context, is a powerful, penetrating, piercing, and commanding call to hearken. Isaiah acts as voice, but it is the Lord himself who is making the invitation. The word of the Lord has an eternal nature to it, so time and space seem to be lost. Oh, what a privilege it is to listen to the words of the Lord, whether through Scripture, through the prophets, or through the Spirit of the Holy Ghost. “And whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost shall be scripture, shall be the will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation” (D&C 68:4). ¶ *I have nourished and brought up children*. There are no quotation marks used in the Hebrew or in the KJV, but if there were, opening quotations would begin here (e.g., see the ERV, HCSB,⁸ NASB and some others). The Lord has lovingly and carefully tended and taken care of the children of Jacob. We are at once reminded of the allegory of Zenos in the Book of Jacob. “For behold, thus saith the Lord, I will liken thee, O house of

Israel, like unto a tame olive-tree, which a man took and nourished in his vineyard ...” (Jacob 5:3a) Delitzsch’s translation, “I have brought up children and *raised them high*, and they have *fallen* away from me,” (emphasis added) brings out the poetical contrast between raising or lifting, and falling. The falling is related to the apostasy, that is, the *falling away*. The lifting means that the Lord did not just raise Israel, but by choosing her, He exalted her and set her apart to become a peculiar people. This meaning is certainly allowed by the Hebrew roots נָדַל and רָם (i.e., to *nourish*, to *bring up*). רָם־מָתִי also means *to exalt* (see note on ISAIAH 25:1). ¶ *And they have rebelled against me*. Despite all the love and care, they have fallen away. The olive tree vineyard “grew, and waxed old, and began to decay” (Jacob 5:3b). When the Lord refers to his children, He is speaking of the covenant relationship established with Israel.⁹ In this way, Yahweh is both the Father (of those who enter into the covenant) and the Son of Elohim.¹⁰

3 The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: [but] Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib. The ox (a castrated bull) and the ass are two domesticated farm animals well known by the Israelites and used even today in third world countries for agricultural work. The ox is a powerful but very slow animal. While sometimes bulls and cows are used instead of oxen, the ox is the most common. While the Hebrew word used here for *ox* (שׁוֹר) could also mean a bull, a cow, or a calf, most translate it as ox. The ass has a reputation for being stubborn. Many translations use donkey while others stick to ass, and both are the same animal (*equus asinus*). It seems that female asses were especially valued as a riding animal (see HBD). The Hebrew Scriptures (זוֹר) use חֲמֹר, utilized for a male ass. This type was probably of a reddish color (see HBD “Chamor” under ass). The ass could be used for a beast of burden, including pulling farm implements such as the plow, or for riding. They are particularly sure footed and ideal for mountainous and difficult terrain. ¶ *Master's crib*. The feed troughs where animals are fed. These beasts of burden, then, recognized the hand that fed them. While it is proverbial to speak of the ass

⁷ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־מֹשֶׁה אֲנִי אֲנִי אֲנִי. And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM (Exodus 3:14). “The name Jehovah יהוה ... received a special meaning by being connected with the Hebrew verb ‘to be.’ *** Jehovah (יְהוָה) is a conflate form with the consonants of one word and the vowels of another. *** The contracted forms in which the name appears suggest that the original form of the word was Yahweh or Yahve (a Greek transliteration is Ἰαβέ). *** In Exodus 3:10 ff., when Moses demurred to go to Egypt, God assured him saying, כִּי־אֲנִי עִמָּךְ ‘I will be with thee.’ When he asked how he would name the God of their fathers to the people, he was told אֲנִי אֲנִי אֲנִי אֲנִי. Again he was bidden say, אֲנִי אֲנִי hath sent me unto you; and finally ‘יהוה’ Yahweh, the God of your fathers, has sent me unto you.’ From all this it seems evident that in the view of the writer אֲנִי and יְהוָה are the same: That God is אֲנִי, ‘I will be,’ when speaking of Himself, and יְהוָה, ‘he will be,’ when spoken of by others. What He will be is left unexpressed—He will be with them, helper, strengthener, deliverer” (DOTB 2:199). It has been suggested that the Targum (ܬܪܓܡ) reads, I AM HE WHO IS AND WHO WILL BE with all its beautiful Messianic implications. See *The Aramaic and Palestinian Targum* by Zen Garcia, as well as Nägelsbach, Gill and Peshitta (ܣ). The latter focuses on the: I SHALL BE.
⁸ HCSB has, “Listen, heavens, and pay attention, earth, for the LORD has spoken: ‘I have raised children and brought them up ...’”

⁹ Adam fell but not without of a hope of being made alive in Christ. Israel fell and was scattered, but not without a hope of a gathering. In the process of this scattering, Israel was mixed with the nations of the world and in the latter-day would play a key role in helping to gather the Lord's elect from the nations of the world.
¹⁰ Mosiah 15:1–7.

as an animal of low intelligence, the Lord points out that yet these animals show more intellect than man. ¶ *but*¹¹ *Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider*. In contrast to the beasts of burden, Israel did not recognize where her blessings sprang from and thus offended God: “And in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things, and obey not his commandments” (D&C 59:21). Robert Millet makes some insightful comments about the word *know*, יָדַע. He mentions that this is the same word that is used for *a man knowing his wife* (e.g., see Genesis 4:17, see Gesenius, euphemism for sexual intercourse). Millet suggests that we must go beyond a mere “cognitive understanding” of the Lord, but to truly *know* Him through a deep spiritual understanding or “personal righteousness.”¹² עַמִּי, or *my people*, is a frequent and tender call used by the Lord in the prophets to refer to his covenant relationship with Israel. “And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and *they shall be my people*, and *I will be their God*: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart” (Jeremiah 24:7, emphasis added, see *Rain in Due Season*).

4 Ah sinful nation, a people laden[✓] with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. ✓ ✓

✓ of heaviness ✓ ✓ alienated, or separated

[Note: ✓ denotes a *marginal || reading, margin ||*, or *gloss*. In the KJV the double vertical lines are often used for this purpose, which we will utilize in the text rather than in the verse. This is the first such marginal || note that appears in the Book of Isaiah. Such is an interpretive comment on the scriptures placed there by the translators (in our case, the KJV, although from time to time I will mention marginal readings from other versions). The purpose was to render a possible alternative translation from difficult Hebrew passages. There are two types of marginal || expressions. I.

¹¹ The word *but* is not in the Hebrew text. Lowth points out that the LXX, Syriac, Vulgate and some other versions actually used the word *but*, as in (but Israel) יִשְׂרָאֵל. This is also supported by 4QIsa¹, yet *but* is absent from 1QIsa^a (Q). We use the Dead Sea Scrolls Bible (Q) translation for the readings, unless otherwise noted. *Figures of Speech in the Bible*, shows how these words that are missing can often strengthen the text.

¹² Millet, Robert. *Insight into Isaiah* (Episode 102). BYU Broadcasting. Draper, Richard; Ludlow, Victor; Millet, Robert; Madsen, Ann. 2008.

HEBREW. The first type is what the literal Hebrew meant. For instance, in ISAIAH 41:28, the KJV reads “... could answer[✓] a word.” The margin || indicates that the literal Hebrew for *answer* in this passage was *return*, “...could *return* a word.” In English people normally *return favors*. **II. OR.** The second type of expression is an alternative meaning. Some words were difficult for the translators to interpret, and they had to base themselves on context as well as inspiration (and I do believe the translators of the KJV were inspired men who loved the Lord).¹³ The translators of the AV have, for instance, preserved some key Messianic scriptures that more modern versions have eliminated (e.g., Zechariah 13:6). ISAIAH 1:27 is an example of an interesting marginal || reading in the KJV: “...and her converts[✓] with righteousness.” The margin || substitutes *her converts* with *they that return of her* (וְשׁוֹבֵיֶיהָ). As we have said, the words related to “turn” (שׁוּב) such as *turn, return, turn back*, are Hebrew expressions that are often associated with (1) *conversion* or *repentance* on the one hand, and (2) *apostasy* on the other—depending on which direction a person is turning toward. So, the reader can picture a return to a geographic location (יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, Zion) or bring a person into Zion *spiritually*. In this case it most probably means both things. Furthermore, the expression “those that *return of her*” has yet another signification—that of a small remnant of Israel that will be preserved and return. These marginal || notes can add much richness to the text. Some marginal || readings greatly improve the translation, others are neutral, and yet others simply add to the difficulty, confuse matters, or give an outright incorrect translation. While our present LDS KJV footnotes do not include all of these, the former *LDS Missionary Edition with Ready References*, contained them.¹⁴ The marginal || note mark appeared on the left hand side of the text, but I have moved them to the right hand side. For the most part this was an easy task, but in some instances it took some interpretation, thus increasing the chances of error on my part. Another disadvantage of this change is that in a few cases the full impact of the marginal || reading is weakened. For instance, in ISAIAH 38:3 we read “And Hezekiah wept sore.” The footnote mark was on the left of the word *sore*, making it clear that the literal translation, when the margin || HEB. *with great weeping*

¹³ While there are faults in the KJV translation, there is no doubt in my mind that it remains as the best translation of the Bible in English, based on the Hebrew text. When I look for a *second opinion*, I seldom find one version that always gives me the best translation. Instead, I find a number of different translations which take turn giving me what I was looking for.

¹⁴ If you are interested in the marginal || readings, you may also wish to consult the 1900 Cambridge Edition of the King James Version.

would be substituted, would render, “And Hezekiah wept with great weeping.” ¶ *Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity.* The *nation* spoken of here is *Israel* [see ISAIAH 1:3] in its completeness (*Israel doth not know*), that is, all of the sons of Jacob. The Hebrew word GOY (גוי) is utilized for *nation*, and here refers to Israel. In its plural form, as we mentioned earlier, we have GOYIM (גוים), or *nations*, which often refers to the *gentile nations*, and is translated as either *Gentiles*, *nations* or *heathen* in the KJV. Israel, then, is labeled as a sinful nation, *laden* or *burdened* with iniquity. And that is what sin is, a burden, a weight. Sin removes joy or enduring happiness. When burdened with sin we do not see the beauty all around but are choked with heaviness. Sin can remove our agency (the Brethren often use the expression *moral agency*). Our choices are limited by sin, and while we are free to choose, there is a consequence associated with that choice. ¶ *A seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters.* The nation of Israel had not taught her children to remember the covenants made with the Lord. It is hard enough for children to do well when parents are a good example. It is much more difficult—but certainly not impossible—when they do not. The Lord tells us that the sin will be upon the heads of the parents when children are not taught properly. What are the children to be taught? “To understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands ... And they shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord” (D&C 68:25, 28) and to shun contention (3 Nephi 11:29–30). Furthermore, parents are to teach their children who is the source of the expiatory sacrifice: “And we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins” (2 Nephi 25:26). ¶ *They have forsaken the LORD.* Man has had, since the beginning, to choose to either forsake his sins or to forsake the Lord. Moroni spoke to the people and exhorted them not to forsake the Lord, but rather, to be more committed towards their faith: “And it came to pass when Moroni had proclaimed these words, behold, the people came running together with their armor girded about their loins, rending their garments in token, or as a covenant, that they would not forsake the Lord their God; or, in other words, if they should transgress the commandments of God, or fall into transgression, and be ashamed to take upon them the name of Christ, the Lord should rend them even as they had rent their garments” (Alma 46:21). Israel had also been under a covenant relationship with the Lord, and they had forsaken Him. ¶ *They have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger.* Wicked behavior has consequences,

and one of them is to drive the Holy Ghost away. ¶ The *Holy One of Israel*, אֱת־קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל. This is one of the most lovely and poetic names given to our Lord, declaring Him to be Holy, and the only true and living God of Israel. This loving expression is used by Isaiah frequently. ¶ *They are gone away backward.* This is an expression to mean they have become apostate. To go away backward gives the impression of a person or a people who have allowed their base passions to dictate behavior. Of a person who has turned his back on the Lord. In Jeremiah we find, “...for they have turned their back unto me, and not their face: but in the time of their trouble they will say, Arise, and save us” (Jeremiah 2:27b); “But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and *I will be your God*, and *ye shall be my people*: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward. Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them: Yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers” (Jeremiah 7:23–26). ¶ UNITY OF ISAIAH. As we discussed in the introduction, there has been a great movement among Bible scholars and others to discredit the Bible. The same words found in D&C 89 can aptly be applied here: “In consequence of evils and designs which do and will exist in the hearts of conspiring men in the last days.” One effort after another has been put forth to plant the seeds of doubt in terms of the divinity and resurrection of the Lord, the inspiration of the Bible, the gifts of prophecy and many other sacred truths. All of this in an effort to put stumbling blocks in the way of truth and salvation. If it were not for the restoration of the Gospel in these, the latter days, and the bringing forth of that book of books, *The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ*, many would have lost their resolve. The Book of Mormon, along with the Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price, and teachings of the Brethren in General Conference, are clearly the greatest defenders of the divinity of Christ, and of the truthfulness of the Bible. There are not a people among the earth today who have a greater belief in the Bible than the Latter-day Saints.¹⁵

¹⁵ As way of example, one of the most beautiful Messianic scriptures is: “And *one* shall say unto him, What *are* these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, *Those* with which I was wounded *in* the house of my friends.” (Zechariah 13:6). The KJV has indeed retained the inspired translation from the 1568 Bishop’s Bible: “And if it be saide vnto him, How came these woundes then in thyne handes? He shal aunswere: Thus was I wounded in the house of myne owne friendes” and the 1599 Geneva Bible: “And one shall say vnto him, What are these woundes in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Thus

¶ Besides the wresting of individual verses there is a different type of effort, on a grander scale, to weaken the scriptures. In essence, it is to claim that many of the books of Scripture were written by multiple authors, or much later than their purported date. Among the most notorious of these claims is the notion that Isaiah only wrote up to chapter 40, and that the remaining chapters were written by a deutero-Isaiah and even a third author. These scholars try to outdo each other, and have even gotten to the level of removing a substantial number of chapters and verses from the authorship of Isaiah, even within the first forty chapters. Gladly, there have been many who have ably defended the integrity of the book, both Jew and Gentile. A Jewish scholar, for whom I have developed a great love and respect, is Rachel Margalioth. In her book, *The Indivisible Isaiah: Evidence for the Single Authorship of the Prophetic Book*,¹⁶ she goes on to explain a number of turn of phrases that are used in Isaiah, both the first 40 chapters, as well as the last twenty-six. One particular section of her book is called *Thesis and Antithesis*. In it she goes on to show that the same words that are used to rebuke Israel are often used by the same prophetic author to console her. So, here Margalioth has: “**Thesis and antithesis.** [In Midrash Exodus Rabbah 15:29 we read,] ‘The mouth that said, Ah SINFUL NATION (ISAIAH 1:4), is the mouth that said: Open ye the gates, that the RIGHTEOUS NATION ... may enter in (ISAIAH 26:2). The mouth that said: A PEOPLE LADEN WITH INIQUITY (ISAIAH 1:4), is the mouth that said: THY PEOPLE ALSO SHALL BE ALL RIGHTEOUS (ISAIAH 60:21). The mouth that said: CHILDREN THAT DEAL CORRUPTLY (ISAIAH

was I wounded in the house of my friends.” This and other verses have been wholly corrupted in the latter days. For instance, instead of **thine hands** we may read, ‘back’ (RSV, AAT, JPS Tanakh), ‘chest’ (HCSB), ‘body’ (NIV), “between the hands,” “between the shoulders,” or “between your arms” (RV 1885, HNV, World English Bible). And instead of ‘friends’ we may even read ‘lovers’ (AAT), or “harlot’s house” (Moffatt) such as to yield an increasingly corrupt text that reads something like: “What are these sores on your chest? Those received at my lover’s home.” In Hebrew, the word בֵּין (BEYIN) most frequently does mean *between*. So that in Hebrew, one may refer to the nose as that which is between the eyes, and so on. However, even Gesenius, the great Jewish Hebraist, admits that בֵּין has other meanings, including *intra*, within, as in Job 24:11, Proverbs 26:13 and yes, Zechariah 13:6! Gesenius also uses the word amongst, such that, הַרְחֵבֵם בֵּין הָרְחֹבוֹת means “within the streets,” or rather “in the streets” (*Hebrew and Chaldean Lexicon*, 1870, p. 114). So, returning to our verse in Zechariah 13:6, we translate בֵּין יְדֵי as “in your hands.” Gladly, we do not have only the KJV tradition that preserved the correct translation, but also modern revelation. These are the words that the Prophet Joseph Smith received in a revelation 7 March 1831, “Then shall they know that I am the Lord; for I will say unto them: These wounds are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. I am he who was lifted up. I am Jesus that was crucified. I am the Son of God” (D&C 45:52).

¹⁶ I strongly encourage the reader to consult this wonderful book.

1:4), is the mouth that said: AND ALL THY CHILDREN SHALL BE TAUGHT OF THE LORD (ISAIAH 54:13). The mouth that said: A SEED OF EVIL-DOERS (ISAIAH 1:4), is the mouth that said: AND THEIR SEED SHALL BE KNOWN AMONG THE NATIONS (ISAIAH 61:9). The mouth that said: YEA, WHEN YE MAKE MANY PRAYERS, I WILL NOT HEAR (ISAIAH 1:15), is the mouth that said: And it shall come to pass that, BEFORE THEY CALL, I WILL ANSWER (ISAIAH 65:24). The mouth that said: Your NEW MOONS and your appointed seasons My soul hateth (ISAIAH 1:4), is the mouth that said: And it shall come to pass, that from one NEW MOON¹⁷ to another (ISAIAH 66:23).’ In this midrashic statement the sages point to Isaiah’s custom of prophesying solace in the same words and expressions he employs in his rebukes. This method of turning phrases of rebuke and evil portent into blessing and consolation is common ... to all the prophets. In the case of every prophet we find prophecies of consolation expressed in the same vocabulary he employs for evil, and which is peculiar only to him.” What Margalioth has done, then, is to find such examples to share with us from throughout Isaiah. Beside their importance in pointing to the unity of Isaiah, there is yet another key principle that can be underscored here. And it is this, that the Lord loves Israel. If this is not understood—which is the case by so many of the commentators who seem to have a deep hatred towards the Jews—then we do not see that the future for Israel shall be glorious indeed. In the end of days, or in the latter days, Israel will once again be favored by the Lord. It is not possible to understand Isaiah without grasping this essential point. This turning of *rebuke* to *consolation*, or the *Hosea Principle* (see my introductory chapter, GREAT ARE THE WORDS OF ISAIAH). For instance, in In ISAIAH 54:7 we read, “For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.”

5 Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more[✓]: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

✓ increase revolt

Israel has been injured spiritually. ¶ *Why should ye be stricken any more?* Are not the punishments suffered sufficient? It suggests to the children of Israel a remembrance of the consequences set out in the Law for doing evil (*Rain in Due Season*). The allusion to Deuteronomy 28:35, where rebellious Israel has been stricken from the sole of her foot to the top of her head is clear: “The LORD shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch that cannot be healed, from

¹⁷ “And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD” (Isaiah 66:23)

the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head.” The Douay, leaning on the Vulgate (V), reads, “For what shall I strike you any more ...?” meaning “Where [or, on what part] can I strike you that I have not already done so?” This also reminds us of Pharaoh, who although afflicted by one disaster after another, only after the Lord took his firstborn son did he permit the children of Israel to leave—and even then he had second thoughts that caused him to follow after them and ended in his own death. ¶ *Ye will revolt more and more.* Same signification as above, how far will Israel go before repudiating sin and turning around? ¶ *The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.* We receive impressions of the Spirit through our heart (general impressions) and through our mind (more specific instructions) so if our head and our heart are faint and sick, then this is a sure sign of apostasy. In Hebrew, the *heart* or לֵב is considered the “the seat of the senses, affections, and emotions ... [and is also] the seat of will and purpose” (Gesenius).

6 From the sole of the foot even unto the head [there is] no soundness in it; [but] wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. ✓

✓ or, oil

Israel’s apostasy is compared to an injured body. The injuries are extensive. The children of Jacob have suffered every type of spiritual disease. “The LORD shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch that cannot be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head” (Deuteronomy 28:35, *Rain in Due Season*). ¶ *From the sole of the foot even unto the head.* This expression can be used both for feelings of conviction (e.g., when I first opened the Book of Mormon, and read the promise found in Moroni, as it was used in that paperback copy, I was filled with the Holy Ghost throughout my body) or in this case, of wickedness. ¶ *There is no soundness in it.* Soundness means health or lack of disease. ¶ *But wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores.* Not only is there disease, but it is composed of the most serious injury. Elder Dale G. Renlund quoted this verse in Isaiah and said: “God uses disease as a metaphor for sin throughout the scriptures ... the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ views disease in His sheep as a condition that needs treatment, care, and compassion. This shepherd, our Good Shepherd, finds joy in seeing His diseased sheep progress toward healing.”¹⁸ ¶ *They have not been*

¹⁸ Elder Dale G. Renlund, Our Good Shepherd, April 2017 General Conference.

closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. Lowth has, “The art of medicine in the East consists chiefly in external applications. ... So the good Samaritan poured oil and wine on the wounds of the distressed Jew: wine, cleansing and somewhat astringent, proper for a fresh wound; oil, mollifying and healing (see Luke 10:34).” These wounds that Israel has received had not begun to close or heal, nor had they been cleaned and treated with any curing ointment, nor had they been bound up or taped to keep further infection out, and thus promote healing.

7 Your country [is] desolate, your cities [are] burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and [it is] desolate, as overthrown ✓ by strangers.

✓ the overthrow of

After a brief summary of spiritual disease, and a comparison of how that disease compares to a body, now we hear how Israel would suffer the temporal ailments taught in the Law of Moses (*Rain in Due Season*) for disobedience. Isaiah sees future events as if they had already taken place, through the *Prophetic Perfect*. Scriptures often have multiple applications. This is one reason why Nephi taught us to *liken all scriptures unto us*. We know that Oliver Cowdery likened this verse to the Lost Tribes, that is, to the northern kingdom, but this does not mean that they did not apply every whit as much to Judah. All of Israel, indeed, would suffer the consequences for disobedience: Ephraim first and Judah second. Regarding Ephraim, we have this from Oliver Cowdery: “Isaiah who was on the earth at the time the ten tribes of Israel were led away captive from the land of Canaan, was shown, not only their calamity and affliction, but the time when they were to be delivered.”¹⁹ Ephraim, indeed, would be carried captive by Assyria, around

¹⁹ In an open letter to W. W. Phelps, published in the *Messenger and Advocate*, Oliver Cowdery recounted some of what the angel Moroni had shown Joseph Smith the night that he appeared by Joseph Smith’s bedside, as well as in their meetings by the place where the Book of Mormon was deposited. Oliver wrote, “And it will come to pass, that though the house of Israel has forsaken the Lord... and been cast out before the face of the world, they will know the voice of the Shepherd when he calls upon them this time; for soon his day of power comes, and in it his people will be willing to hearken to his counsel; and even now are they already beginning to be stirred up in their hearts to search for these things, and are daily reading the ancient prophets, and are marking the times, and seasons of their fulfillment. Thus God is preparing the way for their return” (p. 111). Cowdery, Oliver, et al., eds. *Messenger and Advocate: The Latter Day Saints’ Messenger and Advocate*. Kirtland, Ohio: Letter to W. W. Phelps from Oliver Cowdery. February 1835 and continued April 1835. Electronic text prepared by the Department of Church History and Doctrine, Brigham Young University, 1991, see pp. 78–80, 108–112.

721 BC.²⁰ While a small remnant would make it back to Samaria and intermingle with other peoples, the rest would be lost to the world but *not* to God. The second group to be carried away captive was Judah, and while some of Judah was absorbed into the Babylonian people, a remnant was permitted to return and build the Temple in Jerusalem. ¶ *Your country [is] desolate.* The warnings in *Rain in Due Season* include: “The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes” (Leviticus 26:43); “... and your high ways shall be desolate” (Leviticus 26:22); “...and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste” (Leviticus 26:33); and, “And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the LORD thy God” (Deuteronomy 28:62). And all of this did happen as Ephraim first, and Judah next, were carried away captive: “For he rent Israel (i.e., tore, removed the northern kingdom) from the house of David (i.e., leaving Judah, or the southern kingdom); and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and Jeroboam drave Israel from following the LORD, and made them sin a great sin. For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them; Until the LORD removed Israel [Ephraim, or Lost Tribes] out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day” (2 Kings 17:21–23). There were many Kings of Israel after Jeroboam, but this scripture summarizes the whole of the history of the northern kingdom in those three verses, from the time of Solomon’s death to the time they were carried away captive by Assyria. We can also read about Judah’s removal by Babylon: “And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land” (2 Kings 24:14). The people of Judah were carried away in several successive waves and the land was left all but completely destitute. ¶ *Your cities are burned with fire.* We have a historical account of the burning of Jerusalem, related to her conquest: “And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem: And he burnt the house of the LORD, and the king’s house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man’s

house burnt he with fire” (2 Kings 25:8–9). ¶ *Your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.* (“Before your eyes strangers devour your land” —REB) And from *Rain in Due Season*: “I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it” (Leviticus 26:16). This then, would mean that while the children of Jacob would plant, others would harvest and consume it.

8 And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city.

And the daughter of Zion, בִּתְּצִיּוֹן. This expression is meant to signify Jerusalem. Over time the word ‘Zion’ has come to mean a number of things. Zion was the name given to a fortified hill between the valleys of Kedron and Tyropoeon, even before Jerusalem was conquered by David. This fortification later took on the name of the “city of David” (HBD). For Latter-day Saints, Zion also has several additional meanings, to include (1) all of the American continent, (2) anywhere where the “pure in heart” dwell, and (3) Jackson County in Missouri: “And it shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the Saints of the Most High God; And the glory of the Lord shall be there, and the terror of the Lord shall also be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it, and shall be called Zion” (D&C 45:66–67). In this verse, Zion, especially with the expression *daughter of Zion*, refers to Jerusalem. ¶ *Is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers.* The idea is that of a very small dwelling, often temporary,²¹ not much bigger than the space that would be taken up by a single bed and providing a little protection against the inclemency of the elements. The purpose of these dwellings was to house a watchman that would make sure human thieves (Barnes) or animals (Lowth) would not come in and steal before the harvest. In contrast to the sea of vegetation around them, these dwellings would account for an insignificant amount of land. So would it be with Jerusalem, the rest of Judah would have been lost to the enemy and it alone would remain, with a solitude that would stand out. And like a desolated cottage is abandoned and allowed to decay, or is removed after its usefulness is over, Barnes (cf. Lowth) suggests that Jerusalem would be likewise destroyed. ¶ *As a besieged city.* Jerusalem would be left

²⁰ One last time, any dates given are approximate as there are several date timelines that have been suggested and I do not intend to choose one over another.

²¹ “He buildeth his house as a moth, and as a booth that the keeper maketh” (Job 27:18).

as a besieged city. A siege can be of short or long duration, and consists of eliminating, to the greatest extent possible, all sources of water and food so those inside will be weakened to the point that they will either surrender or will not be able to put up much resistance under attack. For now Jerusalem would be allowed to stand yet the time would come when she would also be destroyed.

9 Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, [and] we should have been like unto Gomorrah.

Except the LORD of hosts. Hosts means armies. When associated with the title *Lord of Hosts*, as it is here, it means the *armies of heaven*. The word *hosts* in Hebrew is צְבָאוֹת (whose transliteration is *tzebaoth*, or *sabaath*²²). The same Hebrew pronunciation is retained in the Greek (σαβαωθ), both in the LXX (6) as well as in the New Testament (e.g., Romans 9:29). Only because of the Lord's tender mercies and loving kindness, then, the punishment was not total and absolute. ¶ *Had left unto us a very small remnant.* When speaking about a remnant a similarity can be drawn between the children of Israel as a whole, and the descendants of Joseph in particular, whose coat was torn into many pieces by his brothers (Alma 46:23). We read that "Jacob, before his death, for behold, he saw that a part of the remnant of the coat of Joseph was preserved and had not decayed. And he said—Even as this remnant of garment of my son hath been preserved, so shall a remnant of the seed of my son be preserved by the hand of God, and be taken unto himself, while the remainder of the seed of Joseph shall perish, even as the remnant of his garment" (Alma 40:24b). We know that a remnant of Joseph was preserved through the peoples who inhabited the American continent, as well as other peoples whom the Lord has kept, which are part of the Lost Tribes. The preservation of Judah would take a different form. In Judah's patriarchal blessing we read that a ruler would be given to the children of Judah until the Savior would come: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people be" (Genesis 49:10). The word *Shiloh* or tranquil (Strong) may be short for *Asher-lo*, that means "whose right it is" (LDS Footnote, Genesis 10c). Another possible signification for Shiloh

is "his descendant" (DOTW) meaning, *the Messiah*. "... the Messiah who is called Shilo ..." (Genesis 50:24 JST). It is important to note that the sceptre or right to rule was indeed miraculously kept within the descendants of Judah, and more specifically, of King David. Even after the time of Christ, the people of Judah have been permitted to retain their national identity. While in Judah the power stayed within the Davidic line, in Ephraim it changed from one ruler to another in a continual saga of one *coup d'état* after another. ¶ *Sodom ... Gomorrah.* The destruction of these two wicked cities was total and absolute: "Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven; And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground" (Genesis 19:24–25). In *Rain in Due Season* we read that strangers would come upon the land and find it so devastated that it would give them cause to wonder, for they would find "the whole of the land thereof is brimstone, and salt, *and* burning, *that* it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah ..." (Deuteronomy 29:23, also see vv. 22–29).

vv. 10–15. The Lord once again asks to be heard, this time of both the rulers and of the people. All the offerings and sacrifices, equivalent to the partaking of the sacrament, have been offered unworthily and so are sources of condemnation to those who have brought them forth: "... all that be clean shall eat thereof. But the soul that eateth *of* the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, which pertain unto the Lord, even that soul shall be cut off from his people" (Leviticus 7:19b–20).

10 ¶ Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.

Hear the word of the LORD, שְׁמַעוּ דְּבַר יְהוָה. A call to pay attention and hearken (cp. v. 2) to the *word* (דְּבַר, also see ISAIAH 40:8 notes). The Lord is about to correct Israel. God wishes to do the same for us, if we will let Him point out where we need to improve. "And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness" (Ether 12:27a, see also vv. 26 ff.). ¶ *Ye rulers of Sodom. Rulers* probably referred to both secular leaders and priesthood leadership that had gone astray. "There could have been no more severe or cutting reproof ..." (Barnes) than to speak to Israel's leadership in this way. Isaiah did not seem to be much concerned about censorship. ¶ *Give ear unto the law of our God.* ¶ This was a reminder to study Scripture, *instruction or doctrine* (Gesenius), literally the *Torah* of

²² The Doctrine and Covenants uses at times *Hosts* (e.g., "... written in the book of the law of God, saith the Lord of Hosts ...," D&C 85:5, and at times *Sabaath* (e.g., "... the alms of your prayers have come up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaath ...," D&C 88:2). Not to be confused with Sabbath.

our God, **תִּנְתְּנוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ**, or Law, and to do as commanded. In its more general sense, it includes all of Scripture. ¶ *Ye people of Gomorrah*. The words *people* and *Gomorrah* begin with the same sounds,

עַם עֲמֹרָה, giving them additional strength. It was not only the leadership, but also the people who needed to listen and repent. The wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah was well known: “But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly” (Genesis 13:13).

11 To what purpose [is] the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. ✓

✓ great he-goats

To what purpose. There was an important reason for the sacrifices under the Law of Moses, just as there is in the partaking of the sacrament today. It was to remember the Lord and His redeeming sacrifice. But when these things become a thoughtless ritual then they are worthless. And when partaken unworthily, they become a condemnation unto the partaker: “For whoso eateth and drinketh my flesh and blood unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to his soul” (3 Nephi 18:29a) and furthermore “The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord” (Proverbs 15:8a) and more especially so when “he bringeth it with a wicked mind” (Proverbs 21:27b). Also see 1 Corinthians 11:27–30). ¶ *is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me?* The false outer expression of piety (in terms of many sacrifices or long prayers) does not make up for a lack of inner conviction. ¶ *Saith the LORD:* **אָמַר יְהוָה**). This is a reminder that Isaiah was speaking the *word of the Lord*. What a privilege, indeed, is to be able to speak on behalf of the Lord as moved by the Holy Ghost, under Priesthood authority, through the principle of *Divine Investiture* (see ISAIAH 52:7). ¶ *I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts.* Full, **שָׂבַעְתִּי**, in the Hebrew, often means *satisfied*. But it can also mean to overeat to the point of nausea, as in the Spanish word *hostigado*, related to the overeating of a particular food until a person does not ever want to see it, smell it, or eat it again. This is what happened to the children of Israel as they murmured in the wilderness, “And say thou unto the people, Sanctify yourselves against tomorrow, and ye shall eat flesh: for ye have wept in the ears of the LORD, saying, Who shall give us flesh to eat? for it was well with us in Egypt: therefore

the LORD will give you flesh, and ye shall eat. Ye shall not eat one day, nor two days, nor five days, neither ten days, nor twenty days; But even a whole month, until it come out at your nostrils, and it be loathsome unto you: because that ye have despised the LORD which is among you, and have wept before him, saying, Why came we forth out of Egypt?” (Numbers 11:18–20). Lowth reminds us that *fat* and *blood* were not to be consumed by men, but rather, offered to God in sacrifice (Leviticus 3:17; 4:7–8, 16–19 ff.). “The fat and the blood are particularly mentioned, because these were in all sacrifices set apart to God. The fat was always burnt upon the altar; and the blood was partly sprinkled, differently on different occasions, and partly poured out at the bottom of the altar” (Lowth). ¶ *I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.* The main idea is that man should provide a sacrifice based on obedience, one that will be acceptable to the Lord: “Hath the Lord as *great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, *and* to hearken than the fat of rams” (1 Samuel 15:22b). See also Amos 5:21–24,²³ for a parallel passage, in which the Lord refuses the burnt offerings and the melody of viols and instead requires: “But let thy judgment (**מִשְׁפָּט**, i.e., righteousness) run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream” (v. 24).

12 When ye come to appear ✓ before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?

✓ be seen

Appear before me ... tread my courts. To come before the Lord, in the context of this verse, “tread my courts,” is a reference to the temple. LITV has, “When you come to see My face....” Leeser has: “When ye come to appear in my presence.” The Law of Moses had strict rules in terms of worthiness, or *cleanliness*, to enter the temple, as does the Lord, today. Delitzsch has: “This [verse] is a standing expression for the appearance of all male Israelites in the temple at three high festivals, as prescribed by the law, and then for visits to the temple generally.” Matthew Henry observes that such visits to “his courts he calls *treading them*, or trampling upon them.” Certainly, the image of animals being herded through the sacred edifice comes to mind. Skinner has:

²³ “I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream” (Amos 5:21–24).

“to appear before me] RV margin || (following one Hebrew MS) suggests **to see my face**, which is grammatically easier. It is thought that here and elsewhere the traditional text has substituted the passive for the active so as to avoid the appearance of anthropomorphism.” ¶ Barnes has: “*To tread my courts*] The courts of the temple were the different areas or open spaces which surrounded it. None entered the temple itself but the priests. The people worshipped God in the courts assigned them around the temple. In one of those courts was the altar of burnt-offerings; and the sacrifices were all made there. To tread his courts was an expression therefore, equivalent to, to worship. To tread the courts of the Lord here, has the idea of profanation. Who has required you to tread those courts with this hollow, heartless service?” Or, in a state of impurity.

13 Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; [it is] iniquity, ✓ even the solemn meeting.

✓ or, grief

Bring no more vain oblations. The Lord does not desire any more offerings born out of emptiness and meaningless externalities. This is because, once again, the offerings brought to the Lord are in remembrance of the expiatory and sacred offering of the Son of God: “Wherefore, redemption cometh in and through the Holy Messiah; for he is full of grace and truth. Behold he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer the ends of the law, unto all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and unto none else can the ends of the law be answered” (2 Nephi 2:6–7). When our offerings to the Lord are born of anything less than a broken heart and contrite spirit, they become vain oblations, an abomination and iniquity. Next, several ceremonies are listed, all of which had become meaningless because of the way they were offered.

¶ *Incense is an abomination unto me.* At the time of the Tabernacle in the wilderness the Lord instructed for an altar of incense to be *put before the veil* that was by the *ark of the testimony*, “And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon” (Exodus 30:1, 6). Incense is representative of *prayer*, “Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense” (Psalm 141:2a). ¶ *The new moons.* The Jewish calendar functions from one month to the next measured in “lunarities” or “moons.” Because lunar months do not fit exactly into a solar year, complete extra months are added to the calendar in a systematic way. The word חֹדֶשׁ for “new moon” or “month” is derived from a Hebrew word pointed חֹדֶשׁ

and that means “to make new, to renew, restore” (AHCL). This was an appointed sacred day, whose first mention is found in Numbers 10:10b “in the beginnings of your months,” (sometimes translated as “new-moon” feasts, e.g., NAB, NJB, Tanakh). The sacred day began when the “thin crescent of the new moon was first visible at sunset” (TWOT). The exact beginning of each new month was important in terms of other sacred days, also. Special watchers would be stationed in the hills surrounding Jerusalem and they would start fires on the top of these watch posts to indicate that the new moon had been spotted. Israel’s foes would start fires at the wrong times to cause confusion (LDS Bible Dictionary). The new-moon feast seems to have been treated as a Sabbath (cp. Amos 8:5a “When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn²⁴?”) and would be a celebration marking the beginning of each month. A large number of offerings were required (Numbers 28:11–15). ¶ *And Sabbath* (שַׁבָּת). When Sabbath appears together with “new moon” it is probably speaking of the weekly Sabbath rather than the 7th year Sabbath (Delitzsch). It is not the observance of the Sabbath day that the Lord abhorred, but its empty observance, devoid of true religious sentiment (see ISAIAH 58). ¶ *The calling of assemblies.* In Numbers 10:2, 10, we find that Moses was commanded by the Lord to have two *trumpets*—or תְּצַנֵּרָה—of silver made for the purpose of calling various assemblies while in the wilderness. The house of Israel was to assemble themselves at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation when these trumpets were played unless they were played as an alarm (see Numbers 10:1–10). ¶ *Even the solemn meeting.* Probably equivalent to *solemn assemblies*, the last or concluding day of assemblage (e.g., the eight day in Numbers 29:35 ff.). These solemn assemblies were especially sacred days (Barnes). The special sacredness of these meetings also characterizes today’s solemn assemblies in the restored Church. In the Doctrine and Covenants we see that solemn assemblies are mentioned in connection with study, learning, and consecration as received in the temples of our Lord (D&C 88:117 ff.; 95; 109; 124:39) wherein the Saints can be endowed with power and learning from on high (it seems that the Lord is telling us that we can receive knowledge directly through the exercise of faith unto revelation, as well as through the

²⁴ Not maize, but rather *grains* such as wheat, oats, etc. In the AV the word corn means *grain*. This is something that I learned from Rabbi Shaye J.D. Cohen. For instance, to note two examples, where in Wycliffe the term wheat is used in Genesis 27:28 and 27:32, in the KJV we have the word corn, instead. Geneva also uses wheat. The AV followed after the Bishops’ Bible in using the word corn instead of wheat. Most Bibles today use the word wheat or grain (e.g., ABP {LXX (Θ)}, AMP, ASV, BBE, CEV, ESV, GNB, GW, HCSB, ISV, JUB, LEB, LITV, MKJV, NASB, as well as most Spanish editions).

study of the best books ... teaching one another). Those occasions when we sustain a new prophet, seer and revelator in the Church at general conference, are also called solemn assemblies. In the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* we find that temple dedications as solemn assemblies, as are some very special meetings where counsel is received from the Brethren, either at the temple or sometimes in other edifices such as stake buildings. Generally, these are for special instruction to priesthood holders, and sometimes the Sacrament is passed in such solemn assemblies.²⁵

14 Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear [them].

Your new moons and your appointed feasts. The Lord is rejecting all of the appointed feasts or religious celebrations, each of which was designed to remember Him (*new moons*, see ISAIAH 1:13). ¶ *My soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear [them].* These are strong words to indicate the displeasure of the Lord at these purposeless assemblies and hollow sacrifices. The Lord and Savior would literally bear or carry that awful burden of our sins, in His eternal expiatory sacrifice, during His mortal ministry.

15 And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. ✓ ✓

✓ multiply prayer

✓ ✓ bloods

And when ye spread forth your hands. Different peoples show reverence in prayer by folding their arms, by bringing hands together either clasped or not, and some by spreading forth their hands. From my own youth, I remember an older lady spreading her arms out away from her body, in prayer, in front of a Catholic chapel in Villa Alegre, Chile. This caused me quite an impression as I had never seen this custom before. In the New Testament the Savior spoke against those who prayed to be noticed of others, “for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men” (Matthew 6:5b), “and for a pretence make long prayer” (Matthew 23:14b). In Solomon’s dedicatory prayer, this spreading forth of the arms was done in righteousness: “And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven” (1 Kings 8:22). ¶ *I will hide mine eyes*

from you: These sacred words have much to say about prayer, and our personal preparation that is required. Scripture teaches us the extreme opposites of how our prayers may be received. At the one extreme, God hides His eyes and will not hear our prayers, as in this verse. Other examples include: “And the word of the LORD came unto Zechariah, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother: And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart. But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts. Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; *so they cried, and I would not hear*, saith the LORD of hosts: But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid the pleasant land desolate” (Zechariah 7:9–14, emphasis added); and “They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to hear my words; and they went after other gods to serve them: the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers. Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; *and though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them*. Then shall the cities of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem go, and cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense: but they shall not save them at all in the time of their trouble. For according to the number of thy cities were thy gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to that shameful thing, even altars to burn incense unto Baal. *Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them: for I will not hear them* in the time that they cry unto me for their trouble” (Jeremiah 11:10–14, emphasis added). Also, “They were slow to hearken unto the voice of the Lord their God; therefore, *the Lord their God is slow to hearken unto their prayers, to answer them in the day of their trouble*. In the day of their peace they esteemed lightly my counsel; but, in the day of their trouble, of necessity they feel after me” (D&C 101:7–8, emphasis added). In yet another example of the *Hosea Principle* this Scripture continues: “Verily I say unto you, notwithstanding their sins, my bowels are filled with compassion towards them. I will not utterly cast them off; and in the day of wrath I will remember mercy” (D&C 101:9). At the other extreme we have such scriptures as Psalm 138:3, ISAIAH 58:8–9a, 1 John 5:14–15, and ISAIAH 65:24. As

²⁵ *Encyclopeida of Mormonism*, Vol. 3, Solemn Assemblies, Richard E. Turley, Jr.

we shall see, the Lord will not only hear our prayers but answer these even before they are uttered. ¶ *Yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear.* We are to avoid repetitive prayers. In fact, the Lord gives us the key whereby our prayers may be heard: “I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me” (Proverbs 8:17). To love the Lord is to keep his statutes. To seek Him early is to turn to the Lord not only in the day of our trouble, but also in the day of our peace.²⁶

²⁶ *So, how do we pray?* There is a promise in the Book of Mormon that has become my pattern to prayer: “Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things, if it be wisdom in God that ye should read them, that ye would remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam even down until the time that ye shall receive these things, and ponder it in your hearts. And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost. And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things” (Moroni 10:3–5). As I write these words, I am only a few years away from my 40th anniversary of my baptism and confirmation. If I am honest, I must admit that it was not easy to truly understand *how to pray*: and do so in such a way that *we can know our prayers have been heard*. Even though I am still learning how to pray, I would like to share a few things I have discovered about prayer. To me, prayer is the essence of religion. It is a communion between God and man. Scripture study and prayer are my stay and my staff (ISAIAH 3:1). When we pray, we address God the Eternal Father, and we do so in the name of His beloved Son, even Jesus Christ. In the olden days, people who traveled to faraway lands would do so with a letter of introduction. Such a letter would open many doors. By coming in the name of Christ, we can dare approach the Father in prayer. It was Christ Himself who repeatedly taught us to address the Father in Jesus’ name: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you” (John 16:23b). We pray while we walk, while we talk, while we study, and not just when we can take the time to kneel down. If we are able to kneel there is something very special about doing so. We add our testimony that indeed the time will come when “Every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ.” I like to think that the particular answer to my prayer is less important, when it is a petition, than knowing that the prayer was heard by our Father. It helps to first meditate upon some of the things that I am grateful for. Then I can kneel down and address the Father, tell Him of those things I am grateful for, speak of my love for Him, and ask one simple question. “Father, hast thou heard my prayer?” I can then ‘listen’ for the reassurance of the Spirit that indeed my prayer has been heard of the Father. For me, this is normally a feeling of comfort or warmth. I can now thank the Father for having heard me, and do so in the sacred name of Jesus Christ. We now know what an affirmative answer feels like. We can now take a ‘spiritual photograph’ of what we are feeling. So we have a pattern: we ponder in a spirit of gratitude, we thank the Father, we ask Him a question, and we feel of His loving comfort through the Spirit. Through this pattern we have a key to ask other questions. “Is the Book of Mormon the book mentioned by Ezekiel 37:15–28 that, together with the Bible, would help bring the remnant of Israel and all peoples unto Christ?” “Am I making the right choice in dating such a person?” “Is this a good field for me to study at the university?” “Should I begin to look for a different job?” An *affirmative answer* to these questions will be much like the comforting one we received when we asked if God had heard our prayer. A *negative answer* to our inquiry is *not* a spirit of fear—such a spirit comes from Satan—but rather *silence*, or a *stupor of thought* (D&C 9:9). We now have a key to asking questions regarding matters

¶ *Your hands are full of blood.* The verse began with the words, “when ye spread forth your hands” and now ends again with the word hands. For the hands that have been spread out to pray in hypocrisy now attempt to hide their bloody and murderous deeds: “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, [thou] that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee ...” (Matthew 23:37). Also see ISAIAH 66:3.

that are important in our lives. One day I realized that this is precisely the pattern of prayer taught to us in Moroni 10:3–5. “Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things, if it be wisdom in God that ye should read them, that ye would remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam even down until the time that ye shall receive these things, and ponder it in your hearts” (Moroni 10:3). Here we are exhorted to be filled with a spirit of gratitude for what God has done for us. To ponder His tender mercies from the creation of Adam until now brings to mind one of my favorite scenes of all time, when the Savior walked along two of His disciples on the way to Emmaus and expounded the scriptures to them: “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:27). What a better way to be filled with gratitude than to immerse ourselves in the Scriptures. “And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost” (Moroni 10:4). We have already spoken about the importance of addressing the Father in the name of Christ. Moroni 10:4 also calls for *faith in Christ* and confidence that we will receive an answer. So it is that we read in James: “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed” (James 1:5–6). Let us not be afraid to ask. We have been commanded of the Savior to *pray always* (Luke 21:36b). Our attitude in prayer needs to be *submissive to the will of the Father*. If we really do not want to know the will of the Father, we will probably not receive an answer. If we want to tell the Father what we want done, rather than ask that His will be carried out, we will probably not receive an answer, either. To ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, means that we will act upon the answer. God does not want us to be like the people of Judah who approached Jeremiah the Prophet to inquire of the Lord for them. The people seemed, on the surface, committed to do as commanded: “Then they said to Jeremiah, The LORD be a true and faithful witness between us, if we do not even according to all things for the which the LORD thy God shall send thee to us. Whether it be good, or whether it be evil, we will obey the voice of the LORD our God, to whom we send thee; that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of the LORD our God” (Jeremiah 42:5–6). The Prophet Jeremiah did inquire of the Lord on their behalf, but the answer enraged the people so much that they reviled the Prophet and accused him of speaking falsely (Jeremiah 43:2). “And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things” (Moroni 10:5). Through this simple pattern of prayer to the Father in the name of Christ, then, we may receive reassurance from the Spirit about proceeding through life’s most difficult mazes. God loves us so much, that He is concerned over those things we are concerned about and says, “Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness” (ISAIAH 41:10). So, let us pray in confidence, full of assurance that God will hear our prayers. While some promises that God makes to us may take some time before they are realized, they will come to pass. (Based on my blog, *Moroni 10:3-5: A Perfect Pattern of Prayer*, 27 June 2010).

vv. 16–20. These verses call Israel to repentance. Through the expiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ we can be made clean. As in *Rain in Due Season*, the choice is placed clearly before us between joy and life everlasting on the one hand, and the negative consequence of disobedience on the other. Clear guidance is given as to what constitutes godliness is given in these verses.

16 ¶ Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;

Wash you, make you clean; The scriptures are replete with references to ceremonial washings, including baptism for the remission of sins, as well as ordinances performed in the Temple, “how shall your washings be acceptable unto me, except ye perform them in a house which you have built to my name?” (e.g., D&C 124:37). But this washing and cleansing is not external only, but a reflection of faith and repentance. Delitzsch suggests that “wash you” has reference to the major act of repentance when turning to God, while “make you clean” to the daily repentance of someone who has already turned his life to God. Certainly this fits in well with the concept of baptism for the remission of sins. ¶ President Joseph Fielding Smith taught that: “There are some references in the Old Testament (Psalm 51:2, 7; ISAIAH 1:16; 48:1) to washings, which could well mean baptisms . . . The Book of Mormon make the fact very clear that baptism was practiced among the Jews, and in the writings of Moses which have been restored, we learn that baptism was taught to Adam, and he was commanded to teach it to his children.”²⁷ One such example includes: “Hearken and hear this, O house of Jacob, who are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of baptism . . .” (1 Nephi 20:1a, cf. ISAIAH 48:1). ¶ *Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil*. President Ezra T. Benson explained that true repentance is more than mere confession. “It is a deep, burning, and heartfelt sorrow for sin that will drive us to our knees in humility and tears—a deep, heartfelt sorrow for sin that produces a reformation of life.”²⁸ We must have an overwhelming desire to cease to do evil before the Lord, and not only that, but to desire to do good. Two of Satan’s greatest lies are that (1) we can just repent later, when it is more convenient, and (2) that we have gone beyond the point where there can be hope for us. Fear of man and lack of confidence in God can keep us from

repenting. Repentance is a *principle of joy*. The moment we recognize our sins and commit ourselves to a course correction, confessing our sins and seeking to make restitution and reaching out to others when appropriate, we can then be in the path of eternal joy. When repentance is sincere we then become “cleansed by the blood of the Lamb” (Mormon 9:6, also see vv. 4–5).

17 Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

✓ or, righten

Learn to do well. It is not sufficient to cease to do evil, but it is also needful to learn to do well. To *learn* implies an effort that takes time. This is not a facile change, but a lifelong effort that requires taking one step at a time. It entails walking in the light, and abandoning darkness. It necessitates not only study of the Word, but practice of it. ¶ *Seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow*. The Lord, through Isaiah, lists four important things that need to be added to the command to do good: (1) seek judgment (i.e., *justice, righteousness*). To seek means to actively go after something, in this case justice or righteousness. To always have an eye out for right to triumph over evil, good over bad; (2) Relieve the oppressed (*deliver him that is suffering wrong*, LXX (6); *do good to the oppressed*, Syriac —S²⁹). Succor those who have fallen under misfortune. What sort of succoring are we to do? “For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me” (Matthew 25:35–36); (3) judge the fatherless (*hear the orphan’s plea*, NAB). Make sure to work towards helping God’s children who have no one to worry about them. (4) Plead for the widow (*obtain justice for the widow*, LXX). A woman who no longer has the protection of her husband, and this would include not only the widow, but the single or divorced mother, is as we have said, someone who is susceptible to being taken advantage, ignored, or being discounted. Man ought to honor woman and womanhood. “But whoso shall offend one of these little ones . . . it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and [that] he were drowned in the depth of the sea” (Matthew 18:6). While this scripture has reference to little ones as those who have

²⁷ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Answers to Gospel Questions*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book. 1957. Volume I, p. 51.

²⁸ Benson, Ezra Taft. *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1988, pp.74–75.

²⁹ For the Syriac, we use George M. Lamsa, *Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts: Containing the Old and New Testaments Translated from the Peshitta, The Authorized Bible of the Church of the East*, A.J. Holman Company: Philadelphia, 1957; and the *Biblia Peshitta and Español: Traducción de los Antiguos Escritos en Arameo*, Holman Bible Publishers, 2006.

humbled themselves as a child to accept the Lord, application to the treatment of defenseless and oppressed, whether they be women, children, or foreigners (or *stranger*³⁰), fits in well. When we make baptismal covenants we agree “to be called his [Christ’s] people, and are willing to bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light; Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places” (Mosiah 18:8b–9a).

18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Israel’s past, no matter how evil, would at the end not stand in the way of the Holy One of Israel coming to make Israel holy. Such a magnificent work has already begun to take place with the restoration of the Gospel. Elder Orson Pratt said, “In the 21st chapter of Luke, our Savior, in speaking of the evils that should befall the Jewish nation, says, ‘And they (the Jews) shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.’ This has been fulfilled literally upon the Jewish nation, and they have been scattered, according to this prediction, among all nations. Many of them were destroyed by the edge of the sword. Jerusalem was taken some seventy years after the birth of Christ, and has been in possession of the Gentiles from that day to this [26 March 1876].³¹ Jesus told them that such should be the fact, that Jerusalem should be in the possession of the Gentiles, and should be trodden down by them until a certain period—until their times should be fulfilled. The great object of the angel in restoring the Gospel was, in the first place, to fulfill the times of the Gentiles. Inquires one— ‘What do you mean by that?’ I mean that God will send this Gospel, restored by an angel, to every nations, kindred, people, and tongue in the Gentile world [i.e., Gentile nations—GB] before he will permit his servants to go to the scattered remnants of Israel [perhaps he meant Judah—GB]; and they will labor with, preach to and declare the work of God to the Gentile nations, and seek to bring them to a knowledge of the ancient Gospel, and to organize a

Church among them, so far as they will hearken to and receive their testimony. Then, when the Gentile nations shall reject this Gospel and count themselves unworthy of eternal life, as the Jews did before them, the Lord will say— ‘It is enough, come away from them, my servants, I will give you a new commission, you shall go to the scattered remnants of the house of Israel. I will gather them in from the four quarters of the earth, and bring them again into their own lands.’³² Each one of us needs to accept the personal invitation to come unto Christ and be cleansed by the atoning blood of the Lamb of God. ¶ *Come now, and let us reason together.* These are certainly powerful words. In the profound context of Scripture, this is a pleading and loving invitation from the Lord to the children of Jacob: repent and be cleansed. This is a standing invitation to each one of us: “Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:31). ¶ *Though your sins be as scarlet... כְּשָׁנִים / though they be red like crimson... יְאֲדִימוּ כְּתוֹלַעַ*. The Talmud tradition (Seder Mo’ed, Yoma 67a) explains what would happen on Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement: “Originally they used to tie the thread of crimson wool to the entrance of the Ulam within, and as soon as the he-goat reached the wilderness, it turned white. Then they knew that the commandment concerning it had been fulfilled, as it is said: If your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white wool” (Talmud, Soncino). Scarlet and crimson tend to stain. The allusion is even stronger if, as several commentators suggest, scarlet refers to a dyed garment, not just one that is soiled. This is supported by the Targum (ת),³³ “Though your sins be stained as with dye

³² Pratt, Elder Orson. *Journal of Discourses*, 26 March 1876. Delivered in the Fifteenth Ward Meeting-house, Salt Lake City, Sunday Afternoon. (Reported by David W. Evans.) Restoration of the Gospel Probable and Scriptural—Sent First To The Gentiles, Then To Israel—This is a Gathering Dispensation or The Fullness of Times—Destiny of all Nations, see especially pp. 176–178.

³³ Unless otherwise specified, the Targum (ת) translation I am providing is the 1871 version by C. W. H. Pauli, *The Chaldee Paraphrase on the Prophet Isaiah*. J. F. Stenning’s ת translation is often the same but at times has a different rendering worth pointing out. More recently, *The Isaiah Targum* by Bruce Chilton, in the Aramaic Bible series, has been published. Beside these three ת translations, I have available to me the ת texts in Aramaic (including some important variants), published by J. F. Stenning, *The Targum of Isaiah; The Bible in Aramaic* (with superlinear punctuation) published by Alexander Sperber (of more particular interest to us, Volume III, *The Latter Prophets According to Targum Jonathan*); part of which is also included in the electronic version of the Jewish Literary Aramaic version of the Prophets Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project (CAL) published by Logos Software. CAL includes an Aramaic Lexicon. An extensive ת lexicon is also written by Marcus Jastrow, ספר מילים, *Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Babli, Yerushalmi and Midrashic Literature*. The Targum Jonathan is credited to Jonathan Ben Uziel, a student of Hillel.

³⁰ “Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Exodus 22:21).

³¹ This glorious prophecy has been fulfilled and the קְדִישָׁת יִשְׂרָאֵל or *State of Israel* has now again become a nation, since 29 November 1947.

&c.” Such a color of scarlet שָׁנִי, explains Lowth, means “twice dipped, or double-dyed; from שָׁנָה, *iterare*, to double, or to do a thing twice.” Although we may wash them, often these spots will not come out. Not unlike grass stains, except even more difficult to remove. The call to repentance extends to all. The Lord is inviting us all to turn unto Him, for *are we not all beggars* before Christ? “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23), *even* in the areas we may consider our greatest strengths.³⁴ From

³⁴ The Prophet Joseph Smith taught “That the nearer man approaches perfection, the clearer are his views, and the greater his enjoyments, till he has overcome the evils of his life and lost every desire for sin; and like the ancients, arrives at that point of faith where he is wrapped in the power and glory of his Maker, and is caught up to dwell with Him” (*History of the Church* 2:8). Elder Neal A. Maxwell taught: “When people are described as ‘having lost their desire for sin,’ it is they, and they only, who deliberately decided to lose those wrong desires by being willing to ‘give away all [their] sins’ in order to know God (Alma 22:18)” (According to the Desire of [Our] Hearts, October 1996 General Conference). The whole of Alma 41 is an exquisite scripture giving us hope that if our desires are right that we are at least part way there: “And it is requisite with the justice of God that men should be judged according to their works; and if their works were good in this life, and the desires of their hearts were good, that they should also, at the last day, be restored unto that which is good” (Alma 41:3). Elder Maxwell also said: “Righteous desires need to be relentless, therefore, because, said President Brigham Young, ‘the men and women, who desire to obtain seats in the celestial kingdom, will find that they must battle every day’” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 11:14). Therefore, true Christian soldiers are more than weekend warriors... “Do you,” President Young asked, “think that people will obey the truth because it is true, unless they love it? No, they will not” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 7:55). Thus knowing gospel truths and doctrines is profoundly important, but we must also come to love them. When we love them, they will move us and help our desires and outward works to become more holy... Fortunately for us, our loving Lord will work with us, “even if [we] can [do] no more than desire to believe,” providing we will “let this desire work in [us]” (Alma 32:27). Therefore, declared President Joseph F. Smith, “the education then of our desires is one of far-reaching importance to our happiness in life” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. [1939], 297). Such education can lead to sanctification until, said President Brigham Young, “holy desires produce corresponding outward works” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 6:170). Only by educating and training our desires can they become our allies instead of our enemies! Some of our present desires, therefore, need to be diminished and then finally dissolved. For instance, the biblical counsel “let not thine heart envy sinners” is directed squarely at those with a sad unsettlement of soul (Proverbs 23:17). Once again, we must be honest with ourselves about the consequences of our desires, which follow as the night, the day” (According to the Desire of [Our] Hearts, October 1996 General Conference). Elder Bruce R. McConkie gave some suggestions on how we can center our minds on wholesome desires: “To enable us to keep our minds centered on righteousness, we should consciously elect to ponder the truths of salvation in our hearts. Brother Packer yesterday pleaded with eloquence that we sing the songs of Zion in order to center our thoughts on wholesome things. I would like to add that we can also—after we have had the opening song [and may I add prayer that we may follow the injunction to “pray always, lest ye be tempted by the devil, and ye be led away captive by him” (3 Nephi 18:15b)—GB]—call on ourselves to preach a sermon. I have preached many sermons walking along congested city streets, or tramping desert trails, or in lonely places, thus centering my mind on the Lord’s affairs and the things of righteousness; and I might say

they have been better sermons than I have ever preached to congregations. If we are going to work out our salvation, we must rejoice in the Lord. We must ponder his truths in our hearts. We must rivet our attention and interests upon him and his goodness to us. We must forsake the world and use all our strength, energies and abilities in furthering his work. I think the Lord’s people should rejoice in him and shout praises to his holy name. Cries of hosannah should ascend from our lips continually” (“Think on These Things,” *Ensign* (CR), January 1974, p.45). With the Psalmist I pray: “Create in me a clean heart, O God” (Psalms 51:10a) that I might “[lose] every desire for sin” (*History of the Church* 2:8). And then—through the grace of God and the merits of Christ, after we have put forth our best efforts—we can rejoice in the words of the Prophet Moroni: “And awake, and arise from the dust [away from our spiritual bondage] ... and put on thy beautiful garments... Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God. And again, if ye by the grace of God are perfect in Christ, and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission of your sins, that ye become holy, without spot” (Moroni 10:31-33). We often hear people explain that they do not quite understand the atonement of Jesus Christ in all of its grandeur. And perhaps the most difficult part of all is to understand the supernal gift of grace that springs forth out of the atonement and how it all works out in the eternal scheme of things. Certainly, I do not claim to understand. “... for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do” (2 Nephi 25:23). What does this scripture mean? The scriptures teach us that true repentance means forsaking of our sins (Mosiah 4:10; Alma 39:9; Ether 11:1; D&C 93:48) and of course, the well known scripture: “By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them” (D&C 58:43). Although the Savior has already suffered for all our sins, if we do not repent we will have to suffer also: “Therefore I command you to repent—repent, lest I smite you by the rod of my mouth, and by my wrath, and by my anger, and your sufferings be sore—how sore you know not, how exquisite you know not, yea, how hard to bear you know not. For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I; Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men. Wherefore, I command you again to repent, lest I humble you with my almighty power; and that you confess your sins, lest you suffer these punishments of which I have spoken, of which in the smallest, yea, even in the least degree you have tasted at the time I withdrew my Spirit” (D&C 19:15–20). At best, I can say I am in the long process of forsaking, but have not forsaken. Sometime around 1990–1991, I was feeling very depressed and despondent because of all of my weaknesses. One day I was reading a newspaper report about someone who had been dishonest. “At least,” I thought to myself, “this is one good quality I have, I am honest.” After having these thoughts I had an open vision in which I saw the many times in my life when I had been dishonest—from both before and after my baptism. One of these scenes particularly stands out in my mind. I was a young lad and was near the door of our large home in Santiago. A poor old woman asked to see my mother. My mother is a very generous person and always gave to the poor—although a few times complained about this duty. I thought I would be doing my mother a favor so she would not have to be bothered by the poor old beggar and explained that my mother was not home. The woman’s words still ring in my ears, “¡mentiroso! (liar!).” I could see this and many other distinct scenes pass by me. It was by no means a short list of scenes. For years I did not understand the purpose of what I had seen. Now I

Alma we read this summons: “Behold, he sendeth an invitation unto all men, for the arms of mercy are extended towards them, and he saith: Repent, and I will receive you” (Alma 5:33). ¶ *They shall be as white as snow / they shall be as wool.* I picture the day, when we die, when we will have to see the movie of our life. We will be before Christ, and the stain of our sins will become evident. At that awful moment of despair, when we think all is lost, if we have given ourselves to the Lord in this life and have endured to the end in faithfulness, I picture that the Holy One of Israel will come forth, and plead our cause before the Father.

know that God was trying to teach me something about grace. Even in those areas where I thought I may have been “doing well” I would need the grace offered to us through Christ’s atonement. Note that the Spirit only showed me the one area I felt I had done well. I shudder to think what the rest of the movie of my life would have looked like. A little more than ten years later I experienced a related revelation of a completely different nature, one that I also did not understand for years. After my second Sabbatical leave in Chile was coming to a close (2002), the Spirit of God manifested to me that my sins had been forgiven. What should have been a moment of great joy was not, because I did not understand the meaning of what was being said to me. I had gone out with the missionaries once a week during my Sabbatical and through God’s grace the Spirit of God was manifesting to me that the Lord had accepted my offering. But all I could think about was the uselessness of it all. I knew my imperfection. Instead, I should have dropped to my knees in thankfulness. The Lord was saying, in effect, yes, I know your weaknesses, but I also can see the desire of your heart and your effort. I can now see the Lord saying: “And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them” (Ether 12:27). We also have: “Nevertheless, the Lord God sheweth us our weakness that we may know that it is by his grace, and his great condescensions unto the children of men, that we have power to do these things” (Jacob 4:7). So perhaps we can speak of a repentant attitude along with repentance. We may also well speak of the fruits of repentance, such as joy and peace and the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost. These also are part of the gift of grace. If we have a great desire to study the word, share the gospel with others, do temple work for our deceased ancestors, improve, do good, choose the right, serve in our callings and answer affirmatively the question that Alma poses: “And now behold, I say unto you, my brethren, if ye have experienced a change of heart, and if ye have felt to sing the song of redeeming love, I would ask, can ye feel so now?” (Alma 5:26, also see Alma 5:27–31a), perhaps these are indicators that the grace of God is working within us now despite our imperfections. We have no reason to believe that the grace required for exaltation is something different than the grace we receive in this mortal existence to help us here and now in our efforts to become men and women of God. (From my blog, *Until we have lost every desire for sin*, 25 March 2013 and *Grace—a gift born of the atonement*, 21 April 2015). Finally, I find these words from the Prophet Joseph Smith of great comfort to me: “When you climb up a ladder, you must begin at the bottom, and ascend step by step, until you arrive at the top; and so it is with the principles of the Gospel—you must begin with the first, and go on until you learn all the principles of exaltation. But it will be a great while after you have passed through the veil before you will have learned them. It is not all to be comprehended in this world; it will be a great work to learn our salvation and exaltation even beyond the grave.” (Also see notes on grace on ISAIAH 33:6.)

“Father, behold the sufferings and death of him who did no sin, in whom thou wast well pleased; behold the blood of thy Son which was shed, the blood of him whom thou gavest that thyself might be glorified: Wherefore, Father, spare my brethren [and I believe that at that time He will call us by name] that believe on my name, that they may come unto me and have everlasting life” (D&C 45:4–5). The atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ is one that is presented in types and shadows throughout Scripture.

19 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:

If ye be willing and obedient. Once we become aware of our own *nothingness*—and this understanding of our nothingness is a gift of God that we can seek earnestly if we have any doubts—then we are in a position to put our faith and confidence in the only person who can save, even Christ Jesus. Nephi taught us that for this purpose we need to *believe* and *be reconciled in Christ*, “for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do” (2 Nephi 25:23b). James seemed to know that many would be confused about the importance of obedience in the last days—not just a statement of belief: “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble” (James 2:17–19). A clear understanding is required of us of how both grace and obedience are needed: “This grace is an enabling power that allows men and women to lay hold on eternal life and exaltation after they have expended their own best efforts” (see *grace*, LDS Bible Dictionary). The Brethren teach that it is not a balance of all the good and evil in our lives that is most important, but rather, the type of person we have become. ¶ *Ye shall eat the good of the land.* This immediately draws our minds to *Rain in Due Season*. “To eat of the good of the land” stands for much more than having food. The promised blessings include a bounty of food, peace in the land, and the making of a fruitful nation. But none of the blessings are as beautiful as the Lord’s promise to establish His covenant with Israel, and then to walk with us (see Leviticus 26:12, *Rain in Due Season*; and notes on ISAIAH 2:3). These same principles apply just as much today as they did in former times: “Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days. And the rebellious shall be cut off out of the land of Zion, and shall be sent away, and shall not inherit the land” (D&C 64:34–35).

20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken [it].

But if ye refuse and rebel. We have the moral agency wherein we can refuse and rebel but then the corresponding consequences will follow. Delitzsch wrote, “Obeying and rebelling are both of them consequences of an act of will.” And so it is that we are free to choose our path, but in so doing we are also choosing our destiny. “Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy” (Hosea 10:12a) or “They that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same” (Job 4:8) and finally, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6:7). But it is not sufficient to sow good for a time, but rather, we must endure to the end: “And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not” (Galatians 6:9). ¶ *Ye shall be devoured with the sword.* The Targum (Ⲯ) renders it, “... ye shall be slain with the sword of the enemy,” Once again, a single one of the curses in *Rain in Due Season* (Leviticus 26:25) is chosen to represent all the others. Every invitation to repent, then, is an invitation to partake of the joy and happiness of the Gospel. “Now, repentance could not come unto men except there were a punishment, which also was eternal as the life of the soul should be, affixed opposite to the plan of happiness, which was as eternal also as the life of the soul” (Alma 42:16).

vv. 21–31. Through Isaiah, the Lord expresses that Israel has failed him and will need to be chastened, but that a day of restoration would come in that the righteous would be redeemed and the transgressors destroyed. Israel shall be ashamed of her former idol worship. All of the wicked would be burned together.

21 ¶ How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.

How is the faithful city become an harlot! This is a reference to Jerusalem, who had sold herself to strange men or nations and refused her true Husband, who was willing and mighty to save. ¶ *It was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it.* A lament, for Jerusalem had been the home of justice and righteousness at one time. ¶ *But now murderers.* In contrast, now the wicked, even the murderer, was the new occupant.

22 Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water:

This verse continues to contrast Jerusalem to her better days. ¶ *Thy silver is become dross.* Silver needs special care to remain lustrous and beautiful. Else it loses its shine. Not only had it lost its shine, but was full of dross or impurities. So it was that Jerusalem had not only lost her previous splendor, but had also become now full of impurities with the worship of false gods. ¶ *Thy wine mixed with water.* The purity of the wine had been corrupted by being diluted.³⁵ So the power of Jerusalem to influence the lives of men and women for good had been diluted. Jerusalem had been set up to be *a light on a hill, and the salt of the earth*, that is, to be an example to the rest of the world. Now each person who takes upon him or herself the name of the Lord is to also become an example. “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 5:13–14, 16).

23 Thy princes [are] rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.

³⁵ The strength of wine is directly proportional to the sugar content (also known as degrees Brix) of the grape juice before it is fermented. One commentator suggested that wine was sometimes watered down and sold in this cheapened and diluted state. This accusation is leveled even today, as seen by several editorials in *Grape Grower* magazine (February 2000, pp. 30–31). One person suggested that a particular watered down flavored wine (where other blended juices are included in the process) should not be allowed to be sold as wine, but instead be labeled: “Water, fruit juice &” A contrary opinion is given by Lowth: “It is remarkable, that whereas the Greeks and Latins by *mixed* wine always understood wine diluted and lowered with water, the Hebrew on the contrary generally mean by it wine made stronger and more inebriating, by the addition of higher and more powerful ingredients; such as honey, spices, defrutum, (or wine inspissated by boiling it down to two-thirds, or on-half of the quantity), myrrh, mandragora, opiates, and other strong drugs. Such were the exhilarating, or rather stupifying, ingredients Such was the ‘spiced wine and the juice of pomegranates,’ mentioned Canticles 8:2. ... Thus the drunkard is properly described (Proverbs 23:30), as one ‘that seeketh *mixt* wine;’ and is mighty to *mingle* strong drink’ (ISAIAH 5:22). And hence the Psalmist took that highly poetical and sublime image of the cup of God’s wrath, called by Isaiah (51:17) ‘the cup of trembling.’” Either way, the fine wine had been corrupted by either being made into strong or diluted drink.

Thy princes [are] rebellious, and companions of thieves. Noblesse oblige, is French for nobility obligates. Those in power—either economic, intellectual or of any other type—are morally obligated to share with the less fortunate. Jerusalem’s princes, far from imparting with the needy, where stealing from them. ¶ *Every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards*. Those who should have done their jobs out of a sense of obligation or love, require bribes instead. There are societies that run on bribes, where individuals pay bribes for almost everything, such as buying tickets to travel by train or to escape legal requirements. One way in which the decay of a society is manifested is through the bribes that are required of its citizens. ¶ *They judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them*. This is in direct contrast to ISAIAH 1:17. The concerns of the downtrodden, the orphans, widows and foreigners who cannot pay are neglected.

24 Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies:

The *mighty One of Israel* אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. Same idea as Holy One of Israel (ISAIAH 1:4). ¶ *Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies*. The Lord will eliminate and avenge himself of His enemies. That is, those who having a special responsibility for watching over the Lord’s little flock have instead turned wolves. “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves” (Matthew 7:15). “Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city! She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the Lord; she drew not near to her God. Her princes within her *are* roaring lions; her judges *are* evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow. Her prophets *are* light and treacherous persons: her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law” (Zephaniah 3:1–4).

25 And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin:

✓ according to pureness

And I will turn my hand upon thee. The Hebrew שׁוּב frequently means “turn” or “return,” but in this context, means *to do again* or *repeat*. It implies a continual castigation until Israel repents, as in *Rain in Due Season*. “And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me; Then will I

also walk contrary unto you, *and will punish you yet seven times for your sins*” (Leviticus 26:23–24, emphasis added). This idea is underscored throughout Leviticus 26. ¶ *And purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin*. Another definition for dross, beside impurities, is the scum or slag that forms around metal that is melted. Several translations render the passage much like this version: “And will smelt away your dross as with lye, And will remove all your alloy” (NAS). The words *lye* and *purity* have the same meaning in Hebrew (HBD). The general idea is that the impurities will be removed or purged as with a very strong alkaline solution or cleanser (also, see notes on ISAIAH 6:9). The Talmud tradition (Seder Mo’ed, Shabbath 139a) has: “And the Holy One, blessed be He, will not cause His Divine presence to rest upon Israel until the wicked judges and officers cease out of Israel, for it is said, And I will turn my hand upon thee, and thoroughly purge away thy dross, and will take away all thy tin. And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning, etc.” (Talmud, Soncino).

26 And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.

And I will restore thy judges as at the first. The Lord set up judges over Israel, “Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes” (Deuteronomy 16:18a). The Lord established then how judges were to conduct themselves: “and they shall judge the people with just judgment. Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous. That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee” (Deuteronomy 16:18b–20). But the people wanted to be like the rest of the world. And so it is they approached the aging prophet Samuel with these words: “Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations” (1 Samuel 8:5). The scriptures teach us that Samuel was displeased by such a request, and prayed to the Lord as to what course to take. “And the Lord said unto Samuel, Harken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them” (Samuel 8:7). The restoration of the *judges as at the first* also alludes to the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, with its ecclesiastical order, with bishops set up as judges in Israel. Regarding the office of bishop, the Lord has said, “And whoso standeth in this mission is appointed to be

a judge in Israel, like as it was in ancient days” (D&C 58:17a). And the Lord gives His judges further counsel: “To judge his people by the testimony of the just, and by the assistance of his counselors, according to the laws of the kingdom which are given by the prophets of God. For verily I say unto you, my law shall be kept on this land. Let no man think he is ruler; but let God rule him that judgeth” (D&C 58:18–20a). Besides these judges, the Lord has set up others, including Prophets, Seers and Revelators, and the Twelve, to be judges over Israel, and over the world. ¶ *And thy counsellors as at the beginning*: The Hebrew root of the word counsel includes the definition “to decree” (AHCL). The greatest of all the judges and counselors (ISAIAH 9:6) is the Lawgiver Himself, the Messiah. In the Millennium the Lord will be among the people as He was in the beginning, when Adam and Eve were in the garden. Messiah is also given the title of the *second David*. “But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them” (Jeremiah 30:9). Hosea is quite explicit, showing that the second David would come on the scene in the latter-days. “For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days” (Hosea 3:4–5). ¶ *Afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city*. The day will come when two great cities will be honored. Jerusalem of old, as well as the new Jerusalem. “...for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem” (ISAIAH 2:3, see also, Micah 4:2). In the Book of Revelation we learn more about this holy city, the new Jerusalem, which shall descend from heaven to become part of the Celestial world. There will be no need for either a temple nor for light in the new Jerusalem: “And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof” (Revelation 21:22–23). In an address delivered to the High Council in Kirtland, the Prophet Joseph Smith made use of verse 26, *His judges as at the first and when the city of righteousness shall be built* in terms of the great and glorious day of restoration of Israel. In this same address Brother Joseph weaved together the magnificent words of former-day prophets, including Jeremiah, in referring to the last days, “when it shall no longer be said, the Lord lives that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, but the Lord lives that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and for all the lands whither He has driven them” (STPJS, pp. 110–111, see also notes on ISAIAH 1:5).

27 Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts[✓] with righteousness.

✓ or, they that return of her

Zion shall be redeemed with judgment. The Lord had expected righteous judgment, or justice, to be used in defending the widow, the orphan and the foreigner. The object of such judgment was to protect and show mercy. Since the Lord will be the Redeemer, Zion’s redemption will be carried out with such everlasting mercy. “And the nations of the earth shall honor her and shall say: Surely Zion is the city of our God, and surely Zion cannot fall, neither be moved out of her place, for God is there, and the hand of the Lord is there; And he hath sworn by the power of his might to be her salvation and her high tower. Therefore, verily thus saith the Lord, let Zion rejoice, for this is Zion—THE PURE IN HEART; therefore, let Zion rejoice, while all the wicked shall mourn” (D&C 97:19–21). The redemption of Zion will take place as will the redemption of individuals through the atoning sacrifice of our Lord and Savior. ¶ *And her converts* (see margin ||, and they who *return to her*, **יְשׁוּבִיהָ**) with righteousness. There are two competing Hebrew roots that would affect the meaning of this expression. One is **שָׁבָה** (root related to *captivity*, see AHCL, TWOT, LXX (Ⓢ), Syriac (Ⓢ)), and YLT has, “Zion in judgment is redeemed, And her captivity in righteousness.” Most translators including the KJV choose, instead, the root **שׁוּב**. Many translate as *converts*, or *repentant ones*. As we have already stated, **שׁוּב** can mean to *turn* or *return* to walk in Christ. This verse is an allusion to the latter-days. Those who come unto Christ today do so by leaving mystical Babylon behind, and entering Zion. Happily, both roots seem to add meaning to the sentence, as either the captives being redeemed, or those who have returned unto Christ being redeemed—who also are captives of mystical Babylon. The invitation is unto all: “Will ye not return unto me, and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you?” (3 Nephi 9:13b). We have said much about the threats and curses found in *Rain in Due Season*. Great promises of redemption are also found therein (Deuteronomy 30:1–10).

28 And the destruction[✓] of the transgressors and of the sinners [shall be] together, and they that forsake the LORD shall be consumed.

✓ breaking

And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners [shall be] together. Nations and individuals who do not turn to Christ with full purpose of heart will be counted as transgressors and sinners. “For behold, and lo, vengeance cometh speedily upon the ungodly as the whirlwind; and who shall escape it?” (D&C 97:22). ¶ *And they that forsake the LORD shall be consumed.* Those who forsake the Lord are those who place their trust and fear in man rather than God. All that are not sufficiently humble will not be able to stand when the Lord comes again. “For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root or branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings” (Malachi 4:1–2a).

29 For they shall be ashamed of the oaks which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen.

The LXX (6) reads, “For they shall be ashamed of their idols, which they delighted in, and they are made ashamed of the gardens which they coveted.” The Hebrew word **גִּדְיָן**, in Holy Writ, has a number of meanings, including the *prophetic pronouncement* that something will indeed or surely come to pass. It is often translated as *for* in the KJV. This verse has reference to the sensuous and idolatrous practices (see Hosea) that Israel had allowed to enter into her life, usually practiced around such shady trees³⁶ and ‘gardens.’ Lowth explains: “Sacred groves were a very ancient and favourite appendage of idolatry. They were furnished with the temple of the god to whom they were dedicated; with altars, images, and everything necessary for performing the various rites of worship offered there; and were the scenes of many impure ceremonies, and of much abominable superstition.” Most idolatry today takes place as a form of *intellectual idolatry* or the love of the philosophies of men over the *Word of God*.

30 For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water.

For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth. Those who prefer idolatry will be left without strength, as a tree whose leaves wilt. There also seems to be a specific

allusion to the tree that had been looked at as a symbol of strength and procreation, but now would be found wilted and faint.³⁷ ¶ *And as a garden that hath no water.* The term *gardens* included not only what today we consider ornamentals, but vineyards, orchards or other man-cultivated vegetation. A garden without water is scorched by the sun, and left worthless. This, in contrast to those who are planted by the living waters and place their trust in God: “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit” (Jeremiah 17:8). Margalioth also considers the *thesis and antithesis* of this verse, in contrast to “And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not” (ISAIAH 58:11) and “For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations” (ISAIAH 61:11).

31 And the strong shall be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench [them].

And the strong shall be as tow. Tow is a very flammable broken fiber, usually made out of flax, jute, or hemp and that can be used for spinning much like lamb’s wool is used for that same purpose (see Webster, HBD). The strong, or as stated in Malachi 4, *the proud*, will be like stubble, tow, or flammable material. ¶ *And the maker of it as a spark.* A number of translations prefer to render closer to the LXX (6) and the Syriac (5), “and their works” rather than *maker*. It is in consequence of people’s evil works, then, that condemnation comes: the spark that starts the stubble burning. ¶ *And they shall both burn together, and none shall quench [them].* The works of evil as well as the makers of it will be burned together. This will be especially so at the second coming of our Lord.

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³⁶ These trees were associated with idolatry.

³⁷ In ISAIAH 40:6–8, this idea of a leaf that fadeth is expanded upon. In ISAIAH 40:28–31 we note the source of true strength.

It is believed by most commentators that Isaiah Chapters 2 through 4 form a united section.

Isaiah 2

The chapter opens with a glorious vision upon the latter days and the millennium, revolving around the time when the Messiah will come again upon the earth, when the mountain of the Lord's mountain will stand as an ensign for all the world to see and flock to, and when metal used for arms of war will be melted down to be used as implements of husbandry. The Lord teaches Israel not to put her faith in the arm of flesh or in false idols that cannot save. The pride of man will be shown to be of no strength. All who have looked to others rather than to the Lord for succor shall be humbled. Man will seek to hide from God by going to the rocks of the hills and mountains, but to no advantage. Man cannot hide from his own iniquity or from God.

COLOR CODE: Both the Book of Mormon and the Prophet Joseph Smith's *Inspired Version* (JST)—also known as the “*New Translation*” of the Bible¹—provide important corrections to the text of Isaiah as we find it in our King James Version. Some of these changes are vital while others are inconsequential. Beginning with ISAIAH 2 we face this issue. ISAIAH 1 is not included in the Book of Mormon, nor are there JST changes for ISAIAH 1. Nephi explained that some “... of the most plain and precious parts of the gospel of the Lamb ... have been kept back by that abominable church” (1 Nephi 13:34b). It is clear that for the Old Testament most of these changes made by designing and wicked priests took place anciently, before the time of the Dead Sea Scrolls (Q). These *precious parts* have been restored by the Book of Mormon and by the JST. The next question, of course, is how much were the scriptures changed even *before* they formed part of the Brass Plates in the Book of Mormon? John Tvedtnes has thought along the same lines: “In my longer study of the ‘Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon,’ I note that there are times when some of the ancient versions disagree with both MT/KJV² and Book of Mormon and that this is to be expected. We shall not always find support for the Book of Mormon, nor shall we always find support for KJV, in ancient texts, because variants existed already in very early times. Because of this, the brass plates of Laban, though closer in time to the original, need not always represent Isaiah’s original

intent.”³ Finally, these same points about early textual changes to *all* presently known Hebrew texts (including M and Q) are brilliantly made by the preeminent Jewish scholar, Emanuel Tov.⁴ For the most part the Book of Mormon and JST coincide. BLUE will be used to indicate *additional* words or punctuation included in the Book of Mormon, and VIOLET in the JST. If both the Book of Mormon and JST make the same additions, then TEAL is used. When there are extra words in the KJV that were removed by either the Book of Mormon or JST, they will be placed in brackets { } or < > with a ~~strikethrough~~ mark to correspond to the Book of Mormon or JST respectively. Where both the Book of Mormon and JST are the same, no brackets are used outside the strikethrough. If the strikethrough is within [], that is for the elliptical words supplied by the KJV translators (which we present in *italics* in the commentary portion of this book), it means that the KJV supplied word has not been retained. If word in [] has a color and no strikethrough, it indicates that the word was used in the Book of Mormon, JST, or both,

¹ See Robert J. Matthews article on the topic, “Joseph Smith’s Inspired Translation of the Bible,”

<https://www.lds.org/ensign/1972/12/joseph-smiths-inspired-translation-of-the-bible?lang=eng> (also see his book, *A Plainer Translation: Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Bible, a History and Commentary*. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1975.

² MT here, stands for Hebrew Masoretic Text (M) or pointed Hebrew Text.

³ Tvedtnes, John A. in Peterson, Daniel C., ed. FARMS Review of Books, Provo, Utah: Foundation, Vol. 6, Number 2, p. 244. The interesting paper “Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon” by Tvedtnes is found in Nyman, Monte S., and Charles D. Tate, Jr., eds. *Isaiah and the Prophets: Inspired Voices from the Old Testament*. Religious Studies Center Monograph Series, Volume 10. Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1984.

⁴ Tov, Emanuel. *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (2nd Edition), Augsburg Fortress Press, Minneapolis, MN, 2001. Textual criticism (sometimes known as *lower criticism*) attempts to point out possible changes and corruptions in our extant versions of the Scriptures. Both mistakes in copying, as well as intentional changes to the text—are included. Textual criticism should not be confused with *higher criticism*. The latter intends to destroy the integrity of the Scriptures and our confidence and faith in God. Higher critics expressly state that man cannot receive revelation from God. An increasing number of Bible versions today are produced by higher critics and deny the divinity of the Jesus Christ.

depending on the same color scheme. For ease in reading, deleted or changed *punctuation* found in the KJV will not be pointed out unless the meaning is changed. Likewise, sometimes the punctuation in the Book of Mormon and JST differ, but such differences will not be underscored, especially when the JST restores punctuation back to what the KJV had (e.g., ISAIAH 3:11, 14). Finally, where there are differences between the Book of Mormon and the JST that are not easily indicated with the system noted, additional changes will be pointed out by asterisks. If the JST restores a change away from the Book of Mormon toward the KJV, then the KJV is retained with a note. KJV spelling is kept throughout. While Brother Joseph was able to make many monumental changes through the JST, the JST does not purport to have the final changes to the scriptures. The Prophet did not have time to spend countless hours on this project, but rather, spent much of his life being persecuted, serving others, being falsely imprisoned, and ultimately, paid the price of a martyr. While one may wonder what additional inspired insights the Prophet Joseph could have left for us if his life would not have been so cruelly cut short, nevertheless, what he has left us is a treasure, a pearl of great price.⁵

⁵ Many LDS believe that the Lord permitted the prophet Joseph to use his Bible as a basis for many of the Biblical verses in the Book of Mormon. This approach is not unusual for translators, who make it a point to leave a previous translation intact, except for the needed changes. Numerous such examples abound, of which I will only mention four. 1) George M. Lamsa's Peshitta Syriac Version of the Bible (1957) uses the KJV almost predominantly, except for the changes in the Eastern text. 2) The *Dead Sea Scrolls Bible* (DSSB, 1999) team included a member who helped produce the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), so it is not a surprise that the NRSV has such a strong influence on this Dead Sea Scroll version. 3) The 1955 Jewish Publication Society (JPS) of America version of the Holy Scriptures, is based strongly on the KJV. In many early translations (including the KJV), in fact, it was the objective of the translating committee *not* to make changes to the former version, unless the changes were absolutely essential. 4) Robert Lowth, an eminent Isaiah scholar said this about his own translation: "I have ventured to call this a New Translation, though much of our vulgar translation is retained in it. As the style of that translation is not only excellent in itself, but has taken possession of our ear, and of our taste, to have endeavoured to vary from it with no other design than that of giving something new instead of it, would have been to disgust the reader, and to represent the sense of the Prophet in a more unfavorable manner; besides that it is impossible for a verbal translator to follow an approved verbal translation which has gone before him, without frequently treading in the very footsteps of it." With this background, let us return to the question of the use of the Bible by Joseph Smith. The Lord made it clear that translation took effort. Oliver Cowdery had hoped to help Brother Joseph with the translation, but was not diligent in the effort so the Lord took away his permission to do so, "Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought save it was to ask me" (D&C 9:7). The Prophet Joseph Smith translated the whole of the Book of Mormon at a phenomenal speed. When the Lord had Joseph Smith correct the Bible, this was not all completed with a single pass through. In fact, the work was not completed when the Prophet Joseph Smith was martyred. In October 1903, H. Chamberlain, a non-

member, wrote President Joseph F. Smith. He wanted to know why the language in the Book of Mormon was identical to the KJV, when scriptures were quoted. "I find that Christ in quoting to the people on this side of the water, the third and fourth chapters of Malachi, quotes, according to the Book of Mormon, in the identical text of King James' version, not missing a word. I find that in many instances, in his talks with the people, and to his disciples here, he used the identical language of the King James' version, not even omitting the words supplied by the translators. [Chamberlain means the words in italics in the KJV, or supplied ellipses]. Now, I know that no two parties will take the same manuscript and make translations of a matter contained therein, and the language of the two translators be alike; indeed, the language employed by the two parties will widely differ. These translations are from different manuscripts, and from different languages, and still it appears in the Book of Mormon as King James' translation. I can conceive of no other way in which such a coincidence could have occurred, within the range of human experience, except where one writing is copied from another, and then it takes the utmost care to get them exactly alike, word for word, and letter for letter as this is. The foundation of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints rests, it seems to me, on the honesty and authenticity of the Book of Mormon, and if that is not just what it claims to be, and was not obtained just as Joseph claims it to be given to him, then you are the same as other churches, a mixture of truth and error—still practicing more truth than they, but without authority. Now, what I want to know is, how do you as a Church account for these things appearing in the Book of Mormon in the identical language of King James' version, when we know his version is faulty, and the same translators could not have made it twice alike themselves? Did Joseph copy it from the Bible, or did the Lord adopt the identical language in revealing to Joseph?" President Joseph F. Smith asked Elder B. H. Roberts to answer this query. I quote here only a very brief portion from Elder Robert's interesting response, of November 1903: "It should be understood also, in this connection, that while Joseph Smith obtained the facts and ideas from the Nephite characters through the inspiration of God, he was left to express those facts and ideas, in the main, in such language as he could command; and when he found that parts of the Nephite record closely paralleled passages in the Bible, and being conscious that the language of our English Bible was superior to his own, he adopted it, except for those differences indicated in the Nephite original which here and there make the Book of Mormon version of passages superior in sense and clearness. Of course, I recognize the fact that this is but a conjecture; but I believe it to be a reasonable one; and indeed the only one which satisfactorily disposes of the difficulty you point out." Elder B. H. Roberts goes on to quote numerous examples of how the Book of Mormon preserved a better and clearer translation than the KJV. Also of interest, from the same source, is B. H. Robert's explanation as to the Malachi prophecies in the Book of Mormon: "The prophecy of Malachi (chapter 3 and 4) quoted in the Book of the Mormon was supplied by the Savior, and the Nephites engraved portions of these scriptures in their records, and this both in the Hebrew, and what the Nephites called the reformed Egyptian" (p. 176). I fancy to all this, however, another inquiry will rise in your mind, and that is: Since Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon by means of the Urim and Thummim, why is it that he did not give throughout a translation direct from the Nephite plates, instead of following our English Bible, since translation by means of the Urim and Thummim must have been so simple and so easy? It is at this particular point where, in my opinion, a very great mistake is made, both by our own people, and our friends in the world. That is, translation by the Urim and Thummim is not so simple and easy a thing as it might at first glance appear. Many have supposed that the Prophet Joseph had merely to look in the Urim and Thummim, and there see, without any thought or effort on his part, both the Nephite characters and the translation in English. In other words, the instrument did everything and the Prophet nothing, except merely to look in the Urim and Thummim as one might look into a mirror, and then give out what he saw there. Such a view of the work of translation by Urim and Thummim I believe to be

vv. 1–5. The magnificent visions of a latter-day are seen by Isaiah. A day when the mountain of the Lord’s house, that is the Holy Temple, will be established in the top of the mountains; a day of restoration, where people will be called to the restored Church from every corner of the globe; even a millennial day, where swords will be beaten into plowshares and are no longer needed. Next, comes the glorious invitation to Israel to come and walk in the light of the Lord. These five verses also appear in a very closely related fashion in Micah 4:1–5. Since the words of scripture are inspired of the Lord, it is not unusual for those who speak as moved upon by the Holy Ghost to quote the words of Scripture. Either both Micah and Isaiah were quoting from an earlier prophet, from each other, or were independently inspired with these words directly from the Lord. The Prophet Joseph Smith’s own writings are full of either direct or indirect quotes, allusions and paraphrases of scripture. So much so that a newer edition of the well-known work *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (TPJS) has now been re-issued under the title of *Scriptural Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (STPJS). This latter edition is the same as the former, except that it contains footnotes indicating the source of the hundreds and hundreds of scriptures used by Brother Joseph. When a prophets use the writings of others, it was not with the intent of making them appear as their own, but rather, with the assumption that all who would read them would *know* their origins. And not only would know their origin, but their context and historical background. This is once again, a reason why the *learning of the Jews* is so necessary to understand the Book of Isaiah. The first four verses in ISAIAH 2 were among the scriptures that Angel Moroni quoted to Joseph Smith according to the Oliver Cowdery narrative (see note to ISAIAH 1:7).

altogether incorrect. I think it caused the Prophet the exercise of all his intellectual and spiritual forces to obtain the translation; that it was an exhausting work, which taxed even his great powers to their uttermost limit; and hence, when he could ease himself of those labors by adopting a reasonably good translation already existing, I think he was justified in doing so ... I trust that the suggestions here offered, as an explanation of the difficulty you present, will have the effect of removing it out of your way; but whether they will be altogether satisfactory or not, this I would suggest to you: consider more especially the positive testimony that exists for the truth of the Book of Mormon, particularly following the injunction of Moroni, in chapter ten, verses four and five of this book, wherein he makes the promise that those who will ask God the Eternal Father for a testimony of the truth of the Nephite record, shall receive such a testimony by the power of the Holy Ghost; ‘and by the power of the Holy Ghost,’ as Moroni teaches us, ‘we may know the truth of all things’” (184–185). (*Biblical and Modern Evidences of the Book of Mormon: Bible Quotations in the Book of Mormon*, by B. H. Roberts, pp. 173–189.)

1 ¶ THE word that Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem:

The emphasis of this introduction is on the word רָאָה. *saw*, for *seer*, and on Judah, or the southern kingdom, with Jerusalem as its center.

2 And it shall come to pass in the last days, [that] when the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it;

✓ or, prepared

And it shall come to pass. Latter-day Saints will notice the similarity of the expression to the frequently used *and it came to pass* in the Book of Mormon. Because the Hebrew Scriptures are almost void of punctuation, the word “and” is used frequently. The Hebrew character that represents the word “and” is called *vav*, or *waw*, and is expressed as the letter ו. When the ו is coupled with the word יהי, that is, *to be* or *to become*, then it is read as either *and it came to pass* or *and it shall come to pass*.⁶ Such use of the conjunction or introductory particle is so frequent that some versions have tended to drop it, while others such as the KJV and the ASV have been more true to the original (TWOT). This dropping of the “and” as well as the “and it came to pass” seems to have been a general phenomenon of translators today, who have moved away from a more literal translation. For example, in ISAIAH 2:3, The *and* in “And many people ...” is dropped by the HNV, WEB, NIV, NRSV, NAB, and NJB, to name a few. In ISAIAH 1:31, the *and* in “and the strong ...” is dropped by the HCSB, HNV, NASB, WEB, NIV, NRSV, NAB, NJB, NRSV and even in the Tanakh Jewish translation. ¶ *In the last days.* This usage is similar to the frequently used eschatological expression, *in that day* (see ISAIAH 2:11, 17, 20). Both speak of a future time when prophecy will be fulfilled. The Jewish exegete Kimhi said, “Wherever the latter times are mentioned in Scripture, the days of the Messiah are always meant” (Lowth). ¶ *When the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains.* The “mountain of the Lord’s house” is THE HOUSE OF THE LORD, the Holy Temple. In the last days, says Isaiah, the Temple would be established or built in the top of

⁶ In ISAIAH 2:2, וַיְהִי.

the mountains. The tops of the mountains have been used for such purposes since time immemorial. Moses talked to the Lord on the top of Mount Sinai before the Tabernacle, which functioned as the Temple in the wilderness, was built. Likewise, the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1–9; Mark 9:2–9) operated as a Temple. There Peter, James, and John received specific priesthood keys, very much like what took place 3 April 1836, in the Kirtland Temple (see D&C 110 and *Transfiguration, Mount of*, in LDS Bible Dictionary). There, they probably were also *endowed with power from on high* (see Luke 24:49; D&C 38:32; 124:39). Another place to which people gather from around the world has been the Tabernacle and the Conference Centers from which General Conference is transmitted. ¶ *And shall be exalted above the hills*. Many of these temples are, like the Salt Lake City Temple, literally built in the tops of the mountains, and are exalted above the hills, such as the Oakland Temple, which is frequently used as a navigational light by those in the sea and air, the Santiago, Chile Temple, and the Anchorage, Alaska Temple, to name a few. The eyes of the world are upon these edifices. And of course, how about Jerusalem itself, where one of the great latter-day temples will be built? So also the temple to be built in Jackson County. ¶ In response to Joseph Smith's question "When will Zion be built up in her glory, and where will thy Temple stand, unto which all nations shall come in the last days?" (D&C 57 section heading) the Lord responded: "And thus saith the Lord your God, if you will receive wisdom here is wisdom. Behold, the place which is now called Independence is the center place; and a spot for the temple is lying westward, upon a lot which is not far from the courthouse" (D&C 57:3). But where are the hills and the mountains wherein such a temple will be built? What could be said of the Jerusalem, can also be said of the Temple in Jackson County, as if the Lord so desires it, all these things can be done. Delitzsch suggests: "The prophet here predicted that the mountain which bore the temple of Jehovah, and therefore was already in dignity the most exalted of all mountains, would one day tower in actual height above all the high places of the earth. The basaltic mountains of Bashan, which rose up in bold peaks and columns, might now look down with scorn and contempt upon the small limestone hill which Jehovah had chosen (Psalm 68:16–17)⁷; but this was an incongruity which the last times would remove, by making the outward correspond to the inward, the appearance to the reality and the intrinsic worth." Furthermore, the Lord would transfer the holiness of

Sinai to Zion. Delitzsch has: "What had been commenced at Sinai for Israel, would be completed at Zion for all the world." Interestingly, Delitzsch suggests that one way that Zion might be built higher in a more literal way, is when the New Jerusalem is set upon it. As LDS, of course, we believe that the New Jerusalem will be in Jackson County. ¶ President Snow taught: "The city of Zion will be built in Jackson County. The site for the city of Zion was pointed out by the Prophet Joseph Smith as Jackson County, Missouri, and there some of our people settled in 1831, but were subsequently driven from their homes. This event, while it delayed the building of the city, did not change the place of its location. The Latter-day Saints fully expect to return to Jackson County and 'build up Zion.' Their exodus to the Rocky Mountains and their sojourn in the stakes of Zion, as the places are called which they now inhabit, they regard as preparatory to that return, and as events that had to be in order to fulfill scripture, notably these words of Isaiah: 'O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain' [ISAIAH 40:9]. 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it' [ISAIAH 2:2]."⁸ And what of the temple in Jerusalem in Judea? "Yea, let the cry go forth among all people: Awake and arise and go forth to meet the Bridegroom; behold and lo, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Prepare yourselves for the great day of the Lord. Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour. Let them, therefore, who are among the Gentiles flee unto Zion. And let them who be of Judah flee unto Jerusalem, unto the mountains of the Lord's house" (D&C 133:10–13). ¶ *And all nations shall flow unto it*. Several commentators have mentioned how Isaiah's image using the word *flow* implies a large number of people in a continual stream (e.g. Barnes, Matthew Henry). Isaiah uses this theme in several places, such as: "For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream ..." (ISAIAH 66:12a). President Hinckley had these interesting comments to make regarding this verse in Isaiah: "I believe that prophecy applies to the historic and wonderful Salt Lake Temple. But I believe also that it is related to this [speaking of the new Conference Center] magnificent hall. For it is from this pulpit that the law of God shall go forth, together with the word and testimony of the Lord."⁹ Similar comments have been pronounced of the old

⁷ "Why leap ye, ye high hills? [this] is the hill [which] God desireth to dwell in; yea, the Lord will dwell [in it] for ever. The chariots of God [are] twenty thousand, [even] thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, [as in] Sinai, in the holy [place]" (Psalms 68:16–17).

⁸ Snow, President Lorenzo. *The Teachings of Lorenzo Snow*. Edited by Clyde J. Williams. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, (2 January 1902, MS, 64:2), 1984, pp. 182–183.

⁹ Hinckley, Gordon B. "This Great Millennial Year," Sunday Morning 170th Annual General Conference.

Tabernacle in Temple Square. Those who have long layovers at the Salt Lake City Airport have the opportunity to get on a van for a trip into town to tour the visitor's center and Temple Square. All temples throughout the world attract the gaze of the people who pass them. Before temples are dedicated, they afford a special opportunity for nonmembers to visit and feel the overabundance of the Spirit. Even where there is no temple nearby, our spiritual gazes are upon the temple where sacred vicarious ordinances are carried out on behalf of our ancestors.

3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD. This verse, as so many in Isaiah, is pure poetry. This is an invitation: to all who are not members, to partake of the waters of baptism; to all who have already entered the waters of baptism, to further prepare to receive sacred ordinances; and for those who have partaken of the ordinances, to remain worthy and serve our kindred dead by performing the necessary ordinances on their behalf. Avraham Gileadi explains the context of the words *go up*: “The verb ‘go up’ or ‘ascend’ in this verse (Heb. **יָעֲלֶה**) is a pilgrimage motif and key word. Two or three times a year, in the seasons of religious festivals, the ancient Israelites ‘went up’ or ‘ascended’ to Jerusalem from throughout the land of Israel to make a pilgrimage to the temple of the Lord (see Psalm 122:1–4; cf. Zechariah 14:16–18). This pilgrimage was traditionally made in remembrance of the exodus out of Egypt under Moses, the period of wandering in the wilderness, and the return to the land of the fathers under Joshua. Later, it became a prophetic type of the latter-day return of Israel from throughout the earth (cf. Jeremiah 31:6), and Isaiah uses the imagery of a pilgrimage to Zion in this very context in 30:29; 35:8–10; and 51:10, 11. By means of the key verb ‘go up’ or ‘ascend’ in ISAIAH 2:3, he thus again identifies the idea of Israel's return with the scene of the nations going to Zion depicted in this verse, and the return itself with a latter-day setting.”¹⁰ ¶ *To the house of the God of*

Jacob. Like *Holy one of Israel* (see ISAIAH 1:4), this is a loving title given to our Savior. The *God of Jacob* brings to our mind a loving, personal God. Those who have had the privilege of being born in this day when the fullness of the Gospel has been restored upon the earth will be especially sensitive to the call of the Good Shepherd, to come and partake of the wedding feast, and most specially, to come unto Christ and unto His temple. ¶ *And he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths.* When we accept the invitation to partake of baptism, and then receive the Holy Ghost through the ordinance of confirmation, then we can be taught from on high. So literally, *He will teach us of his ways.* This is no matter of speech, no vain promise; we can indeed receive a flow of revelation, comfort, peace, and knowledge. Without a doubt, this invitation to follow the Savior's example, and to *walk in His paths*, is among the most striking and lovely scriptures to be found anywhere. In the most beautiful and poetic verse in Leviticus 26, the Lord would bless an obedient Israel with His presence: “And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people” (Leviticus 26:12, *Rain in Due Season*). This can be our joy, this is what we have to look forward to if we are obedient. ¶ *For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.* Elder Brigham H. Roberts, in a General Conference address, asked: “Why the law from Zion? Why the word of the Lord from Jerusalem?”¹¹ In this magnificent address to the Saints, Elder Roberts goes on to explain that out of Zion (the American continent) there would grow a system of government, where individual freedoms would predominate, and which would be based on the voice of the people, such that it would be a land of liberty.¹² Elder Roberts then goes on to explain his views about the beautiful role that Jerusalem would play in the last days. He suggests that out of Jerusalem the revelation of the Lord would proceed. In doing so, he repeatedly warns Latter-day Saints against narrow or ethnocentric views that might minimize the importance of Jerusalem. “When we take into account the greatness of our own dispensation of the Gospel, I think sometimes we overlook the grandeur and the greatness of the ‘Dispensation of the Meridian of Times.’ It must always be remembered that the great Atonement, the central fact of the Gospel, was wrought out at Jerusalem; that there the sacrifice was made; that there the Son of God

¹⁰ Gileadi, Avraham, “Isaiah: Four Latter-day Keys to an Ancient Book,” in Nyman, Monte S., and Charles D. Tate, Jr., eds. *Isaiah and the Prophets: Inspired Voices from the Old Testament*. Religious

Studies Center Monograph Series, Volume 10. Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1984, p. 133.

¹¹ Roberts, Brigham H., April 1908 General Conference Report, pp. 107–110.

¹² President Harold B. Lee was another individual who frequently pointed out the relationship between this prophetic scripture, and the important role that would be played by the Constitutional form of government found in the USA. See, for instance, *The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, compiled by Clyde J. Williams, p. 364.

took upon Him our sins; there our transgressions were laid upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. *** Jerusalem must forever be a holy shrine, a place to which the eyes of all nations will turn for light and inspiration; what more natural, then, than that it should become a holy city, the capital of the eastern world, if you will, the holy sanctuary whence shall issue the word of the Lord in future even more abundantly than in the past.”

4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks — nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

✓ or, scythes

And he shall judge among the nations. In ISAIAH 1:26 we discussed the role that latter-day judges would play in the re-established Church, in the day that the Lord would *restore thy judges as at the first*. Here we are told that the millennial day will come when the Holy One of Israel will own His people again and personally reign upon the earth as the Judge of Israel. Sooner or later, of course, we will all be judged by the *Keeper of the Gate* who “employeth no servant there; and there is none other way save it be by the gate; for he cannot be deceived, for the Lord God is his name” (2 Nephi 9:41b). ¶ *And shall rebuke many people.* The Lord invites us all to repent while it is yet time, “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent” (Revelation 3:19). Alma the High Priest taught, “And now I say unto, all you that are desirous to follow the voice of the good shepherd, come ye out from the wicked, and be ye separate, and touch not their unclean things; and behold, their names shall be blotted out, that the names of the wicked shall not be numbered among the names of the righteous, that the word of God may be fulfilled, which saith: The names of the wicked shall not be mingled with the names of my people; For the names of the righteous shall be written in the book of life, and unto them will I grant an inheritance at my right hand” (Alma 5:57–58a). The Lord rebukes us because He loves us. ¶ *And they shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks.* Of those who have lived upon the earth, only the just will be brought forth in the morning of the first resurrection and permitted to abide the millennial day when there shall be no war and Christ will reign personally. There will be no need of swords, whose metal will be put to better use, such as for agrarian implements. ¶ *Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn*

war any more. Isaiah will have much more to say about the joyful and peaceful felicity that will exist during the millennial reign. Much of the joy we feel in this lifetime is the joy given to us by the Holy Ghost, so that we are able to feel at peace even in the midst of growing trouble around us. Those who desire this peace need not wait until the millennium to experience it, but can feel it now by walking in the light of the Lord. The extent of the millennial joy, however, will be widespread, as the waters that cover the oceans.

5 O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD; yea, come, for ye have all gone astray, every one to his wicked ways.

O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD. Once again, that beautiful invitation to *walk in the light of the Lord* and thus keep His commandments: “And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul” (Deuteronomy 10:12). Those who love the Lord will desire to so walk, “for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them” (Hosea 14:9b). “And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect” (Genesis 17:1). The Lord will prove each one of us in this life. Formerly, He put Israel to the test, too, “...that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no” (Exodus 16:14b). I love the way that is phrased, *whether they will walk in my law, or no*. As discussed in ISAIAH 2:3, this reminds us of the glorious promise in *Rain in Due Season*: “And I will walk among you, and *will be your God*, and *ye shall be my people*” (Leviticus 26:12). If we keep the commandments, then, and walk in His light, we shall have the Spirit of the Holy Ghost, or the Comforter, to illuminate our way. The Lord even promised the Second Comforter to those who truly humbled themselves, His own companionship. As in ISAIAH 2:3 there is the “let us,” or the idea that we do not do this alone, but invite all who will listen to come along. ¶ *Yea, come, for ye have all gone astray, every one to his wicked ways.* This is, once again, an invitation to turn, שׁוּב, and make whatever course corrections are needed, and follow the Savior. Nephi taught that if we are not brought into the light, it is because we ask not: “Wherefore, now after I have spoken these words, if ye cannot understand them it will be because ye ask not, neither do ye knock; wherefore, ye are not brought into the light, but must perish in the dark” (2 Nephi 32:4). Jacob, the brother of Nephi,

exhorted: “O then, my beloved brethren, come unto the Lord, the Holy One” (2 Nephi 9:41a). When the invitation is accepted, and we enter in the way and continue it, we can be guided by the Spirit in all things and thus walk with the Lord: “For behold, again I say unto you that if ye will enter in by the way, and receive the Holy Ghost, it will show unto you all things what ye should do” (2 Nephi 32:5).

vv. 6–9. The people have abandoned the Lord, as they have turned to admire the customs of other nations, and have sought after diviners rather than the Lord, and have permitted their children to be intermarried with those outside the covenant. Their trust has been on the work of their own hands, even their worldly treasures and mighty armies. Israel has stooped down to idol worship.

6 ¶ Therefore, O Lord, thou hast forsaken thy people, the house of Jacob, because they be replenished from[✓] the east, and [are] hearken unto soothsayers like the Philistines, and they please[✓] themselves in the children of strangers.

- ✓ or, more than
- ✓ or, abound with

Therefore, O Lord, thou hast forsaken thy people, the house of Jacob. Isaiah, who is permitted to see into the future, can see that the Lord would permit the children of Jacob, both Ephraim and Judah, to be carried away captive by Assyria and Babylonia, respectively. ¶ *Because they be replenished from the east.* The LDS footnotes suggest that the people are filled with the beliefs of aliens. Instead of being a light on a hill for all to see, they “mingled among the heathen, and learned their works” (Psalm 106:35, also see vv. 34, 36 ff.). Several Bible versions interpret this verse similarly: “filled with customs from the east” (ASV); “filled with influences from the east” (NAS); “full [of practices] from the East” (Tanakh). The LXX (6) translates these words as “their land is filled as at the beginning,” suggesting as the Psalm, that the influence of the settlers had been overcome by the influence of the original Canaanite inhabitants of these lands, people who had done that which was wicked in the eyes of the Lord. The Syriac (S) and Douay (Latin Vulgate (V)) translation into English) agree with the general approach of the LXX (6), “because they are self-satisfied as in the olden days,” and “because they are filled as in times past.” Some translations introduce the idea that they are filled with diviners, fortunetellers or superstitions (NRSV, NAB, NIV). The difficulty in this

passage is that the Hebrew מִן־הָמָזְרָח can mean “on the east” or “of old, formerly” (AHCL). Either way, then, what seems to be certain, is that whatever they are filled with is not from God. ¶ *And hearken unto soothsayers like the Philistines.* Instead of turning to the Lord, Israel was quick to turn to soothsayers and diviners or others who would prophecy of future events. In an earlier time, Saul had been the example of such desire to lean on the arm of flesh rather than the might of God (see my notes on Saul’s fall in ISAIAH 26). ¶ *And they please themselves in the children of strangers.* This section has been interpreted as having business dealings with other nations, “strike bargains” (NAS). Some versions are less clear as to whether they clasp hands in business or in marriage: “strike hands with the children of foreigners” (ASV), and “clasp hands” (NRSV, NIV). The LXX (6) and Syriac (S) suggest that marriage was involved, “and many strange children were born to them,” and “they have reared many alien children.” Of all the commandments given to Israel, one of the most compelling was to marry in the covenant. The Lord had specifically asked Israel not to allow herself to be influenced by the ways of the surrounding nations, and the previous inhabitants of Canaan: “And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them” (Leviticus 20:23). Israel, then, had not passed the test of walking in His statutes, and so the price would have to be paid: The Lord had warned and forewarned, “And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish” (Deuteronomy 18:19).

7 Their land also is full of silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures; their land is also full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots:

In the Mosaic Law, the Lord warned Israel and commanded her not to multiply either horses nor silver and gold: “But he¹³ shall not multiply horses to himself ... Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold” (Deuteronomy 17:16a, 17). The Lord wanted Israel to put her trust in Him. Men often prefer to put their trust in themselves, or in their neighbor. The Lord says, *prove me now herewith* (Malachi 3:10). But the man answers, “I cannot come to Church with you, for it is Sunday when I make more money than the rest of the week!” *Their land also is full*

¹³ That is, the king that the Lord would set over Israel.

of silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures. Israel was filled with riches. One could say that she had a *strong economy*. Riches can be the result of prosperity and blessings from God—but how often is God acknowledged by individuals and by nations? Riches can also come from the exploitation of the poor, the overtaxing of the people, or burdens placed on other nations. ¶ *Their land is also full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots.* Besides economic strength, dominant nations can be filled with military might. In the scriptures, horses and chariots are often used to represent military strength. The Lord makes it clear that when He is on our side, we need not fear the strength of our enemies: “But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen” (Hosea 1:7); “When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, *and* a people more than thou, be not afraid of them” (Deuteronomy 20:1). One of the great messages we receive through Isaiah, then, is that we need to place our trust in God, even—or shall we say, especially—when the matter at hand seems impossible, and “Fear not: for they that *be* with us *are* more than they that *be* with them” (2 Kings 6:16b).

8 Their land ~~also~~ **is also** full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made:

Their land is also full of idols. אֱלִילִים is generally used for idols. The singular of אֱלִילִים is אֱלִיל, meaning *worthless* (HAL, BDB). Cheyne suggests that אֱלִיל is a contraction אֵל (no) and אֵיל (strong, noble) and that the word *idols* may well be translated *no-gods* or *nonentities*. Not only has Israel leaned upon the arm of flesh, but has turned to *no-god*. Is it not interesting that the very men who refuse to follow the Lord are often moved by superstition? Or by intellectual idolatry? ¶ *They worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made.* One of the recurring messages of Isaiah is the absurdity of worshipping manmade idols (e.g., ISAIAH 44:15–17). As we apply issues of idolatry to ourselves, we must avoid the philosophies of men and intellectual idolatry (ISAIAH 55:8–9).

9 And the mean man boweth **not** down, and the great man humbleth himself **not**: therefore forgive them not.

And the mean man boweth not down, and the great man humbleth himself not. Without the Book of Mormon and

JST corrections and restitution of both of the dropped “not,” this verse would seem to continue to have reference to idol worship. Instead, this is a summary statement of the preceding verses, in which man refused to humble himself before the Lord. Man was willing to bow down to the influences of foreign nations, soothsayers, the power of economic and military strength, as well as to idols. To all of these things would man bow down to, but yet would not humble himself before God. The English word *mean* in “mean man,” (or in the 1611 KJV, “meane man”) as used in the language of the day, signified someone of low, common, or insignificant stature or importance. Gesenius makes a distinction between the two Hebrew words, one often used for a *common* man, *adam*, אָדָם, in contrast to a more *noble* one, *ish*, אִישׁ. In ISAIAH 5:15, we see that both of these men would be humbled: “And the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled.” ¶ *Therefore forgive them not.* Rabbi J.H. Hertz coincides well with the LDS perspective on sin: “This fundamental thought, viz. that God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked, is an essential doctrine of Judaism as of every higher religion. They may differ as to the nature and form of Divine retribution, but the belief that right is rewarded and wrong punished is part of an ethical faith, a belief vindicated and confirmed by the experience of humanity.”¹⁴

vv. 10–22. Man’s sins will not go unpunished, even if he seeks to hide from the lord in the furthestmost caves and mountains. Instead, man will be humbled and the Lord will be exalted. The Glory of the Lord will be too much for people to look upon, when he comes to judge the nations of the earth. All nations, peoples, and individuals will humble themselves before the Lord. Idolatry will finally be recognized as useless.

10 ¶ **O ye wicked ones**, enter into the rock, and hide thee* in the dust, for **the** fear of the LORD and {~~for~~} the glory of his majesty** shall smite thee.

* JST, hide ye

** JST, and his majesty (“the glory of” deleted)

O ye wicked ones, enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust. The wicked will seek protection and a hiding place from the wrath of God in rocks, holes in the earth, and caves. When the Israelites were afraid of the Philistines, they likewise tried to hide where they could:

¹⁴ *Commentary from Pentateuch & Haftarahs* (ed. Dr. J.H. Hertz) on *Rain in Due Season* chapters. 2nd edition, 1978, p. 542.

“When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait, (for the people were distressed,) then the people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits” (1 Samuel 13:6). Such hiding will be as useless and ineffective as Adam and Eve’s attempts “to hide themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden” when they feared His wrath (Moses 4:14b). Certainly, hiding from God is senseless, for “Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord” (Jeremiah 23:24a). ¶ *For the fear of the LORD and the glory of his majesty shall smite thee.* When the Lord appears, His glory and majesty will have so much force that man will not be able to stand in the presence of the Lord, unless he is quickened. For instance, at the time of Solomon, when the Ark of the Covenant was placed in the Holy of Holies within the temple, we read that “the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord” (1 Kings 8:11).

11 And it shall come to pass that the lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men* shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.

* JST, man

And it shall come to pass that the lofty looks of man shall be humbled. Man can show his pride in the way he looks at others, as well as in how he wishes to be looked at or considered. ¶ *And the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down.* Until I heard President Benson’s talk, *Beware of Pride*,¹⁵ I had never supposed that pride was such a rampant sin, even in my own life. I had thought to myself, “What do I care about homes and cars, about lands and jewels and clothing?” My father and mother were to me a righteous example of persons who were not ostentatious despite their own wealth. But I was well acquainted with both the rich and those who wanted to appear that way. Their way of walking and holding themselves up, the affectation of their voices, and the extravagance in outer show. To me they appeared shallow, full of pretense; distinction of classes the reality of the day as I grew up. In contrast, among the rich Latter-day Saints, this affectation does not seem to exist. Instead, they are often willing to give generously and only ask that no one know of their gift. These people are willing to “treat themselves as a real person” to borrow the expression I once heard from a farm worker. I am sure there are such good people in all

religions, but I am only speaking from experience. But, returning to the issue of pride. I never supposed that I was a prideful man until I heard President Benson, and my eyes were opened. I have had such a high need for achievement in such things as dressage (youth to middle age), my work in labor management at the University of California, and even in the study and understanding of the scriptures. More and more I have come to understand, however, that where we excel it is a gift from God, and that a more sure way of succeeding is to have the Spirit of the Lord upon us, consecrating all of our doings to the Lord. And then giving thanks to the Lord, for our success. The moment we feel it was us who achieved a goal—rather than the Lord helping us reach our potentials—then we are in the deepest of errors. There is nothing wrong, then, with a desire to improve and to excel, as long as we are not competitive. The Prophet Obadiah spoke about pride: “The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt *thyself* as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord” (Obadiah 1:3–4). What is to be done, then? While I have been working at this, I cannot yet say that I have been *stripped of pride*. I know I will have achieved such a goal when I can be just as excited about someone else’s success in a field I deeply care about, as I would about my own accomplishment, which talent is a gift of God. But the task before us is clear, either we humble ourselves or the Lord will have to humble us: “And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted” (Matthew 23:12). ¶ *And the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.* It is so very comforting to know that the day will come when the only power will be that of the Lord, that the cruelty of man and the fiery dart of the adversary will be subjugated.

12 For the day of the LORD of Hosts [shall be] soon cometh upon all nations; yea, upon every [one that is]; yea, upon the proud and lofty, and upon every [one that is] who is lifted up, and he shall be brought low.

For the day of the LORD of Hosts soon cometh upon all nations. We are fast approaching the fulfillment of eschatological prophecies. The following was revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith: “Behold, verily I say unto you, the angels are crying unto the Lord day and night, who are ready and waiting to be sent forth to reap down the fields” (D&C 86:5). In other words, reap down Idumea or the world. This section of the Doctrine and

¹⁵ Benson, Ezra Taft. *Beware of Pride*. April 1989 General Conference, Saturday morning session.

Covenants was given 6 December 1832. President Wilford Woodruff taught: "... When I have the vision of the night opened continually before my eyes, and can see the mighty judgments that are about to be poured out upon this world ... God has held the angels of destruction for many years, lest they should reap down the wheat with the tares. But I want to tell you now, that those angels have left the portals of heaven, and they stand over this people and this nation now, and are hovering over the earth waiting to pour out the judgments. And from this very day they shall be poured out. Calamities and troubles are increasing in the earth, and there is a meaning to these things. Remember this, and reflect upon these matters. If you do your duty, and I do my duty, we'll have protection, and shall pass through the afflictions in peace and in safety."¹⁶ ¹⁷ ¹⁸ There are many other revelations which have likewise been fulfilled or soon will be. But what a grand day it will be when the Lord will come again *and all flesh shall see it together* (ISAIAH 40:5b): "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight, for the hour of his coming is nigh" (D&C 133:17b). ¶ *Yea, upon every one*. There are at least two ways to look at the second coming. One of them is the second coming itself. Another one, which should be just as sobering, is that for *every one* of us, we shall die *soon* (and in a manner of speaking thus be brought to the second coming). Man never knows when he will meet death and eternal accountability. In our youth time often seems to stand still, but as we mature time seems to move forth with haste and sometimes an almost dizzying speed. "And now, as I said to you before, as ye have had so many witnesses, therefore, I beseech of you that ye do not procrastinate the day of your repentance until the end; for after this day of life, which is given us to prepare for eternity, behold, if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be no labor performed" (Alma 34:33, also see 34 ff.). This warning and call for repentance is unto all, and none are exempted. For those who do not watch for the signs of the times that day will catch them by surprise: "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden distraction cometh upon them ..." (1 Thessalonians 5:2–3a). Borrowing an expression from the same Pauline text and placing it in a different context, I like to think that although no one will know the day or the hour, those

who watch will be as *a woman with child* when travail falls upon her. The moment and day are still a surprise, but the general season for the birth is known. Paul invites believers to be prepared, "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. ... Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" (1 Thessalonians 5:4, 6). ¶ *Yea, upon the proud and lofty*. Knowledge and wealth are two common sources of pride: "O the wise, and the learned, and the rich, that are puffed up in the pride of their hearts" (2 Nephi 14:15a). ¶ *And upon every one who is lifted up, and he shall be brought low*. Continuing with the theme in ISAIAH 2:11, it is good to remember the source of our blessings, lest it be that "Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God" (Deuteronomy 8:14a).

13 Yea, and the day of the Lord shall come upon all the cedars of Lebanon, [that] for they [are] high and lifted up; and upon all the oaks of Bashan;

Yea, and the day of the Lord. That is, the day of judgment that will come upon all men. ¶ *Shall come upon all the cedars of Lebanon*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has "and upon all the kings of the nations, the strong and the mighty." There are a number of expression to indicate those who are mighty in power or influence, one of them being the cedars of Lebanon (*Cedrus Libani Conifera*, see Barnes and Holman), a magnificent and commanding tall tree (also see notes on ISAIAH 10:34). It seems people have been calling each other names from time immemorial. One such case that particularly stands out is the conflict between Amaziah ben Joash, king of Judah and Jehoash ben Jehoahaz ben Jehu, king of Israel (see 2 Kings 14). Amaziah, king of Judah has been successful in a war against the Edomites (v. 7). Gaining much confidence in himself, he proceeded to send a message to Jehoash, king of Israel, in the colorful language of the time, "Come, let us look one another in the face," that is, let us measure how our strengths stand against each other in battle (v. 8). In response, Jehoash tells him to be content with his achievements, and not to push his luck through pride. It is at this point that Jehoash calls himself a *cedar* of Lebanon, and the king of Judah a *thistle* of Lebanon: "And Jehoash the king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The thistle that *was* in Lebanon sent to the cedar that *was* in Lebanon, saying, ... Thou hast indeed smitten Edom, and thine heart hath lifted thee up: glory of *this*, and tarry at home: for why shouldest thou meddle to *thy* hurt, that thou shouldest fall, even thou, and Judah with thee? But Amaziah would not hear. Therefore Jehoash king of Israel went up; and he and Amaziah king of Judah looked one another in the

¹⁶ *The Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star*, 8 April 1894, Volume 58.

¹⁷ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Church History and Modern Revelation*. Salt Lake City, Utah: The Council of The Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1946, p. 119.

¹⁸ *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Seminary Student Study Guide*, D&C 86. See Susa Young Gates, "The Temple Workers' Excursion," *The Young Woman's Journal*, August 1894, 512–13).

face at Beth-shemesh ... And Judah was put to the worse before Israel; and they fled every man to their tents” (2 Kings 14:9–12). Beside the idea of the men who have exalted themselves as the cedars of Lebanon, the multiple applications and fulfillment of scripture often have a quite literal application upon nature. Delitzsch wrote: “What the prophet foretold began to be fulfilled even in the Assyrian wars. The cedar woods of Lebanon were unsparingly destroyed; the heights and valleys of the land were trodden down and laid waste; and, in the period of the great empires which commenced with Tiglath-pileser, the Holy Land was reduced to a shadow of its former promised beauty.” The elements of nature, of course, are never lifted up against the Lord, but are always ready to sing praises to Him: “Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars ... Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven” (Psalm 148:9, 13). Speaking of the writing style of the Hebrews, Lowth explained: “These verses afford us a striking example of that peculiar way of writing which makes a principal characteristic of the parabolical or poetical style of the Hebrews, and in which their prophets deal so largely; namely, their manner of exhibiting things divine, spiritual, moral, and political, by a set of images taken from things natural, artificial, religious, historical; in the way of metaphor or allegory. *** Thus you will find, in many other places beside this before us, that cedars of Libanus and oaks of Basan are used, in the way of metaphor and allegory, for kings, princes, potentates, of the highest rank.” ¶ *For they are high and lifted up.* Just like Amaziah king of Judah was lifted up in pride and was subsequently brought down, so will any who put their trust in any other than the Holy One of Israel. ¶ *And upon all the oaks of Bashan.* The oak was another mighty tree. Bashan is believed to have been a fertile area northeast of the Sea of Chinnereth (called the Sea of Galilee at the time of Christ) known for its agriculture and oak trees (LEB, Holman).

14 And upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills, and upon all the nations which [that are] lifted up, and upon every people;*

* Note: Paragraph division as Book of Mormon, rather than JST. In JST, “And upon every people” is part of the next paragraph.

And upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills. Both hills and mountains represent refuge on the one hand, and stand as symbols of importance and status on the other. ¶ *And upon all the nations which are lifted up, and upon every people.* Complete nations and peoples

will be affected and accountable, as none who are lifted up in pride shall escape.

15 And upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall;*

* Note: Paragraph division as Book of Mormon, rather than JST. In JST, “And upon every people” is first line of this paragraph.

And upon every high tower. Towers were constructed both for fortification, and to increase the distance that could be seen from afar. They stood for a symbol of strength. The Lord had set Jerusalem to be such a strength and example, “I have set thee for a tower and a fortress among my people” (Jeremiah 6:27a). ¶ *And upon every fenced wall.* Or, fortified wall around a fenced city. It can also be a symbol of strength and power: “The rich man’s wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit” (Proverbs 18:11).

16 And upon all the ships of the sea, and upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures.✓

✓ pictures of desire

Sydney B. Sperry observed, “...the Book of Mormon has a reading of remarkable interest. It prefixes a phrase of eight words not found in the Hebrew or King James Versions. ...the ancient Septuagint (Greek) version concurs with the added phrase in the Book of Mormon.... The Book of Mormon suggests that the original text of this verse contained three phrases, all of which commenced with the same opening words, ‘and upon all.’ By a common accident, the original Hebrew¹⁹ (and hence the King James) text lost the first phrase, which was, however, preserved by the Septuagint. The latter lost the second phrase, and seems to have corrupted the third phrase. The Book of Mormon preserved all three phrases.”²⁰ ¶ *And upon all the ships of the sea, and upon all the ships of Tarshish.* Ships can constitute two sources of power, military might as well as trading power. Many have considered Tarshish in relation to Spain, but other possibilities are also offered: “Most likely of Tartessus at the southern tip of Spain but possibly of Tarsus in Cilisia. ... ‘ships of Tarshish’ may designate sea going vessels like those of Tarshish or else ships bearing metal cargo like those of Tarshish” (HBD). ¶ *And upon all pleasant pictures.*

¹⁹ Rather than original, Sperry meant the **MT** as well as the other Hebrew texts that we have today, none of which are the original signatures.

²⁰ Sperry, Sydney B. *Book of Mormon Compendium*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1968.

Many translators believe the Hebrew translated as “pictures” means sea crafts of some type (e.g., Tanakh, NRSV, REB, NAB, NAS), but not all. The NJB translates this as “and for everything held precious,” as does the English translation of the Vulgate (V), “and upon all that is fair to behold” (Douay), as likewise Delitzsch, who feels like Jerome, that the more literal *works of curiosity* means “and upon everything beautiful to look at,” such as works of art. The Targum (T) renders it “And upon all that dwell in beautiful palaces.”

17 And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low; and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.

And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down. Man can make the choice of humbling himself, or of being humbled. ¶ *And the haughtiness of men shall be made low.* To be haughty means to be exceedingly arrogant or proud. Men are quick to give themselves too much credit. ¶ *And the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.* Sooner or later, however, “every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear” that Jesus is the Christ (ISAIAH 45:23b). I suspect this will take place in the midst of great joy and gratitude.

18 And the idols he shall utterly[✓] abolish.

✓ or, shall utterly pass away

Many suppose that idolatry and idols are a thing of the past. While at the time of Isaiah one of the major manifestations of idolatry was bowing down to dumb idols who could not utter a word, idol worship is much more than adoration of a dead piece of wood or metal: “They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall” (D&C 1:16).

19 And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth,[✓] for the fear of the LORD shall come upon them, and for the glory of his majesty shall smite them, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.

✓ or, dust

And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth. This thought builds on that of ISAIAH 2:10. The land of Israel was full of caves in the rocks, such as where the Dead Sea Scrolls (Q) were found. Yet man cannot hide from the judgment that will come. Not in rocks, not in caves, not in bomb shelters, not in man-made forts and buildings. While at first men shall try the futility of hiding in the rocks, after realizing the inefficacy of such, will wish to be buried by those same rocks: “And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb” (Revelations 6:15–16). The only true refuge will be the *Rock of Our Salvation*. ¶ *For the fear of the LORD shall come upon them.* Evil men often look in terror at the prospect of death, when they know that they will face God, “... with that awful fear of death which fills the breasts of all the wicked” (Mormon 6:7b). ¶ *And the glory of his majesty shall smite them.* Two things come to mind here. First, the literal “brightness of His glory” (Targum, T), a brightness that is blinding and that shames the brightness of the sun. Second, such powerful, pure righteousness of the Lord, that man would tremble with fear on account of his iniquities unless he was purified in preparation to meet the Lamb (see ISAIAH 6). ¶ *When he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.* The focus of these words is upon the latter days, including the times preparatory for the Lord’s second coming, when He shall *shake terribly the earth*. The message of repentance is to go out to all the world in preparation for His second advent, “For verily the voice of the Lord is unto all men, and there is none to escape; and there is not eye that shall not see, neither ear that shall not hear, neither heart that shall not be penetrated” (D&C 1:2). The hearts of those who do not heed this message of love, and prepare to meet the Lamb, will fail. “And in that day shall be heard of wars and rumors of wars, and the whole earth shall be in commotion, and men’s hearts shall fail them, and they shall say that Christ delayeth his coming until the end of the earth.”²¹ And the love of men shall wax cold, and iniquity shall abound” (D&C 45:26–27). And important final note here, is that it is man’s own guilt which shall condemn him: “For our words will condemn us, yea, all our works will condemn us; we shall not be found spotless; and our thoughts will also condemn us; and in this awful state we shall not dare to look up to our God: and we would fain be glad if we could command the rocks and the mountains to fall upon us to hide us from his presence” (Alma 12:14). Alma the younger spoke of the torment

²¹ Also see ISAIAH 66:5.

he faced before he repented, as he was *racked with eternal torment* at the very thought of having to face God: “Oh, thought I, that I could be banished and become extinct both soul and body, that I might not be brought to stand in the presence of my God, to be judged of my deeds” (Alma 36:15).

20 In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, [✓] and his idols of gold, which ~~they~~ **he** **hath** made ~~[each one]~~ for himself [✓] to worship, to the moles and to the bats;

- ✓ the idols of his silver
- ✓ or, for him

In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which he hath made for himself to worship. Man will realize the worthlessness of his man-made treasures. ¶ *To the moles and to the bats.* One possibility is that so worthless will be gold and silver, that man will use them as pest control, to drive away moles and bats from the caves and thus leave them open for human habitation. Joseph Fielding Smith offered this suggestion: “We are all familiar with ISAIAH chapter two, at least the first five verses. . . . We have frequently quoted these verses, but we have failed to study the verses which follow, and they all have to do with our present day. One significant thing in it is that the Lord says we would throw our idols of gold and silver which men worship in these days, to the moles and the bats, and we have nearly done this, have we not? You do not have much gold and did not the Government take it and bury it? This is close to giving it to bats and moles.”²² Lowth similarly wrote, “They shall carry their idols with them into the dark caverns, old ruins, or desolate places, to which they shall flee for refuge; and so shall give them up and relinquish them to the filthy animals that frequent such places, and have taken possession of them as their proper habitation.” In the context of the next verse, man will leave behind his “treasures” in an effort to escape and seek hiding.

21 To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for the fear of the LORD **shall come upon them**, and ~~for the glory of his majesty of his glory~~^{*} **shall smite them**, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.

^{*}Note: majesty of the Lord (JTNT)

This verse, like poetry, comes back to the recurring theme introduced in ISAIAH 2:10 and 19: men will look for refuge in the rocks, but to no avail. Through repetition the unity of the thought is kept together.

22 Cease ye from man, whose breath [is] in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?

Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils. It is not unusual in the prophets to find alternate thoughts between lamentation and a desire for the justice of the Lord to come upon those who have done wickedly. In response to the Lord’s, “Surely, I come quickly,” as with the author of the Book of Revelations, Isaiah seems to be saying, “Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus” (Revelations 22:20b). ¶ *For wherein is he to be accounted of?* With King David, we could ask the Lord in gratitude, “What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” (Psalm 8:4).

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²² Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Signs of the Times*. “Restoration of Israel and Judah.” Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News Press, 1952. Talk delivered October 28, 1942, Barratt Hall, p. 57.

Isaiah 3

Israel would be blessed if she did that which was right, and cursed if she did that which was evil in the sight of God. Now the Lord would take away her support, both in terms of food, rulers or any sort of strength—as well as her spiritual succor. When a person has the Spirit of the Lord, this is visible in that individual's countenance. While the wicked will not go without punishment, it shall be well with the righteous. The Lord will stand to plead the cause of the righteous. Women, like men, have been guilty of pride, and will suffer shame.

vv. 1–8. Isaiah speaks explicitly as to what was going to take place if Judah did not repent of her ways. Many of these prophecies have multiple fulfillments. One such former time fulfillment took place long after Isaiah's time, during the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah. The Lord would not punish directly, but would do so by the hand of the enemies of Israel. "And the LORD sent against him [Jehoiakim] bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servants the prophets" (2 Kings 24:2). 2 Kings 24–25 shows the fulfillment of these verses from Isaiah, below, as well as of the prophets from the beginning. In ISAIAH 3:1, we are told that Jerusalem would suffer great hunger: "At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged" (2 Kings 24:10). Next, in ISAIAH 3:2–3, we find that Jerusalem's mighty would be removed: "And Jehoiakim the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign. And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land" (2 Kings 24:12, 14). Among those who were not carried away captive, Zedekiah was established king of Judah by the king of Babylon. Zedekiah rebelled against Babylon, but not out of zeal for the Lord. The people were once again exposed to the horrors of an extended siege that brought Jerusalem to the ground. "And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign ... that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about. And the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. And on the ninth day of the fourth month the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land" (2 Kings 25:1–3). Zedekiah tried to escape but was soon found, his children were put to death before his eyes, and then Zedekiah's eyes were

removed before he was carried captive to Babylon. The House of the Lord, Solomon's Temple, was burnt to the ground. What the inhabitants of Jerusalem thought could never happen took place. As spoiled children who had been repeatedly warned and entreated to no avail are shocked and surprised when the punishment comes, so it was with Jerusalem. Gedaliah was made ruler over the small remnant that remained in the land. He would be murdered and anarchy would prevail. At the time of the Second Temple, Jerusalem would once again fall after the death of Christ, this time by Roman forces, around 70 AD. In the last days, Babylon—or the world—will entice men away from their true Stay and Staff, and those who answer to her seductive beckoning will be surprised to find out the eternal nature of the law of the harvest. Our only hope is to continually drink at the hands of the Savior, lest we be seduced also.

1 ¶ For, behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem, and from Judah, the stay and the staff, the whole ~~stay~~ **staff** of bread, and the whole stay of water—

For, behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem, and from Judah. The more literal translation of the Hebrew (אֲנִי) would be "For behold, Adonai Yahweh of Tzeva'oth" that is, "For behold, the Lord Jehovah of Hosts." The Lord, He who rules the armies of heaven has decreed what would befall upon Jerusalem and Judah. ¶ *The stay and the staff, the whole staff of bread, and the whole stay of water.* Or rather: "...stay [מִשְׁעָן] and staff [מִשְׁעָנָה], the whole staff or bread, and the whole stay of water." It is interesting to note here, that the Targum (ܬܪܓܡ) agrees with the Prophet Joseph Smith, in keeping the parallelism between *stay* and *staff*. In Hebrew these words are the *masculine* and *feminine* versions of מִשְׁעָן based on the root (שָׁעַן) that means to lean on for support. The Aramaic expression is "...stay (ܡܫܥܢܐ) and support (ܡܫܥܢܐ), the whole stay

of food and *the* whole support of drink.”¹ The Aramaic roots for these words are סמך and סעד respectively, and mean to either give or obtain support, help, strength, and so on. *Spurrell's Old Testament* English translation (which is supposed to follow Boothroyd²) corresponds exactly with that of the Book of Mormon: “... [Every] stay and support: The entire staff of bread, And the entire stay of water.” I say *supposed*, because the Kennicott-Boothroyd manuscript I have does not include the suggested variants and matches the Masoretic Text (מס):

כי הנה האדון יהיה צבאות
מסיר מירושלם ומיהודה
משען ומשענה
כל משען לחם
וכל משען מים :

I am certainly anxious to find the authority Spurrell used for following the Targum (Ⲯ) and Book of Mormon. The Spanish RVA 1960 (but not other editions) also coincides more with the Book of Mormon and JST, than with the KJV: “... quita de Jerusalén y de Judá al sustentador y al fuerte, todo sustento de pan y todo socorro de agua” (doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah, the sustainer and the strong, the whole support of bread, and the whole succor of water). ¶ Such drought and famine would be in an excruciatingly literal form, whose horrors are beyond description; as would it be a spiritual drought and famine, whose devastating effects are even more painful. The Lord would take away Jerusalem’s support in terms of food and shelter, military defense, and every semblance of dignity. Oh, how different this would be, than what was promised were Israel to keep the Law, and lean on her true stay and staff, even the Lord: “And ye shall serve the LORD your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee” (Exodus 23:25). The extent of the physical hunger would lead men to revolting practices. Israel was warned in *Rain in Due Season*: “And when I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall

bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver you your bread again by weight: and ye shall eat, and not be satisfied. And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me; Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins. And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat” (Leviticus 26:26–29). Such would be the desperate hunger. “And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee: So that the man *that is* tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children which he shall leave: So that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat: because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates. The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter, And toward her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and toward her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all *things* secretly in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates” (Deuteronomy 28:53–57). The following is but one example of the fulfillment of the *Rain in Due Season* prophecies regarding famine: “And it came to pass after this, that Benhadad king of Syria gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria. And there was a great famine in Samaria: and, behold, they besieged it, until an ass’s head was *sold* for fourscore [pieces] of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove’s dung for five *pieces* of silver. And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, Help, my lord, O king. And he said, If the LORD do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? out of the barnfloor, or out of the winepress? And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to day, and we will eat my son tomorrow. So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him: and she hath hid her son. And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he rent his clothes; and he passed by upon the wall, and the people looked, and, behold, *he had* sackcloth within upon his flesh” (2 Kings 6:24–30).³ ¶ But this is not all, worse than

¹ Stenning, *The Targum of Isaiah*. Interestingly, some of the Targum manuscripts do not show this difference, and thus the translations based on these texts are here similar to the Authorized Version. The main Aramaic text (not the critical apparatus) reproduced by Stenning (although I am unable to reproduce the superlinear points), has: “סמך וסעד כל סמך ימך לכל סעד משה”.

² Boothroyd, Benjamin. *Biblia Hebraica, or, the Hebrew scriptures of the Old Testament : without points, after the text of Kennicott, with the chief various readings, selected from his collation of Hebrew mss., from that of De Rossi, and from the ancient versions: accompanied with English notes, critical, philological, and explanatory*. There may be other Kennicott manuscripts that may include the Targum and Book of Mormon variation.

³ No less horrible was the famine experienced at the time when Jerusalem was besieged by the Romans. See, for instance, the account found in Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, Book VI, Chapter 3:4).

physical support, the Lord would remove Himself from being Israel's spiritual sustenance. In the following verses one can sense the utter agony of being left alone, of having the Spirit depart: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it" (Amos 8:11–12). I have felt the awful pain of the Lord's withdrawal of His spirit.⁴ ¶ Jerusalem and Judah would be left without the protecting arm of the Lord. One of the great messages of the Old Testament is that man should not lean on his own strength, nor the strength of kings, rulers, military or on the strength of Egypt (the nation of Egypt used as a representative or type of man-made strength—so also Assyria and Babylon). Instead, Judah would be made to acknowledge her true strength, Jehovah. ¶ During the time period when I was working on this passage of ISAIAH, I was meditating one morning while I was showering, on how much I loved prayer and the scriptures. "How could I begin to explain how important these things are in my life?" I asked myself. Then the sweet thought of the Spirit came to my mind, "They are your stay and your staff." A few days later I

⁴ In the 1980s, during one of my trips to Chile (during the time I worked for the University of California) I had a very touching and frightening spiritual experience. Even though I had received a confirmation of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon earlier in my life, I was under the impression that perhaps I ought to ask again for a spiritual confirmation when finishing the book. In humility I asked for further confirmation beyond that which I had already received. I had had the companionship of the Spirit of the Holy Ghost for years at that point. When one is warm for a long time, one can forget what cold feels like. As I finished my prayer I felt the Spirit withdraw and I was left in the cold. The Spirit left me as quick as the flow of water from a hose is stopped when a faucet is quickly turned off. All I was left with was an intellectual testimony. *I remembered knowing* about the truthfulness of the gospel but no longer had that warmth in my bosom. Fear and despair came over me, but I did not say a word to anyone about it. The Spirit withdrew from me for 3 days and I almost died from spiritual emptiness. I came to understand that it was not required of me to ask again for a spiritual confirmation of the Book of Mormon. That I already had a perfect witness of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. After three days I pleaded with my Father in Heaven for a restoration of the Spirit. The Spirit entered back as warm rushing waters that filled me with warmth. I will not forget this painful experience. The Savior suffered for us indescribable pain: "Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit" (D&C 19:18 (16–19) calls us to repentance with these words (v. 20, emphasis added): "Wherefore, I command you again to repent, lest I humble you with my almighty power; and that you confess your sins, lest you suffer these punishments of which I have spoken, *of which in the smallest, yea, even in the least degree you have tasted at the time I withdrew my Spirit.*" I solemnly testify that the Holy Ghost may be manifested to us in great power to know that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God who redeemed us if we will repent; that the Book of Mormon is true; and that we have a living prophet today. (Adapted from my journal, *At the time I withdrew my spirit* (D&C 19:20).

read this from Lightfoot in Geike, "The idea of eating, as a metaphor for receiving spiritual benefit, was familiar to Christ's hearers, and was as readily understood as our expressions of 'devouring a book,' or 'drinking in' instruction. In ISAIAH 3:1, the words 'the whole stay of bread,' were explained by the Rabbis as referring to their own teaching (*Chagiga*), and they laid it down as a rule, that wherever, in Ecclesiastes, allusion was made to food or drink, it meant study of the law, and the practice of good works (Midrash, *Kohleth*). It was a saying among them — 'In the time of the Messiah the Israelites will be fed by Him' (*Sanhedrim*). Nothing was more common in the schools and synagogues than the phrases of eating and drinking, in a metaphorical sense. 'Messiah is not likely to come to Israel,' said Hillel, 'for they have already eaten Him' — that is, greedily, received His words (*Horae Hebraicae et Talmudicae*) — 'in the days of Hezekiah.' A current conventionalism in the synagogues was that the just would 'eat the Shechinah.'⁵ It was peculiar to the Jews to be taught in such metaphorical language. Their Rabbis never spoke in plain words, and it is expressly said that Jesus submitted to the popular taste, for 'without a parable spake he not unto them' (Mark 4:34).⁶ We also have examples of prophets being asked to *eat the scriptures* in a literal way: "And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness" (Ezekiel 3:3); and "And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter" (Revelation 10:9–10). ¶ Of course, my *true Stay and Staff* is God the Eternal Father, His Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

2 The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient;

When used to describe man, these terms touch on his pride. "Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches" (Jeremiah 9:23). And then these beautiful words of counsel are added in the next verse: "But let him that

⁵ Transliteration of the non-Biblical Hebrew word שְׂכִינָה, from the root שָׁכַן meaning, "to dwell" or "reside", and often used for the *Divine Presence of the Lord* (ISBE, Holman, Jastrow).

⁶ Geike, Cunningham. *Life and Words of Christ*. Revised Edition, Volume II, 1896, p. 184.

glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I *am* the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these *things* I delight, saith the LORD” (Jeremiah 9:24). ¶ *The mighty man*. The man who is strong, by virtue of wealth, intellect, valor, physical strength, power, or any other admired trait. ¶ *And the man of war*. A military man, or man of physical prowess. ¶ *The judge, and the prophet*. Those who judge and guide the people in their temporal or spiritual affairs. The allusion is to the false prophet. ¶ *And the prudent*. Barnes, following Vitranga, suggests that the prudent referred to a false prophet to whom people went for advice, and that the word eventually took on the meaning of a wise person. The word is based on the Hebrew **חָכָם**, and refers to the wicked profession of witchcraft, often translated as *diviner*, *soothsayer* or *augur*. As we liken the scriptures to ourselves, we may add those who promote the philosophies of men. ¶ *And the ancient*. Those who have lived long and especially in the eastern cultures are looked up to for their wisdom. But none of these were delighting in Scripture.

3 The captain of fifty, and the honourable[✓] man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator.^{✓✓}

- ✓ a man eminent in countenance
- ✓ ✓ or, skilful of speech

The captain of fifty. Perhaps the most famous captains of fifty in the scriptures are the three who were sent by Ahaziah, king of Samaria, to capture Elijah. Elijah called upon them from heaven to consume the first two captains along with their fifty soldiers. While the first captain of fifty was probably overconfident, the last humbled himself, and entreated Elijah to follow him back to the king’s presence (2 Kings 1:1–16). A captain of fifty is a man accustomed to give orders and to be obeyed.⁷ ¶ *And the honourable man*. An honorable man would be any man of importance. Literally in Hebrew, **וְנִשְׁוֹא פָּנָיו**, “and the exalted of face” (LITV), and “elevated countenance” (Barnes). ¶ *And the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator*. In

⁷ Much like the centurion, then, who pleaded with Jesus to heal his servant, and that only a word from the Savior was necessary, rather than His presence. The centurion sent a message to Jesus rather than coming in person: “Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it” (Luke 7:7–8).

the scriptures, counselors⁸ often take on a very high role, often as secretaries of state. ¶ *Artificer* is a craftsman. A *cunning artificer*, then, is a skilled craftsman, such as a master in working metal: “... an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron” (Genesis 4:22b). An *orator* is a public speaker, and *eloquent* means, a person who speaks with power, in a convincing manner. The Hebrew word **חֹזֵק** means charmer, enchanter or magician. Barnes points out that this same word was used in ISAIAH 3:20 to represent an amulet. “It is applied to the charm of the serpent—the secret breathing or gentle noise by which the charm is supposed to be effected.” Kay, referring to the great orator, says: “Probably, the man who abused the power which his oratory gave him over men; and who, instead of instructing them, led them about at will, as if they were fascinated.” CES educators are often warned about being lifted up in pride based on skillful teaching ability. A person who is blessed with a strong and powerful testimony of Christ, and the ability to speak well, needs to be ever vigilant to build to the Lord and not unto himself. One of the Brethren warned that those in Church leadership, likewise, should never put themselves between the members and God. Each individual has the opportunity and obligation to go directly to the *well of living water* through prayer. Any time persons who have been given a gift forget the purpose of that gift, it could be said “Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!” (ISAIAH 5:21). It could then be said that such a person has crossed the line from a powerful testifier of Christ to a charmer and enchanter. When such a thing happens, the Spirit is grieved. Lowth points out that these verses (ISAIAH 3:2–3) would be fulfilled at the time King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon took captive the mighty and strong of Judah, as recorded in 2 Kings 24:14.

⁸ One of the most interesting cases in Scripture regarding counselors was that of Hushai and Ahithophel as they counseled Absalom. The latter had usurped power from his father, David. King David asked his counselor, Hushai, to pretend to have changed his allegiance to Absalom. This stratagem saved David from almost certain death. Absalom’s own counselor, Ahithophel, gave David’s son very astute advice regarding the steps they ought to follow to capture King David. But at the end Absalom listened to Hushai, instead. “And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite *is* better than the counsel of Ahithophel. For the LORD had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the LORD might bring evil upon Absalom” (2 Samuel 17:14). Ahithophel lost face and we read: “And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled *his* ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father” (2 Samuel 17:23).

4 And I will give children unto them [to be] their princes, and babes shall rule over them.

Children would be left holding the monarchy in Judah. Kings, instead of being blessed with a long life, would be cut off leaving their children, even babes, as the next king. In some instances in the Bible, we hear the date when a person began to reign, but sometimes these dates involved co-regency with their father. Nevertheless, there were plenty of instances when a child came to the throne alone, after the death of the monarch. In Ecclesiastes we read, “Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child ...” (Ecclesiastes 10:16). The Hebrew for babes, תַּעֲלִילִים, has several meanings, including capricious, wanton (i.e., unrestrained), and childish.

5 And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable.

And the people shall be oppressed. What does oppression mean? The exploitation and taking advantage of another person. This includes the person who takes advantage of farm workers or the poor, to steal from them or to pay them a pittance. “Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates” (Deuteronomy 24:14). My parents were always concerned for the poor and taught this to me. As a young man, at our farm in Chile, one of the farm workers told me that he appreciated the respect that I showed the workers, and that I had not demanded their daughters, to take them to myself. The implication was that there were men of power who would set their eyes upon the virgin daughters of the workers, to do with them as they wished, and then discard them after satiating their carnal desire. I do not want to give the idea that this practice was the norm among farm owners, but it must have happened, as it did among those who in the history of the world owned slaves. The people in Judah, even her poor, then, would suffer oppression. This oppression would not only come from foreign invaders, or from the mighty within the land, but from within. ¶ *Every one by another, and every one by his neighbor.* Such a state of oppression would be so terrible, that hardly anyone would escape. ¶ *The child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient.* Among many cultures, especially those that value community over individualism, there is much

respect shown to the elderly. Man was commanded: “Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee” (Exodus 20:12) and “Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head,⁹ and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD” (Leviticus 19:32). ¶ How about Abraham, who rebelled against his own father? I have heard it said, that the best way to honor your parents, is to honor the Lord. The Savior said, “He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me” (Matthew 10:37). ¶ *And the base against the honorable.* Barnes says: “All the forms of respect in life would be broken up; all the proper rules of deference between man and man would be violated. Neither dignity, age, nor honor would be respected.” It is not uncommon for people to use foul and degrading language without regard for who is present. This is one of many examples of this lack of respect.

6 When a man shall take hold of his brother of the house of his father, and [saying], shall say: Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler, and [let] not this ruin [be] come under thy hand—

When a man shall take hold of his brother of the house of his father... be thou our ruler. Lowth suggests that perhaps the brother would have some primogeniture over the family in order to become its ruler (רֹאשׁ) or head (רֹאשׁ): “The case seems to require, that the man should apply to a person of some sort of rank and eminence; one that was the head of his father’s house” Ludlow suggests that this might be particularly true in those cases where the father had died and perhaps the oldest refused the responsibility of leadership. Henry has, “Whereas, commonly, men are not willing that their equals should be their superiors,” here they entreat a brother to do just that. ¶ *Take hold.* In terms of taking hold, Lowth translates, “Take by the garment,” and explains, “That is, shall entreat him in an humble and supplicating manner” as in Zechariah 8:23, “Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.” ¶ *And shall say: Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler.* The clothing, שְׂמֹלֶה, referred to here is a large outer mantle, sometimes used as a bed covering (BDB, Gesenius, AHCL, Holladay, TDOT). Perhaps it was very much like a Chilean manta,

⁹ Gray or white haired.

except a *manta* is often made out of sheep wool and is a heavy warm covering, which is worn like a *poncho*, with a slit through the center, and which also can play the role of a blanket for sleeping. Commentators debate as to whether this mantle was intended to be a sign of wealth, or rather, quite the opposite. Besides a garment or robe, in Modern Hebrew שְׂמֻלָּה is used for a dress.

¶ *And let not this ruin come under thy hand.* This statement seems to indicate that by taking leadership in this harsh and extreme environment, the brother may be able to help the family save face and honor—and avert the impending ruin. Wade suggests: “The man importuned to assume authority and put an end to anarchy is one who in the collapse of the social order has retained some portion of his patrimony.” Except for localized situations, the world has not yet seen such a total collapse at this date. Gladly, the Lord has promised regarding that period of turmoil: “And except those days should be shortened, there should none of their flesh be saved; but for the elect’s sake, according to the covenant, those days shall be shortened” (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:20).

7 In that day shall he swear, [✓] saying: I will not be an healer; [✓] for in my house **there [is]** neither bread nor clothing: make me not a ruler of the people.

- ✓ lift up the hand
- ✓ ✓ binder up

Despite the desperate pleadings that he take on the leadership of the larger family circle, the man so approached utterly refuses, on the ground that he did not have enough to even feed or clothe his immediate family. ¶ יֵשָׁא בַיּוֹם הַהוּא לְאֹמֶר *In that day shall he swear, saying.* The expression בַּיּוֹם “in that day” has reference to future events. The Hebrew text (א) has the words יֵשָׁא *lift up*, and the margin || provides the ellipsis, *lift up the hand*. SOT follows the margin ||, “Then he shall raise *his hand* in that day &c.” Darby likewise renders it: “He will lift up his hand in that day, saying.” ¶ Matthew Henry explains: “He *shall swear* (shall lift up the hand, the ancient ceremony used in taking an oath).” A couple of examples of oath taking include: “put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness” (Exodus 23:1b), “And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth” (Exodus 14:22). To swear means to utter an *oath*. In ancient days an oath was of such great power, that a man would not think of breaking it. Such was the case, for instance, between Nephi and Zoram, Laban’s servant. “And it came to pass that I spake with him,”

Nephi explained, “that if he would hearken unto my words, *as the Lord liveth, and as I live*, even so that if he would hearken unto our words, we would spare his life. And I spake unto him, *even with an oath*, that he need not fear; that he should be a free man like unto us if he would go down in the wilderness with us” (1 Nephi 4:31–32, emphasis added). Zoram, as a result, believed he would indeed be safe. “And it came to pass that when Zoram had made an oath unto us, our fears did cease concerning him” (1 Nephi 4:37). Zoram had multiple occasions to escape, but did not, because of this oath. ¶ Some people have the habit of accompanying their statements with the emphasis of a swearing—often false swearing or an expletive. This is especially true when a person is moved by fear, as the context of this verse makes clear. Such false swearing was quite common in ancient times, and also in the present day. Certainly it was very prevalent among the youth of Chile when I grew up (I can still hear the echoes, *jte lo juro!* or I swear it!). Probably the more resolute the swearing, the likelier that what was being said was false. Jeremiah asked, “Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not” (Jeremiah 7:9). Perhaps this is one of the reasons why the Savior taught: “Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God’s throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil” (Matthew 5:3–37). ¶ *I will not be a healer.* In contrast to such refusal to serve, the Savior offered Himself to be our healer. “And the Lord said: Whom shall I send? And one answered like unto the Son of Man: Here am I, send me” (Abraham 3:27). See notes on ISAIAH 6:8. ¶ *For in my house there is neither bread nor clothing. Make me not a ruler of the people.* Such a brother being asked to be a leader explained that he could not solve the family’s problems, for he was not any better off, in terms of food and raiment, than those who wished him to take charge. The rich in the East were expected to have food and raiment to give as gifts to their guests. Lowth explains: “This explains the meaning of the excuse made by him that is desired to undertake the government: he alleges, that he has not wherewithal to support the dignity of the station, by such acts of liberality and hospitality as the law of custom required of persons of superior rank.”

8 For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen, because their tongues and their doings ~~are~~ have been against the LORD, to provoke the eyes of his glory.

For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen. Jerusalem, as the capital of Judah would be destroyed. At that time when this prophesy was uttered, such a comment seemed like pure blasphemy. The people of Jerusalem believed that the Lord would protect Jerusalem and her Temple, and that she would never fall. People today would just as likely ridicule Elder Wilford Woodruff's prophecy—which was endorsed by President Brigham Young—that in a future day people would look back and say: "New York was destroyed by an earthquake ... Boston was swept into the sea ... [and] Albany was destroyed by fire" (in Lundwall, *Temples of the Most High*, pp. 97–98).¹⁰ ¶ *Because their tongues and their doings have been against the LORD.* It was because the people of Judah and Jerusalem had set their words and their deeds against the Lord that punishment would befall them. They had forgotten the advice of the Psalmist, "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it." (Psalms 34:13–14). ¶ *To provoke the eyes¹¹ of his glory.* The Lord sees all, and nothing is kept from Him. The eyes of His glory have been provoked by man's wicked behavior.

vv. 9–15. Men's countenances stand as a witness that they have lost the spirit and have given themselves to doing evil. The consequences of such behaviors will follow. Those who rule over the people will lead them astray. They have been the first to abuse the poor. Nevertheless, it shall be well to the righteous, and the Lord will stand up to plead the cause of the upright.

9 ¶ The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they doth declare their sin to be even as Sodom, and they cannot hide [it] ñet. Woe unto

¹⁰ Section 84: The Oath and Covenant of the Priesthood. *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual*, (2002), 180–185.

¹¹ A great number of commentators have attempted to explain away that the Lord could have eyes, a physical trait, to go along with their beliefs regarding God's incorporeality. Delitzsch, for instance, goes on to say that the Hebrew does not support such a vague notion of the eyes being just an abstract quality, and goes on to compare it with the statement, "the arm of glory." After having so argued, however, Delitzsch rejects the anthropomorphism by stating that it is man who is limited to thinking of God in such anthropomorphic terms. See ISAIAH 6:1.

their souls! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.

The shew of their countenance doth witness against them. Some people seem to glow with the light of Christ that is within them. At the May 2000, Stockton, California, regional priesthood leadership conference President Faust spoke about the Jerusalem Center and about the agreement not to proselyte in Israel. Someone commented, something to the effect that they believed the Church would keep its word on this matter, "But what will you do about the light in the eyes of your young people!"¹² President David O. McKay said: "Every person radiates what he or she really is ... it is what we are and what we radiate that affects the people around us."¹³ President McKay spoke often of this subject: "If we think noble thoughts, if we encourage and cherish noble aspirations, there will be that radiation when we meet people, especially when we associate with them. Every man, every person radiates what he or she is. Every person is a recipient of radiation. The Savior was conscious of this fact. Whenever he came into the presence of an individual, he sensed that radiation. ... Christ was ever conscious of the radiation from the individual, and, to a degree, so are you, and so am I. It is what we are and what we radiate that affects the people around us."¹⁴ Elder Bruce R. McConkie, speaking along the same lines explained: "In a real though figurative sense, the book of life is the record of the acts of men as such record is written in their own bodies. It is the record engraven on the very bones, sinews, and flesh of the mortal body. That is, every thought, word and deed has an effect on the human body; all these leave their marks, marks which can be read by Him who is Eternal as easily as the words in a book can be read. By obedience to telestial law men obtain telestial bodies; terrestrial law leads to terrestrial bodies; and conformity to celestial law—because this law includes the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost—results in the creation of a body which is clean, pure, and spotless, a celestial body. When the book of life is opened in the day of judgment, men's bodies will show what law they have lived. The Great Judge will then read the record of the book of their lives; the account of their obedience or disobedience will be written in their bodies. Literally, it is the record kept in heaven of the names and righteous deeds of the

¹² Also see, "The Light in Their Eyes," President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, October 2005 General Conference.

¹³ David O. McKay, *Man May Know for Himself*, p. 108, in *OT Student Manual*, p. 140.

¹⁴ President David O. McKay, *General Conference Reports*, 1 April 1969.

faithful.”¹⁵ Alma asked people to consider their level of conversion: “Have ye received his image in your countenances?” (Alma 5:14b) ¶ In this Isaianic verse we are not speaking about the countenance of righteousness, but that of sin. “Two weeks ago our stake president attended a training session with President Packer,” explains President Reed Hopper, a friend who shared some pertinent thoughts on this topic. “President Packer said he could tell more about the saints by looking at faces during a meeting than by all the reports he could ever read. By way of example he mentioned he was visiting a stake once when he noticed a man enter the chapel. President Packer said he asked the stake president if he knew the man. The stake president said he didn’t but President Packer suggested he get to know this man because he could tell from his countenance there was ‘something wrong.’ President Packer was informed by the stake president sometime later that he learned the man was involved in serious transgression.” My friend Reed Hopper also shared some experiences he has had. “When I served as bishop, I could often see a darkness around the faces of those who were drifting in the Church or who were having deep spiritual problems. But, on the positive side of this principle, my daughter (Anna Hopper) said she spoke with a silver smith on her mission who told her that he could always tell when the silver he worked with was refined because he could see his image in it. The purer the silver, the clearer the image. This is how the Lord knows when we have been purified; when he sees his image in our countenances.”¹⁶ ¶ *And doth declare their sin to be even as Sodom.* “... the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly” (Genesis 13:3), whose “sin is very grievous” (Genesis 18:20b). Elder Neal A. Maxwell wrote: “In the societies of Sodom and Gomorrah there was rampant sexual immorality; there was also inordinate pride, idleness, and a neglect of the poor and the needy (Ezekiel 16:48–50).”¹⁷ A haughty attitude towards God (who had given strict counsel on the need to care for the poor) led to the neglect of the poor and needy.”¹⁸ President Harold B. Lee taught: “I want to warn this great body of priesthood against that

great sin of Sodom and Gomorrah ... I speak of the sin of adultery, which, as you know, was the name used by the Master as He referred to unlicensed sexual sins of fornication as well as adultery; and besides this, the equally grievous sin of homosexuality, which seems to be gaining momentum with social acceptance in the Babylon of the world, of which Church members must not be a part.”¹⁹ President Hopper also noted: “Comparing wicked Jerusalem to wicked Sodom is a helpful metaphor because it reinforces the message that sin is to have an ‘unnatural affection’ for the things of the world as opposed to the things of God ... the ultimate point is that the sins of Jerusalem are as pervasive as Sodom and therefore Jerusalem, like Sodom, would reap destruction. When grievous sin becomes socially acceptable, even institutional, there is no escaping the Judgment of God.”²⁰ This same sort of thing took place in Book of Mormon times: “But behold, this people had rejected every word of God, and they were ripe in iniquity; and the fulness of the wrath of God was upon them” (1 Nephi 17:35, also see ISAIAH 6:12–13, in terms of consequences to be suffered by Israel). ¶ *And they cannot hide it.* As mentioned, our countenances show who we are, and we cannot hide it. Some decide to openly flaunt their defiance towards God. ¶ *Woe unto their souls! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.* In Galatians 6:8 we read the law of the harvest: “For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”

10 Say ye unto the righteous, that [it shall be] is well [with him] them; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.

Say unto the righteous. Any righteousness comes through the *Branch of Righteousness* (Jeremiah 33:15), even the Holy One of Israel, “If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him” (1 John 2:29). ¶ *That it is well with them.* Anyone who has tasted of the fruit of the tree of life and who has been *filled* with *exceedingly great joy*, understands that the blessings to be tasted by the righteous person who endures to the end, will be exceedingly desirable. “The hope of the righteous shall be gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish. The righteous shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.” (Proverbs 10:28, 30). Furthermore, “Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written

¹⁵ *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 97.

¹⁶ President Reed Hopper was serving as a counselor in the Davis, California Stake at the time of this personal communication, which took place in November 2000. After I joined the Church Brother Hopper was a pillar for me and I will always be indebted to him.

¹⁷ “As I live, saith the Lord GOD, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters. Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good” (Ezekiel 16:48–50).

¹⁸ Sermons Not Spoken, p. 37, in Maxwell, Cory H., ed. *The Neal A. Maxwell Quote Book*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1997.

¹⁹ Lee, Harold B. *The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*. Edited by Clyde J. Williams. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1996, p. 233.

²⁰ Reed Hopper, personal communication, November 2000.

before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not" (Malachi 3:16–18). ¶ *For they shall eat the fruit of their doings.* Once again, an allusion to the law of the harvest. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still" (Revelations 22:11, also see Alma 41). Nevertheless, at that day none will be able to be made clean on his or her own merits, but only through Christ Jesus. "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Corinthians 15:50–55).

11 Woe unto the wicked! ~~[it shall be]~~ ~~ill~~ ~~[with him]~~ for they shall perish; for the reward of his ~~their~~ hands shall be given [✓] ~~him~~ upon them.

✓ done to

Woe unto the wicked! for they shall perish. At the second coming the wicked shall melt as fat or wax melts before a consuming fire: "But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away" (Psalms 37:20), and "... as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God" (Psalms 68:2b). ¶ *For the reward of their hands shall be upon them.* This is similar to "Behold, it is written before me: I will not keep silence, but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom" (ISAIAH 65:6, see comments there, also). This is parallel to that of the law of the harvest in ISAIAH 3:10, "for they shall eat the fruit of their doings." Moses said, "For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do evil in the sight of the LORD,

to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands" (Deuteronomy 31:29).

12 And ~~[as for]~~ my people, children ~~[are]~~ their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they ~~which~~ ~~who~~ lead [✓] thee cause ~~[thee]~~ to err and destroy [✓] the way of thy paths.

✓ or, call thee blessed

✓ ✓ swallow up

And as for my people, children are their oppressors.

Part of the poetic form includes emphasis by repetition. As mentioned in verse 4, children would reign over Judah. A great number of commentators feel that the youth spoken about in this verse may also deal with a childish personality, besides that of young age. President Hopper opines, "The term 'children' seems to me to be a metaphor for the weak of this world. It shows the utter abasement of Israel that they would be conquered and enslaved (that is oppressed) by such. To be ruled by women suggests to my mind that Israel would become subject to those who have no right of authority over the Lord's people. Because they have broken the Lord's covenants, the Lord will say amen to Israel's priesthood and set others as rulers over the people. 'Women,' or those without divine investiture, will rule because the men of God have abdicated their role, much like the brother in ISAIAH 3:7 who refuses to lead because he has no bread or clothes to satisfy his office as head of his clan. Taken as a whole, the verse seems to paint a picture of a world turned upside down. Israel would be dominated by the weak rather than the strong; Israel would be ruled by usurpers rather than those appointed of God; and, Israel's leaders would take the people down forbidden paths rather than guide them in the way of the Lord."²¹ ¶ *And women rule over them.* Some exegetes (e.g., Cheyne, Barnes) suggest that Judah's rulers would be powerless or effeminate in their leadership. An example of a wicked woman ruling over Judah was that of Athaliah, who was a follower of Baal. Perhaps, Isaiah was speaking of the *family unit*, parallel with ISAIAH 3:6. In this case, *women rule over them* because men will no longer be the head of households by either death (vv. 24–25, 27) or the disintegration of the family. Certainly we are living at a time when there are a unprecedented number of women who are single heads of the home. We know that children are most blessed when they live in a home with the benefit of both a loving father and mother. Alternative translations of this passage retain the word women in both the Syriac (S) "The princes shall pluck my people out, and

²¹ Reed Hopper, personal communication, November 2000.

women shall rule over them” and Vulgate (V). “populum meum exactores sui spoliaverunt et mulieres dominatae...” (or, its English translation, as found in the Douay, “As for my people, their oppressors have stripped them, and women have ruled over them.”). The LXX (6) and the Targum (T) have the word usurer (or extortioner, creditor) for the word woman.²² “O my people, your exactors strip you, and extortioners rule over you” (6); and “As for my people, their oppressors plunder them, as those who glean the vineyard; and as usurers they rule over them” (T). Such a translation might represent an allusion to the foreign rule that would soon be established. Usurers or money lenders, as well as tax collectors or publicans as they were often called in the New Testament, were not looked upon kindly by the general population. To have these rule over the people would be considered a great punishment. Nothing said here should give the impression that women are less capable than men. The Brethren have counseled local leaders to give great weight, and seek out, the opinions of women in Church counsels.²³ ¶ *O my people*. As we saw in ISAIAH 1:3, עַמִּי, or *my people*, is a frequent and tender call or lamentation used by the Lord in the prophets to refer to his covenant relationship with Israel as well as a reminder of the Abrahamic covenant we discussed in *Rain in Due Season*. ¶ *They who lead thee cause thee to err and destroy the way of thy paths*. When a path is destroyed, then people do not know the way anymore, and can more easily be deceived. The Lord lamented as he could see the people walking down the wrong path, as in the vision seen by Lehi and Nephi. What was worse, those who should have known better were their leaders in doing that which was wrong in the sight of God. One of the themes of the Old Testament is to show the importance of following the living prophets who will tell us what we need to know rather than what we want to hear. The LXX (6) translates this portion of the verse as “O my people, they that pronounce you blessed lead you astray, and pervert the path of your feet.” The KJV margin ¶ agrees with the 6, and renders the passage, “O my people, they which *call thee blessed*” (emphasis added). In other words, the false prophets spoke well about those who hired them. A notable

²² Stenning, on page xvii, provides a table contrasting some words presupposed by the Targum (T) in contrast to the Masoretic text (M). This table shows some differences in consonants between M and T, so it is presupposed that the present T reading הַבָּאֵהָ was based on נִשְׂאִים or נִשְׂאִים (and creditors—based on נִשְׂךָ to lend with usury, Gesenius, DBD, HAL, Jastrow) differently pointed than the מַלְאִים, נִשְׂאִים (and women).

²³ See for instance, Elder M. Russell Ballard, *Counseling with our Councils: Learning to Minister Together in the Church and in the Family*. Deseret Book, 1997.

example is that of Ahab, King of Israel, who asked for the support of Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, in order to go out to battle against Syria. All the false prophets spoke in Ahab’s favor, and provided false blessings upon his head. Jehoshaphat asked if Ahab had *inquired of the Lord*. Ahab answered, “There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may enquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil” (1 Kings 22:6). Ahab ended up consulting Micaiah, but did not heed his counsel, to the cost of his own life (1 Kings 22:1–40).

13 The LORD standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people.

The LORD standeth up to plead. We have been transported to a court room. There is a great flow of power in this verse, as we picture our Savior who has been sitting, now walking up to the bar. What will the Lord plead? Is the Savior ready to accuse or to defend? Numerous modern translations tend to the former interpretation, and read closely to the NJB, “Yahweh has risen to accuse, is standing to pass judgment on the people.” Others tend closer to the KJV: “Yahweh has taken his station to plead” (EB), and “The Lord stands up to plead a cause, He rises to champion peoples” (Tanakh). Leeser renders it: “The Lord is stepped forth to plead, and standeth up to judge the people.” The Master prayed on behalf of His disciples: “Father, behold the sufferings and death of him who did no sin, in whom thou wast well pleased; behold the blood of thy Son which was shed, the blood of him whom thou gavest that thyself might be glorified: Wherefore, Father, spare my brethren that believe on my name, that they may come unto me and have everlasting life” (D&C 45:4–5). Also see notes on ISAIAH 1:18. ¶ *And standeth to judge the people*. In the LXX (6), *his people*. “But now the Lord will stand up for judgment, and will enter into judgment with his people.” The *Keeper of the Gate*, our Savior, will be our judge. See notes on ISAIAH 2:4. In the Psalms we hear, “O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah”²⁴ (Psalms 67:4). In Alma we read: “And it is requisite with the justice of God that men should be judged according to their works; and if their works were good in this life, and the desires of their hearts were good, that they should also, at the last day, be restored unto that which is good. And if their works are evil they shall be restored unto them for evil” (Alma 41:3–4a).

²⁴ Selah or סֶלָה, used frequently in the Psalms, may be a musical direction, perhaps calling for a pause or the raising of the voice. (AHCL)

14 The LORD will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof; for ye have eaten[✓] up the vineyard; and the spoil of the poor [is] in your houses.

✓ or, burnt

The LORD will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof. The Syriac (S), Targum (T) and LXX (G) use *elders* for *ancients*. In the early history of Israel, elders were the rulers and spiritual leaders of their clans and tribes (Holman). After Yahweh appeared to Moses, he was commanded to go to the elders and share these things with them, “Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, ...” (Exodus 3:16). The Lord will make accountable both the spiritual teachers (Ezekiel 34) as well as the political rulers. ¶ *For ye have eaten up the vineyard.* Delitzsch suggests that the vineyard is a representation of the people (see also ISAIAH 5:1 ff.). Rabbi Ibn Ezra thinks it an allusion to Israel or the people of the Lord. Ibn Ezra also suggests we look at Exodus 22:5, where we see the consequences required for destroying another man’s vineyard through neglect (in this case, having animals graze in the vineyard): “If a man shall cause a field or vineyard to be eaten, and shall put in his beast, and shall feed in another man’s field; of the best of his own field, and of the best of his own vineyard, shall he make restitution.” These words are of special interest when we consider the Targum (T) and LXX (G), both of which still have the Lord speaking. The G has “my vineyard” (ἀμπελῶνά μου). Instead of a vineyard, the T²⁵ has: “You have robbed my people (emphasis added, מִבְּנֵי).” Gill suggests that His people and his vineyard are synonymous. The LXX (G) and Syriac (S) imply a burning the vineyard, instead of the “eaten up” of the KJV, or *devoured* or *ravaged* often used in other translations of the Masoretic text (M). In the Law, the Lord made it perfectly clear that part of the crop should be left in the field un-harvested for the poor to eat: “And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God” (Leviticus 19:10). This commandment was repeated with no less strength in Deuteronomy: “When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow” (Deuteronomy 24:21). This verse seems to say

²⁵ Here, T, Chilton translation. Also see CAL, Gill and Stenning.

that the greed of the grape growers was such that they had left nothing behind for the poor, the stranger, the widow or the fatherless to eat. ¶ *And the spoil of the poor is in your houses.* Hardly a greater accusatory evidence can be found against a thief, than to find those things that have been stolen in his home. Such was the accusation against the well-off; the spoil of the poor was to be found in their homes. Yet another way to look at this clause is that it is upon the sweat and exploitation of the poor that many of the rich have constructed their beautiful mansions and vineyards.

15 What mean ye? ~~[that]~~ Ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor², saith the Lord GOD of hosts.

What mean ye? Perhaps, “What do you think you are doing?” Tanakh translates as “How dare you” ¶ *Ye beat my people to pieces.* Several translations (NRSV, REB, NAB, NJB, Tanakh, EB, Green) use “crush.” The word crush also reminds us of the grape harvest. ¶ *And grind the faces of the poor, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.* To grind the faces of the poor, or exploiting them through oppressive work. The Syriac (S) and LXX (G) use to “shame the face(s) of the poor.” This implies depriving the poor of dignity and respect. The face is where many of our emotions of joy, satisfaction, affection, embarrassment, shame, and so on are manifested. The word *face* can be used in psychological terms related to *saving* and *giving* face. We engage in saving face activities when we act in such a way that we promote a positive self-image of ourselves to others, particularly after we have done something that may make us look foolish in the sight of others. People are often careful to protect their guests from embarrassment.²⁶ In societies where there are very pronounced class differences, there are often servants and others whose faces are trampled on continually, as if they had no feelings whatsoever. In a study of farm worker feelings (1999) I found that workers highly valued being treated with dignity and respect by their supervisors and farm employers.²⁷ ¶ President Harold B. Lee taught that the purpose of the Church welfare system is to “lift [the poor] to a point of independence,” lest the Church be accused in the welfare program of “grinding down the faces of the poor.”²⁸ I suspect that President Lee was concerned that the welfare system

²⁶ Billikopf, Gregorio, *Party-Directed Mediation: Facilitating Dialogue Between Individuals*, University of California, 3rd Edition, 2014.

²⁷ Billikopf, Gregorio, *Agricultural Labor Management: Cultivating Personnel Productivity*, University of California, 3rd Edition, 2014.

²⁸ Lee, Harold B. *The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*. Edited by Clyde J. Williams. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1996. p. 315.

help the poor retain a sense of dignity and independence. Regarding the expression, grinding the faces (פָּיַף) of the poor, Barnes has, “This is an expression also denoting great oppression. It is taken from the act of grinding a substance on a stone until it is worn away and nothing is left. So, by their cruel exactions, by their injustice to the poor, they exhausted their little property until nothing was left. The word *faces* here is synonymous with *persons*—or with the poor themselves.”

vv. 16–27. The pride of the women shall be turned to shame, as they also are guilty.

16 ¶ Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes, [✓]walking and mincing [✓] [as] they go, and making a tinkling with their feet—

- ✓ deceiving with their eyes
- ✓ ✓ tripping nicely

Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty. Daughter of Zion is another name for Jerusalem. ISAIAH begins speaking about the female inhabitants of Zion, yet in ISAIAH 3:26, the allusion to Jerusalem is evident. Haughty is another word for puffed up, conceited, vain, arrogant, lifted up in pride. The women of Zion, who ought to have been a model of piety and modesty, have given themselves to the things of the world. Many commentaries speak about what these attires may have consisted off, but much of it is conjecture. Even without understanding the exact nature of the items, the general idea is all too clear. ¶ *And walk with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes.* These first two items refer to *body language*. Pride or haughtiness is most often shown by the way the head is held high through the unnatural extension of the neck, as well as by an affectation of the eyes as a result of such high head carriage. Such a look gives others the non-validating message, “You do not exist.” ¶ *Walking and mincing as they go.* Webster defines mincing as “affectedly dainty or delicate.” Perhaps a seductive sort of walk is intended. A number of commentators have suggested that the steps are short because there is a chain connecting both legs, and thus the length of the stride is so limited mechanically. ¶ *And making a tinkling with their feet.* Perhaps an ankle bracelet with little bells or pieces of metal that make sounds as the women walk. The Targum (ⲧ) translates this last thought quite differently, “with their hair rolled up, and with their feet they excite *lust*.” The LXX (Ⲭ) talks

about them “drawing their garments in trains, and at the same time sporting with their feet.” Perhaps it speaks of wearing their clothing shorter so their legs were exposed to view and provoking desire. The Syriac (Ⲥ) offers, “Making a tinkling with their feet, and thus provoking the Lord.” Delitzsch explains that Moslem women in modern times also used such fashions as the “coquettish tinklings, although they are forbidden by the Koran.”

17 Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will discover [✓] their secret parts.

- ✓ make naked

Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion. If the punishment was directly related to the previous verse, which may or not be the case, then the Targum’s (ⲧ) reference to how the women wore their hair may be in line. A woman’s hair is something of beauty, certainly, and the Lord would strike at the very center of such beauty. One translator suggests that the scab is formed as a result of leprosy, “Therefore will my Lord smite with leprosy the crown of hair of the daughters of Zion” (EB). Others suggest that these women will be afflicted with baldness: “the Lord will smite with baldness the women of Zion” (REB), “the Lord will give Zion’s daughters scabby heads, Yahweh will lay their foreheads bare” (NJB). ¶ *And the LORD will discover their secret parts.* Some versions continue with the previous theme, about exposing their baldness (e.g., NAS, NJB, NAB, REB, Douay). The EB talks about exposing the *shame* of the daughters of Zion. The NRSV is close to the KJV, “and the Lord will lay bare their secret parts.” The SOT, “And Jehovah will expose her destitute of raiment.” In Hosea we read: “Lest I strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was born ...” (Hosea 2:3a). Lowth explains: “It was the barbarous custom of the conquerors of those time to strip their captives naked, and to make them travel in that condition, exposed to the inclemency of the weather; and, the worst of all, to the intolerable heat of the sun. But this to the women was the height of cruelty and indignity; and especially to such as these here described, who had indulged themselves in all manner of delicacies of living, and all the superfluities of ornamental dress; and even whose faces had hardly ever been exposed to the sight of man. This is always mentioned as the hardest part of lot of captives. Nahum, denouncing the fate of Nineveh, paints it in very strong colours.²⁹” So, these women

²⁹ “Behold, I am against thee, saith the LORD of hosts; and I will discover thy skirts upon thy face, and I will shew the nations thy

who were puffed up in pride would be brought down to shame. The world's view is well represented by two rules given as guides to employment arbitrators: (1) on the one hand the employer has a right to set dress standards that will "keep employees from being distracted by outlandish and overly revealing attire," but, on the other hand; (2) such standards "must be reasonably attuned to contemporary mores and attitudes toward dress and grooming. As styles change, the standard may have to change."³⁰ Parents can do much to teach their children the Lord's way, and expect appropriate dress from them despite changing mores. An excellent guide is the pamphlet, *For the Strength of Youth*.

18 In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of [their] tinkling ornaments, [about their feet], and [their] cauls, ✓ and [their] round tires like the moon;

✓ or, net-works

In that day the Lord will take away. In a day that will come, in the future, the Lord will remove ... ¶ *The bravery.* The *bravery* spoken here is not that of courage, but rather, of *fine clothing* or *showy display* (Webster). The word is sometimes translated into English as finery, beauty, brilliancy and glory. In a sense, the word bravery, as we know it today, is correct, in that it also means bold or shameless. ¶ *Of their tinkling ornaments, and cauls, and round tires like the moon.* See notes under vv. 19–23, below.

18b ... and [their] cauls, and [their] round tires like the moon;
19 The chains ✓ and the bracelets, and the mufflers; ✓

✓ or, sweet balls

✓ ✓ or, spangled ornaments

20 The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, ✓ and the ear-rings;

✓ houses of the soul

21 The rings, and nose jewels;
22 The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping-pins;

nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame. And I will cast abominable filth upon thee, and make thee vile, and will set thee as a gazingstock" (Nahum 3:5–6).

³⁰ *Grievance Guide* (10th Edition), BNA Editorial Staff, The Bureau of National Affairs, Inc., Washington D.C., p. 71. These suggestions can be found in earlier editions of this manual.

23 The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the vails.

The Tanakh includes a footnote of interest: "Many of the articles named in vv. 18–24 cannot be identified with certainty." Nevertheless, just to give an idea of how they are translated, I will include the ASV translation as well as the LXX (5): "18b ...and the cauls, and the crescents; 19 the pendants, and the bracelets, and the mufflers; 20 the headtires, and the ankle chains, and the sashes, and the perfume-boxes, and the amulets; 21 the rings, and the nose-jewels; 22 the festival robes, and the mantles, and the shawls, and the satchels; 23 the hand-mirrors, and the fine linen, and the turbans, and the veils" (ASV). "18b ... the curls and the fringes, and the crescents, 19 and the chains, and the ornaments of their faces, 20 and the array of glorious ornaments, and the armlets, and the bracelets, and the wreathed work, and the finger-rings, and the ornaments for the right hand, 21 and the ear-rings, and the garments with scarlet borders, and the garments with purple grounds, and the shawls to be worn in the house, and the Spartan transparent dresses, and those made of fine linen, and the purple ones, and the scarlet ones, and the fine linen interwoven with gold and purple, and the light coverings for couches" (after v. 21, text does not mark paragraphs 22 and 23, LXX, 5). It is interesting to see how fashions go in and out. While in the 1990s one could see women beginning to wear nose rings, Rawlinson explains: "Actual nose rings are not represented in any of the ancient remains; and the use of them seems to be confined to very barbarous communities. Probably the 'nose jewels' here mentioned were ornaments depending from the forehead and touching the upper part of the nose." Lowth says, "But it appears from many passages of Holy Scripture, that the phrase is to be literally and properly understood of nose-jewels, rings set with jewels hanging from the nostrils, as ear-rings from the ears, by holes bored to receive them. ... This fashion, however strange it may appear to us, was formerly, and is still, common in many parts of the East, among women of all ranks." He refers us to Ezekiel and Proverbs: "I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head" (Ezekiel 16:11–12); "As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion" (Proverbs 11:22). Such ornaments were almost unheard of in the Western world at the time many of these commentaries were written, but they are quite common today. ¶ Two extremes in dress weary the Lord: the dress that calls attention to riches and power, and the dress that belittles the person wearing it. The Lord has reiterated today the

need for simplicity in dress: “And again, thou shalt not be proud in thy heart; let all thy garments be plain, and their beauty be the beauty of the work of thine own hands” (D&C 42:40). In terms of the daughters of Zion, it is pleasing to the Lord when women do not forget their femininity as well as their modesty. So we read: “In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works” (1 Timothy 2:9–10). President James E. Faust and Elder Richard G. Scott have, in General Conference, addressed femininity’s enduring importance. Men and women have distinct divine roles given to them. “The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God” (Deuteronomy 22:5).³¹

24 And it shall come to pass, ~~that~~ instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle, a rent; and instead of

³¹ The responsibility for proper attire and appearance are not only those given to women. Men must dress appropriately, and wear a white shirt and a tie, especially when attending Church or involved in priesthood ordinances. As a new member of the Church, in the mid-1970s, in one of my first General Conferences I watched, I saw all these General Authorities, all dressed with a white shirt and a tie and clean shaven, and all Caucasian, and for a brief moment I had some negative feelings. When the first of these Brethren opened his mouth to speak, I was overcome by the Spirit, “these are Prophets, Seers and Revelators, these are the servants of the Lord.” Now I wear a white shirt and tie to church and when I go home teaching. I would not consider the possibility of not doing so. I love the Brethren, I want to emulate them. When I wear a white shirt and tie, and a clean shaved face, *to me it means* that I sustain the Brethren. As a representative of the Savior, holding the Priesthood, I feel that I should so dress when I go out of my home to go home teaching, to go and give a blessing, or to extend a calling. Now a few words about nationality, ethnicity, and the like. Leaving my own beloved Chile was very traumatic to me, a decision forced on me by my earthly father as he had to make difficult choices on what he thought best for his family. I used to always wear a Chilean flag pin on my jacket lapel when I went to Church. About 15 years after I was baptized, however, I increasingly felt this was not pleasing to the Lord, and I stopped wearing my pin. I realize that now I am a Christian first, a follower of the Savior above all. I love the scripture, “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19). I love my beautiful country as much as ever, I give thanks that I was permitted to be born in Chile, yet feel that there is simplicity and equality in being dressed in the plain Sunday dress, whose focal point is that white shirt. It is an honor for me to be a member of the Lord’s Church and to be called a brother. It is as if I am willing to say *Amen* in response to the question: “Art thou a brother or brethren? I salute you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, in token or remembrance of the everlasting covenant, in which covenant I receive you to fellowship, in a determination that is fixed, immovable, and unchangeable, to be your friend and brother through the grace of God in the bonds of love, to walk in all the commandments of God blameless, in thanksgiving, forever and ever. Amen” (D&C 88:133, also see v. 135).

well-set hair, baldness; and instead of a stomacher, a girding of sackcloth; ~~and~~ burning instead of beauty.

And it shall come to pass, instead of sweet smell there shall be stink. Perfume is often part of what people wear to be attractive. Instead of smelling well, however, there will be a reeking stench. Such can come from extreme poverty or disease. Another source of bad smell is that of a decomposing body. In the scriptures there is frequent mention of the type of putrid odors that will accompany the many dead in battles. For instance, “Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcases, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood” (ISAIAH 34:3). ¶ *And instead of a girdle, a rent.* This verse is frequently translated where girdles or sashes on the one hand are replaced by a rope on the other. The **תַּגְּזֵרֶהָ** as worn by women was not an undergarment, as the word “girdle” connotes in modern usage, but a valuable ornamented belt or sash like the Japanese *obi*.³² The word here used for rent (**נִקְצָה**) in the KJV, means rather a rope or even something to tie prisoners or slaves. At the very least we have abject poverty, where women are using a rope to hold up their skirts. Continuing with the worst case scenario, where there is not death, there will be captivity, slavery, and the other horrors of war. The Targum (**ܬ**) has “in the place where they were binding the girdles, shall be marks of smiting,” with an allusion to slavery and captivity. The Syriac (**ܫ**) has, “And instead of an ornamental girdle, a worker’s apron.” SOT translates as “the captive’s rope.” ¶ *And instead of well-set hair, baldness.* The NJB translates as: “Instead of hair elaborately dressed, a shaven scalp.” The Syriac (**ܫ**) translates as “instead of curled hair, baldness.” One of the indignities suffered by slaves, especially so for women, was shaving their scalps. Baldness can also be a side-effect of disease, such as radiation treatment for cancer patients, or those exposed to nuclear radiation. ¶ *And instead of a stomacher, a girding of sackcloth.* A stomacher (**פְּתִילִל**) is a fancy evening gown or other expensive clothing of its type, while a sackcloth (**שֹׂק**) is the material used in mourning, made from rough materials. The word in English and many other languages is pronounced the same as the Hebrew, namely, *sack*. ¶ *Burning instead of beauty.* Here **בִּי** in Hebrew stands for *burning*, or rather, *branding* (not to be confused the word *for*, or *because* we have seen before, the branding **בִּי** is a shortened version and comes

³² Harris, R. L., Harris, R. L., Archer, G. L., & Waltke, B. K. (1999, c1980). *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (electronic ed.) (263). Chicago: Moody Press.

from the root כָּרַח which stands for *burnt* or *scorched*).³³ Once again, we have the idea of slavery. An alternative translation—for manuscripts following the Dead Sea Scrolls (Q) text rather than the Masoretic text (M)—is that of *shame*: “Instead of beauty, shame” (DSSB, Q). Certainly, the idea of being branded as livestock would bring shame. ¶ Margalioth considers the *thesis* and *antithesis* of this verse, using the words *instead of* / *and instead of*, תַּחַת / תַּחַת, “And it shall come to pass, that INSTEAD OF sweet smell there shall be stink; AND INSTEAD OF a girdle a rent; AND INSTEAD OF well set hair baldness; AND INSTEAD OF a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning INSTEAD OF beauty,” and contrasts them to those in the second half of Isaiah. Whereas here in ISAIAH 3 the comparison was of something good turned into bad; the same words are inverted so that good would be transformed into something even better. While the KJV uses, “and for” whereas the Hebrew text (M) is exactly that of ISAIAH 3:24, תַּחַת, so substituting *and instead of* in place of *and for* we then have: “For brass I will bring gold, AND INSTEAD OF iron I will bring silver, AND INSTEAD OF wood brass, AND INSTEAD OF stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness” (ISAIAH 60:17). Furthermore, Margalioth points us to two other like verses (the JKV has *for* in place of תַּחַת) so we make the same substitution as before: “To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty INSTEAD OF ashes, the oil of joy INSTEAD OF mourning, the garment of praise INSTEAD OF the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified” (ISAIAH 61:3); and “INSTEAD OF the thorn shall come up the fir tree, AND INSTEAD OF the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off” (ISAIAH 55:13).

25 Thy men shall fall by the sword and thy mighty[✓] in the war.

✓ might

Thy men shall fall by the sword. While women’s beauty will now be gone as they are put to shame, men shall not go without feeling the consequences of such horrible times. It is perhaps the stink of these men who fall by the sword that is noted in ISAIAH 3:24. Alternate translations include, “And thy most beautiful son whom thou lovest shall fall by the sword” (LXX, G), “Thy beautiful men shall be killed by the sword” (Targum, T) and “Your mighty men shall fall by the sword”

(Syriac, S). ¶ *And thy mighty in the war.* The mighty are often thought of as invincible, even immortal. Yet, “Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall” (ISAIAH 40:30).

26 And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she ~~{being}~~ shall be desolate,[✓] and shall sit upon the ground.

✓ cleansed, or emptied

We noted that *Daughter of Zion* was another name for Jerusalem. Here, the allusion is to Jerusalem herself, along with all her inhabitants. ¶ *And her gates shall lament and mourn.* The gates of Jerusalem are meant. Jeremiah lamented: “Judah mourneth, and the gates thereof languish; they are black unto the ground; and the cry of Jerusalem is gone up” (Jeremiah 14:2) and “Her gates are sunk into the ground; he hath destroyed and broken her bars: her king and her princes are among the Gentiles: the law is no more; her prophets also find no vision from the LORD” (Lamentations 2:9); “The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts: all her gates are desolate: her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness” (Lamentations 1:4); and “The kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem” (Lamentations 4:12). In Nahum we have, “Behold, thy people in the midst of thee are women: the gates of thy land shall be set wide open unto thine enemies: the fire shall devour thy bars” (Nahum 3:13). These seem to speak of a time where all of Jerusalem, including her gates, will have been burnt and all left in complete desolation. The gates of the city were an important meeting place where the people could bring their challenges and controversies to be heard of judges, as well as wise and prudent men: “Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment” (Deuteronomy 16:18); and “Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land” (Proverbs 31:23). The gates were also a place where people gave thanks for the mercies of the Lord, “They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water, there shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the LORD, even the righteous acts toward the inhabitants of his villages in Israel: then shall the people of the LORD go down to the gates” (Judges 5:11); and “That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation” (Psalms 9:14). Now, instead of judgment and gratitude, there would be mourning, burning and desolation. ¶ *And she shall be desolate, and shall sit upon the ground.* The Prophet Jeremiah makes the

³³ AHCL, also see Gesenius.

connection between the city itself and her inhabitants: “The elders of the daughter of Zion sit upon the ground, and keep silence: they have cast up dust upon their heads; they have girded themselves with sackcloth: the virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground” (Lamentations 2:10). The Psalmist expressed it so: “By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion” (Psalms 137:1). Babylon would, in a future day, suffer the same consequences that would be inflicted upon Jerusalem: “Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate” (ISAIAH 47:1). Like Babylon, Israel had exalted herself, and would be brought down. While Babylon’s punishment would be forever, a remnant of Israel would be kept and brought forth. There is a curious Roman coin with a diagram of a Jewish woman sitting on the ground, mourning, and the word Judea. While this coin represents a later captivity, the custom of the Jews of mourning by sitting on the ground is preserved.³⁴

27 {KJV: ISAIAH 4:1}³⁵ ¶ AND in that day, seven women shall take hold of one man, saying: We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us[✓] be called by thy name, to take away^{✓✓} our reproach.

✓ thy name be called upon us

✓ ✓ or, take thou away

* KJV: This verse is first in ISAIAH 4, JST and Masoretic text (𐤀𐤍) considers it as part of Ch. 3.

AND in that day, seven women shall take hold of one man, saying. So few men would be left upon the land, as a result of having fallen in war (Isaiah 3:24–25), that for each man there would be seven women. Rabbi Ibn Ezra puts seven (שִׁבְעָה) to mean “many,” and explains that “this will happen in consequence of the death of the male persons in battle.” The death in battle of Israelite men in former days was extensive. “For Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah an hundred and twenty thousand in one day, which were all valiant men; because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers” (2 Chronicles 28:6). Jeremiah would say, “Their widows are increased to me above the sand of the seas” (Jeremiah 15:8a). The Psalmist wrote that

despite the blessings received from the hand of the Lord, “Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies: But turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they were turned aside like a deceitful bow. For they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images” (Psalms 78:56–58). As a result, the Lord “...delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy’s hand. He gave his people over also unto the sword; and was wroth with his inheritance. The fire consumed their young men; and their maidens were not given to marriage” (Psalms 78:61–63). Besides the horror of warfare, the disintegration of the family is likely to also play a role in such modern day scenes as depicted here. ¶ *We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel.* These women would offer to cook and provide for themselves in every way, contrary to the proper order of the Lord (Exodus 21:10) just so they could have children. ¶ *Only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.* LDS understand that when the Lord told Adam, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread” (Genesis 3:19a), that the principle of work would be one that was a blessing to man. Likewise, while women would bear children in sorrow,³⁶ that is, through suffering and pain, that children would nevertheless be a *blessing* to women. For women everywhere it has often been considered a disgrace or a reproach not to bear children. Many of the verses in Isaiah are those of contrast. Delitzsch points out that women of society are often pursued by a number of suitors, yet the tables would change so multiple women would be content to share one man. Rawlinson further suggests, “Among the Jews childlessness was a special reproach, because it took away all possibility of the woman being in the line of the Messiah’s descent” (Rawlinson).

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³⁴ Snowden, James Ross, *Coins of the Bible*, Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1864, pp. 43 ff.

³⁵ Agreeing with the JST, Lowth says, “The division of the chapters has interrupted the Prophet’s discourse, and broken it off almost in the midst of the sentence.”

³⁶ “I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children” (Genesis 3:16b).

Isaiah 4

A glorious vision opens this chapter, beginning with verse ISAIAH 4:2, showing forth *the Branch*, or our Savior and the focus of our joy and our confidence. In Isaiah we often meet an expression of Messiah spoken by the Lord, such as in ISAIAH 4:2, *The Branch of the LORD*. It should be known that the Lord Jehovah spoke, through the principle of Divine Investiture, the words of the Father. The time would come when only an esteemed remnant would be left. This remnant will have been washed clean. Upon the holy temples would be manifested the ancient tokens of the presence of God: “And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night” (Exodus 13:21).

1 ¶ AND in that day, seven women shall take hold of one man, saying: We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.*

* JST: This verse is last verse in ISAIAH 3, see exegesis there.

Verse one is actually the last verse in ISAIAH 3, where we see the results of the scenes of horror found there. ISAIAH 4, in contrast, begins with a message of beauty, hope and glory.

2 ¶ In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious; ✓ and* the fruit of the earth [shall be] excellent and comely for to them that are escaped of Israel. ✓

✓ beauty and glory

✓ ✓ the escaping of Israel

* JST & KJV include “and,” while Book of Mormon deletes.

¶ *In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious.* Some translations capitalize¹ the word branch (בִּנְיָן). For instance, “In that day the Branch of the Lord will be beautiful and glorious” (NAS, see also NIV, EB, SOT, YLT) giving this passage a Messianic tone. The Targum (ܬܪܓܡ) has: “At that time shall the Messiah of the Lord be for joy and for glory.” So, how can it be the *Branch of the LORD*, since the Branch represents Messiah, and so does the Lord? In ISAIAH 53:6b, we read similarly, “and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” The principle of *Divine Investiture* is at play, wherein the Savior speaks on behalf of the Father. It is the Branch or Messiah that is

being spoken of here. The contribution of the Targum (ܬܪܓܡ) is extremely significant, and shows that anciently the Jews believed in Messiah. The Jewish commentator Kimhi likewise translates as “The Messiah, the Son of David” (Kimhi, in Clarke). Today, while some Jews hold strong to their faith in *Messiah*, others have diluted their hope into a *Messianic Age*. The Book of Mormon shows a like occurrence; where before the coming of Christ many were not able to continue steadfast in their belief in Christ. In Jeremiah the figure is also contained of Messiah as the Branch: “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land” (Jeremiah 23:5–8; see also 33:15). Likewise, we find “I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH. ... In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree” (Zechariah 3:8b, 10; see also 6:12.). Other translations for ISAIAH 4:2 include, “In that day shall the glory of the Lord shine forth” (Syriac, ܣܝܪܝܐ) and “And in that day God shall shine gloriously in counsel on the earth” (LXX, ܠܟܟ). ¶ Then, will the Branch be *beautiful and glorious*. For the Branch to be *beautiful and glorious*, it means that the people will acknowledge the Lord as their Savior. So perhaps, one could say that the Branch will be *beautiful and glorious in the eyes of Israel*. Not that the beauty of the Branch had changed, rather, that the eyes of the people would be opened to see that beauty. ¶ *And the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely.* Some translators continue with the Messianic message, by capitalizing Fruit: “And the Fruit of the Land splendid and majestic” (EB), “Even

¹ Recall that in Hebrew there is no distinction between capital and lower case letters. They are all the same in this respect.

the most excellent and beautiful Fruit of the earth” (SOT). Lowth says: “The Branch is an appropriated title of the Messiah; and the fruit of the land means the great Person to spring from the house of Judah, and is only a parallel expression signifying the same; or perhaps the blessings consequent upon the redemption procured by him.” If we render the KJV with the modified capitalization, “And the Fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely,” the result is striking. In a Messianic allusion we read about the Christ, “he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, [there is] no beauty that we should desire him” (ISAIAH 53:2b). So once again, we can infer that while the Savior had no beauty or comeliness to those who were in spiritual darkness, those who love the Lord will exclaim, “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!” (ISAIAH 52:7). And from the Book of Mormon, “And behold, I say unto you, this is not all. For O how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that is the founder of peace, yea, even the Lord, who has redeemed his people; yea, him who has granted salvation unto his people; For were it not for the redemption which he hath made for his people, which was prepared from the foundation of the world, I say unto you, were it not for this, all mankind must have perished” (Mosiah 15:18–19). Certainly my soul delighteth in the scriptures. ¶ Many scriptures have multiple fulfillments and so we can also read, from *Rain in Due Season*: “Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit” (Leviticus 26:4). So the fruit of the land would be excellent and plentiful. “And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightful land, saith the LORD of hosts” (Malachi 3:11–12). Finally, in the Targum (Ⲯ)² we read, “and they that keep the law for majesty and for praise.” This speaks of the beauty to come upon the people who keep the commandments. ¶ *To them that are escaped of Israel*. This clause is a reference to the *remnant* of Jacob. Out of this remnant we have not only the Lamanites—who are descendants of Israel mostly through the tribe of Joseph and in the latter days would join The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—but other remnants of Israel found throughout the world, such as those of the tribe of Judah and Benjamin, as well as of the Lost Tribes. Slowly, descendants from all of the tribes are entering into the waters of baptism.

² Stenning.

And the day will come when a great number of the Lost Tribes will come into the Church and Ephraim will have the privilege of baptizing them (see D&C 133:26 ff.). At that day of rejoicing, it will be clear to Judah that they are not the only ones of Israel who are left upon the earth. The rejoicing of Joseph of Egypt when he saw his brothers, and all twelve were re-united, is a type and a shadow of future happy days alluded to in the following scriptures: “Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been?” (ISAIAH 49:21). The same thought is contained in: “Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD” (ISAIAH 54:1).

3 And it shall come to pass, **they** ~~that he~~ **that is** are left in Zion, and **he** ~~that~~ remaineth* in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, **even** every one that is written among the living[✓] in Jerusalem--

✓ or, to life

* Book of Mormon: remain

And it shall come to pass, they that are left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem. In speaking of a yet future remnant, perhaps those who are left when Jerusalem is being attacked from every side, in the end of days, when many will have already been destroyed and all are about to perish were it not for the Son of Man: “Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee” (Zechariah 14:1–5). Those of Judah will recognize their redeemer at that time: “And one shall say unto him,

What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends ... And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein” (Zechariah 13:6, 8). A second fulfillment refers to the New Jerusalem and Zion in the American continent, as they are becoming purified to receive the City of Enoch. Regarding this second signification, it is already beginning to be fulfilled with the gathering of children of Jacob into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. ¶ *Shall be called holy*. At that time, those who are left, will turn to the Lord and be called holy, קְדוֹשׁ. It is Christ who shares His holiness with His disciples. ¶ *Even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem*. The words *everyone that is written* also seem to point to those spoken of in the Book of Revelation, who are written in Book of Life. “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels” (Revelation 3:5). Ibn Ezra feels that the words “*that is written*” refer to the certainty of their being fulfilled.³ At the time that Christ visited the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, after His resurrection, the Book of Mormon paints a similar scene, where the most righteous survived the cataclysmic events.

4 When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.

When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion. In speaking of pride we read: “There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness. There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up” (Proverbs 30:12–13). And what is the filthiness spoken of here? Pride and neglect of the poor: “There is a generation, whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men” (Proverbs 30:14). In term of what constitutes the filth of sin, we read, “And finally, I cannot tell you all the things whereby ye may commit sin; for there are divers ways and means, even so many that I cannot number them” (Mosiah 4:29).

³ Friedländer, M. *The Commentary of Ibn Ezra on Isaiah: Edited from MMS. And translated, with notes, introduction, and indexes*. Volume I. Translation of the commentary, Philipp Feldheim, Inc. The House of the Jewish Book: New York, also published in London and Jerusalem. 1983, p. 25, Note 3.

Man, of himself, cannot remove the least of his sins and iniquities. “For though thou wash thee with nitre,⁴ and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord GOD” (Jeremiah 2:22). The Savior admonished: “And no unclean thing can enter into his kingdom; therefore nothing entereth into his rest save it be those who have washed their garments in my blood, because of their faith, and the repentance of all their sins, and their faithfulness unto the end. Now this is the commandment: Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day” (3 Nephi 27:19–20). It is through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, then, that the filth of our sins can be washed away, as we repent, are baptized in His name, and are purified by the influence of the Holy Ghost throughout the remainder of our days. The Lord is the *fountain of living waters* (Jeremiah 17:13). ¶ *And shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof*. The cleansing action continues: “And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, *It is my people*: and they shall say, The LORD *is my God*” (Zechariah 13:9, emphasis added). ¶ *By the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning*. How shall people be purified and their sins purged? Here is a scripture that indicates what would happen in the latter-days. “But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years” (Malachi 3:2–4). The question is also asked, “Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” (ISAIAH 33:14b). The fire will either consume or purify us, depending on whether we have chosen or rejected the *plan of happiness* (Alma 42:16).

5 And the LORD will create upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by

⁴ Regarding the Hebrew word for “niter,” pronounced *neter* in Hebrew, נִתֵּר, it corresponds to a heavy cleansing agent, sometimes translated as *lye* or as *potash*. The ASV translates it as: “For though thou wash thee with lye, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord Jehovah.”

night; for upon[✓] all the glory of Zion [shall be] a defence.^{✓✓}

- ✓ or, above
- ✓ ✓ covering

ISAIAH 4:5–6 was among the scriptures that Angel Moroni quoted to Joseph Smith according to the Oliver Cowdery narrative (see note to ISAIAH 1:7). These verses speak, at least in part, to the building of Holy Temples throughout the world, for a place of refuge and for a covering from both physical and spiritual storm and rain. Elder Orson Pratt felt these verses referred to the Tabernacle that would serve for protection from the elements. He went on to add that in a future date: “The time is to come when God will meet with all the congregation of his Saints, and to show his approval, and that he does love them, he will work a miracle by covering them in the cloud of his glory. [In the time of Moses] the Lord intended his people to be covered with the cloud continually, and he intended to reveal himself unto them, and to show forth his glory more fully amongst them; but they sinned so much in his sight that he declared— ‘My presence shall not go up with this people, lest I should break forth upon them in my fury and consume them in a moment.’ [Yet] Moses was permitted to enter the tabernacle, and to behold the glory of God, and it is said that he talked with the Lord face to face—a blessing which God did intend to bestow upon all Israel had they kept his law and had not hardened their hearts against him. But in the latter days there will be a people so pure in Mount Zion, with a house established upon the tops of the mountains, that God will manifest himself, not only in their Temple and upon all their assemblies, with a visible cloud during the day, but when the night shall come, if they shall be assembled for worship, God will meet with them by his pillar of fire; and when they retire to their habitations, behold each habitation will be lighted up by the glory of God,—a pillar of flaming fire by night. Did you ever hear of any city that was thus favored and blessed since the day that Isaiah delivered this prophecy? No, it is a latter-day work, one that God must consummate in the latter times when he begins to reveal himself, and show forth his power among the nations.”⁵ ¶ *And the LORD will create upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night.* The word *dwelling-place* is מִבְּנוֹי or habitation. It is often used for the dwelling place of God (Gesenius). This word “occurs seventeen times, all but one (Psalms 104:5) referring to God’s dwelling place, either in heaven or the temple” (TWOT). In the D&C we find that the

cloud is the *glory of the Lord*. “Yea, the word of the Lord concerning his church, established in the last days for the restoration of his people, as he has spoken by the mouth of his prophets, and for the gathering of his saints to stand upon Mount Zion, which shall be the city of New Jerusalem. Which city shall be built, beginning at the temple lot, which is appointed by the finger of the Lord, in the western boundaries of the State of Missouri, and dedicated by the hand of Joseph Smith, Jun., and others with whom the Lord was well pleased. Verily this is the word of the Lord, that the city New Jerusalem shall be built by the gathering of the saints, beginning at this place, even the place of the temple, which temple shall be reared in this generation. For verily this generation shall not all pass away until an house shall be built unto the Lord, and a cloud shall rest upon it, which cloud shall be even the glory of the Lord, which shall fill the house” (D&C 84:2–5). Certainly, the time will come, when in the millennium the glory of the Lord will also be manifest in a more widespread fashion: “For the Lord shall be in their midst, and his glory shall be upon them, and he will be their king and their lawgiver” (D&C 45:59). ISAIAH 4:5 obtains much of its strength from an allusion to former times, during the exodus from Egypt, when the presence of the Lord was made manifest as he accepted the people of Israel. “And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people” (Exodus 13:21–22); and “And they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land: for they have heard that thou LORD art among this people, that thou LORD art seen face to face, and that thy cloud standeth over them, and that thou goest before them, by day time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night” (Numbers 14:14). The clouds were also to be a protection from the elements and from danger. “He spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to give light in the night” (Psalms 105:39). In Exodus, the cloud was given for a defense against the Egyptians as the Israelites waited to begin their crossing of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:19–20). Regarding the time when Solomon completed the Lord’s Temple, we read: “And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD, So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD” (1 Kings 8:10–11). In Kirtland, in the dedicatory prayer, the Prophet Joseph prayed, “Let the gift of tongues be poured out upon thy people, even cloven tongues as of fire, and the interpretation thereof. And let thy house be filled, as with a rushing mighty wind, with thy glory. Put upon thy servants the testimony of the covenant, that when they go out and proclaim thy word they may seal up the law, and prepare the hearts of thy

⁵ Journal of Discourses. Orson Pratt, June 15, 1873, See also ISAIAH 60.

saints for all those judgments thou art about to send, in thy wrath, upon the inhabitants of the earth, because of their transgressions, that thy people may not faint in the day of trouble” (D&C 109:36b–38). Numerous witnesses spoke of this glorious event. Delitzsch suggests that such a cloud as spoken of here in Isaiah, is a “smoke-cloud, not a watery cloud, like those which ordinarily cover the sky; and by night in a fiery splendour, not merely a lingering fiery splendour like that of the evening sky, but, as the words clearly indicate, a *flaming* brightness (לְהִכָּהֵב), and therefore real and living fire ... above all, the cloud and fire were intended as signs of the nearness of God, and His satisfaction. ... [Now, the extent would be such that] the whole mountain [Mount Zion] would thus become a Holy of holies” (Delitzsch, emphasis added). A number of commentators seem confused by the plurality of the expression, *every dwelling place*. As LDS we understand that temples will dot the land, especially in the American continent. ¶ *For upon all the glory of Zion shall be a defence*. While in earlier times those in Israel and Judah built fortified walls and cities for a defense, now it would be the Lord who would be the defense of the children of Jacob. “Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence” (Job 22:25a). We do not have to wait for a millennial day for the Lord to come to our defense. Each of us can surely sing with the Psalmist: “But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble. Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing: for God is my defence, and the God of my mercy” (Psalms 59:16–17).

6 And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for* a covert from storm and from rain.

* JST & KJV include “for,” while Book of Mormon deletes.

And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat. “The heat in those regions was very intense, particularly in the vast plains of sand ... While traversing the burning sands of a desert, exposed to the rays of a tropical sun, nothing could be more grateful than the cool shadow of a rock” (Barnes). Lowth further explains, “In countries subject to violent tempests, as well as to intolerable heat, a portable tent is a necessary part of a traveler’s baggage, for defence and shelter.” Shadow gives protection from the heat and rays of the sun, “He spread a cloud for a covering” (Psalms 105:39a). But the protection goes much further than that of the scorching sun, or blinding sandstorm, it is a protection against both men and evil: “... hide me under the shadow of thy wings” (Psalms 17:8b) and

“...in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me” (ISAIAH 49:2b). Furthermore, of all places of protection and refuge, there are none like the Temple, formerly the tabernacle. “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place” (Matthew 24:15). ¶ *And for a place of refuge*. Regarding a *place of refuge*, the Prophet Joseph wrote that “The time is soon coming, when no man will have any peace but in Zion and her stakes.” The Prophet explained that the great calamities that have been predicted are at the doors, and that we need to look to the Presidency of the Church in order to be safe. For, “the devil will use his greatest efforts to trap the Saints.”⁶ The Lord will be merciful and protective of those who lean upon Him. “For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall” (ISAIAH 25:4). ¶ *And for a covert from storm and from rain*. Storms represent adversity, either physical or spiritual. It is our beloved Savior who can calm the storms of nature, persecution, and adversity: “And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm” (Mark 4:39, see also Psalms 107:23–31). So what can we do now, to partake of that protection and be filled with the Spirit of the Holy Ghost? “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints” (Ephesians 6:11–18). And with the Psalmist we can rejoice in the Lord, “I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah” (Psalms 16:1). We also read in ISAIAH 32:1–2, regarding King Messiah, who Himself “... shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in weary land.”)

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⁶ Smith, Joseph Jr. *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. 3:391.

Isaiah 5

ISAIAH 5 is divided into three distinct sections: (1) the allegory of the vineyard of “my beloved”; (2) a series of six “woes” directed to disobedient Israel, along with corresponding punishments; and (3) the establishment of a latter-day Ensign to which Israel will heed.

v. 1–7. The allegory of the vineyard is given as a warning that the Lord will follow up with the consequences outlined for disobedience as shown in *Rain in Due Season*. A choice vineyard was planted with great care and love, and yet it yielded worthless fruit. We are again transported to a court of law and judgment.

1 ¶ **NOW AND then** will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved, touching his vineyard. My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill. ✓

✓ the horn of the son of oil

AND then will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved. The expression “my beloved” appears 24 times in the Song of Solomon, here in ISAIAH 5:1, and in Jeremiah 11:15. In our own Doctrine and Covenants, we also have an expression from the Song of Solomon: “clear as the moon, and fair as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners” (D&C 5:11b, see also 109:73).¹ Who is “my well-beloved” here in ISAIAH 5? He is the same as in “And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17; and also see the allegory in Luke 20:9–16). It is Jesus the Christ. ¶ What does the expression “will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved” mean? The song appears to be sung by both the Father and the Son. The Father introduces the Son in verses 1–2. Then, in verses 3–6 it is the Great Jehovah or “my beloved” who speaks. Jesus speaks on behalf of both the Father and of Himself through the principle of Divine Investiture. Variations of this principle are accepted by other fellow Christians of other faiths: “The fact that the prophet speaks as if he were the beloved himself, shows at once who the beloved must be. The beloved of the prophet and the lover of the prophet ... were Jehovah, with whom he was so united by a *unio mystica* exalted above all earthly love, that, like the angel of Jehovah in the

early histories, he would speak as if he were Jehovah Himself” (Delitzsch). ¶ *Touching his vineyard.* What is represented by the vineyard? The answer is given below, in ISAIAH 5:7, “For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel.” ¶ *My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill.* The well-beloved has a vineyard (the house of Israel), and has planted them in a very fruitful hill. A hill can have the advantage of good drainage and protection from the wind. The Lord of the vineyard certainly has more than one choice land. While this verse seems to apply specially and principally to the land of Israel, and this seems to be the meaning of the *fruitful hill* spoken about here, much of what is said also applies to the inhabitants of the ancient American continent and any people who have been entrusted with the good things of the Lord, but who have failed to lean upon the Lord. A wonderful allegory is that of Zenos, the tame and wild olive vineyard. When one understands Zenos’ allegory, one is better prepared to understand this allegory or parable of the vineyard. Regarding the marginal ¶ note, “the horn of the son of oil,” Rabbi David Kimhi has this to say, “He calls the land of Israel a horn, because it is higher than all lands; as the horn is higher than the whole body; and the **son of oil**,² because it is said to be a land flowing with milk and honey” (Kimhi, in Lowth). The word horn, in older English, means the peak or summit of a hill. The whole idea, then, is that the Lord had placed Israel in a land flowing with milk and honey and fertility, the very best that was available.

2 And he fenced ✓ it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made ✓ ✓ a wine-press therein; and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.

✓ or, made a wall about ✓ ✓ or, hewed

¹ In the Song of Solomon, the expression is “fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners” (Song of Solomon 6:7b, also see 6:4. The Prophet Joseph Smith did not question the authenticity of the Song of Solomon, but rather, its inspiration.

² בן־שמן

And he fenced it. From a viticulture perspective, there are a couple of important reasons to fence a vineyard. Vineyards are fenced to keep animals and people out. Horses that have grown in areas where vineyards abound, for instance, often learn to eat the grape leaves, and love eating the grapes, too. There may well be an allusion to the wall surrounding the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Cheyne suggests we study Ezra 9:9 ff. Certainly it fits well with this passage, “For we were bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem” (Ezra 9:9, emphasis added).” From a spiritual sense, what could the fence be? Certainly, something given for a protection. One of the first things that come to mind is the Law; the scriptures and commandments given to Israel to help her from being contaminated by the idolatrous beliefs of nearby nations. Today we have the scriptures as well as living prophets to be our fence, to keep the world out. We must live worthy of the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost. ¶ *And gathered out the stones thereof.* One of the first jobs in preparing agricultural land is to remove the stones so the land can be plowed, and the plants have earth around them. Earth not only holds essential plant nutrients, but also holds water. Stones, obviously do not hold water, and release nutrients at an insignificant rate. The stones probably signify the surrounding nations and their idol worship (Deuteronomy 7:1–3). As Israel came into her fertile land, these other nations were to be utterly removed. The Lord feared the negative influence these nations would have upon Israel: “For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly. But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire. For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth” (Deuteronomy 7:4–6). Unfortunately, Israel did not hearken at that time and as a result would be removed from her land of promise for a season. ¶ *And planted it with the choicest vine.* Having the right genetic plant material makes all the difference in the world. Vineyards are not planted from seed, but rather, from vine cuttings, in order to produce genetically consistent excellent crops. So who was the choicest vine? In ISAIAH 5:7 we have the answer: “the men of Judah [are] his pleasant plant.” The expression, *choicest vine*,

corresponds to the Hebrew שֹׂרֵק, or *sorek*.³ Delitzsch has “*Sorek* [being] the finest kind of eastern vine, bearing small grapes of a bluish-red, with pips hardly perceptible to the tongue. The name is derived from its colour (compare the Arabic *zerka*, red wine).” Robert Lowth points us to the writings of Moses, particularly to the Patriarchal Blessings given by Jacob to his sons. There we find the feminine form of the word, שֹׂרֶקֶת, translated the same way, *choicest vine*. The blessing to Judah reads in part: “Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes” (Genesis 49:11). Lowth, leaning on a number of former commentators, suggests that Sorek represents a region, much as we would consider the Napa Valley in California today, for its excellent vineyards and wines. Furthermore, “By naming particularly the vine of Sorek, and the vine belonging to Judah, the prophecy [i.e., the Patriarchal Blessing] intimates the very part of the country which was to fall to the lot of that tribe.” Lowth cites an instance of a vine that was so large that a man could hardly put his arms around the trunk, and thus one could tie an ass's colt to it. It is certainly true that vines can grow to very large proportions. I saw one such vine at the University of California, Davis, when I was a viticulture student there. Over the years the vine had been carefully trained and pruned so it covered a very large area. Lowth's insight leads us quickly into further parallels. Several translations use the word *vesture* (RV, ESV, JPS), *cloak* (Geneva), or *robes* (HCSB, HNV, WEB, NAS) for clothes (סוּת) in Genesis 49:11. So we then immediately think of: “Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.” (ISAIAH 63:3); and “And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God ... and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” (Revelation 19:13, 15b). Judah's blessing in Genesis is preceded by: “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the

³ “Sorek was a valley lying between Ascalon and Gaza, and running far up eastward in the tribe of Judah. Both Ascalon and Gaza were anciently famous for wine ... And it seems, that the upper part of the valley of Sorek, and that of Eshcol, where the spies gathered the single cluster of grapes which they were obliged to bear between two upon a staff, being both near to Hebron, were in the same neighbourhood; and that all this part of the country abounded with rich vineyards (cp. Numbers 13:22–23; Judges 16:3–4). P. Nau supposes Eshcol and Sorek to be only different names for the same valley.” (Lowth).

people be” (Genesis 49:10). We can see, then, all of the symbolism of the atoning sacrifice of our Savior. No wonder, one translator has gone even further in her beautiful symbolic rendering: “Binding his Sapling unto the vine; And the Son of His Strength to the choice vine. He *shall* cleanse His garments in wine. And His vesture in the blood of grapes” (SOT). The Scriptures point to the Savior’s atoning sacrifice. ¶ The Talmud tradition (Seder Mo’ed, Sukkah 49a) is also symbolic of the Savior’s great love for His people: “‘And planted it with the choicest vine’, refers to the Temple; ‘and built a tower in the midst of it’, refers to the altar; ‘and also hewed out a vat therein’, refers to the Pits” (Talmud, Soncino). ¶ *And built a tower in the midst of it.* The most frequent use of towers in the days of the Old Testament were for a defense or inspection against those who would enter unlawfully. In this context, what is the tower? It seems to be the Temple built in Jerusalem. (Also, see notes on ISAIAH 5:6.) The Targum (Ⓢ) more explicitly combines the Temple symbolism and the atonement: “I sanctified them, and I made them glorious, I propped them up as a precious vine; and I built my sanctuary in the midst of them; and I gave also mine altar to make an atonement for their sins; and I thought that they should do good works before me, but they did evil works.” ¶ *And also made a wine-press therein.* There are diverse types of winepresses. At my mother’s farm trucks loaded with grapes would come into the winepress areas where farm workers would throw the grapes into a cement press. The grapes were brushed into a spot where a small motor was used to crush them and extract the juice. (In former times, men would stomp on the grapes to separate the juice from the residues, *orujo* in Spanish.) In our farm the juice would be pumped into a very large concrete container. In order to slow down the fermentation process, the juice would continually pass through tubes under water that would help cool it, and prevent an overly quick fermentation that would be out of control. Or, in other words, prevent the wine from turning into vinegar. Interestingly, Lowth translates this portion of the verse as “And he hewed out also a *lake* therein” (emphasis added) and comments: “In very hot countries it was perhaps necessary, or at least very convenient, to have the lake underground, or in a cave hewed out of the side of the rock, for coolness; that the heat might not cause too great a fermentation, and sour the must.” This translation is also supported by Spurrell: “And He also hewed out a lake therein” (SOT). After fermentation, once again returning to my mother’s vineyard, the juice would be then pumped into either closed concrete or wooden containers. ¶ In former times wine was stored in bottles, or more correctly, *animal skins* that could expand as the fermentation process was completed. The

Savior explained, “Neither do *men* put new wine⁴ into old wine-skins: else the skins burst, and the wine is spilled, and the skins perish: but they put new wine into fresh wine-skins, and both are preserved.” (ASV, Matthew 9:17, also see Mark 2:22 and Luke 5:37–38). In other words, new wine, or wine that had not completed its fermentation process, needed to be put in animal skins that could stretch with the production of added fermentation gases. Else the animal skins would rupture; and the wine lost. This new wine, then, had already gone through part of the fermentation process (wherein the sugars are changed into alcohol). It was called new wine because the fermentation process was not yet completed. The Savior’s teaching about the new

⁴ Some believe that Christ did not drink wine, but grape juice, as he drank *new wine*. Yet, if new wine was not alcoholic, then why do we read: “Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine” (Acts 2:13). When the Holy Ghost fell abundantly upon the Saints, onlookers thought that the Saints were drunk. Furthermore, we read, “For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!” (Luke 7:33–34). How could the Lord be called a winebibber for drinking *grape juice*? In present time, the Lord for a time allowed the use of wine in Sacramental services, and that was not grape juice, either. After the restoration of the Gospel, the Prophet Joseph Smith was warned against purchasing wine from the enemies of the Church, who could poison it, and wrote in the *History of the Church*: “Early in the month of August Newel Knight and his wife paid us a visit at my place in harmony, Pennsylvania; and as neither his wife nor mine had been as yet confirmed, it was proposed that we should confirm them, and partake together of the Sacrament, before he and his wife should leave us. In order to prepare for this I set out to procure some wine for the occasion, but had gone only a short distance when I was met by a heavenly messenger, and received the following revelation ... ‘Listen to the voice of Jesus Christ, your Lord, your God, and your Redeemer, whose word is quick and powerful. For, behold, I say unto you, that it mattereth not what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink when ye partake of the sacrament, if it so be that ye do it with an eye single to my glory—remembering unto the Father my body which was laid down for you, and my blood which was shed for the remission of your sins. Wherefore, a commandment I give unto you, that you shall not purchase wine neither strong drink of your enemies; Wherefore, you shall partake of none except it is made new among you; yea, in this my Father’s kingdom which shall be built up on the earth (D&C 27:1–4).’” We also know of the great damage—both in terms of health as well as violations to the law of chastity—associated with drinking. Our Savior commanded: “Behold, verily, thus saith the Lord unto you: In consequence of evils and designs which do and will exist in the hearts of conspiring men in the last days, I have warned you, and forewarn you, by giving unto you this word of wisdom by revelation—That inasmuch as any man drinketh wine or strong drink among you, behold it is not good, neither meet in the sight of your Father, only in assembling yourselves together to offer up your sacraments before him” (D&C 89:4–5). Today, in the Church, we do not use wine for the Sacrament, either. Those who keep this and other commandments will receive blessings untold both in this life and in the next. “And all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow for their bones; And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures; And shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint. And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them. Amen” (D&C 89:18–21).

wine may well be applied to the restoration of the Gospel. The Lord chose a pure young man, a clean vessel, a new bottle, even Joseph Smith, to be the prophet of the restoration. Brother Joseph would have to expand to his very limits to come to understand and partake of the doctrinal new wine of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Prophet Joseph Smith had not been contaminated with the doctrines of the sectarian world. ¶ My friend, and recent convert, Humberto Vallejos Prado, tells me that in the olden times the fermentation process took longer as it was not aided by supplemental yeast. The fermentation took place with the naturally present yeast in the grapes.⁵ Brother Vallejos explains that anciently, without all of the instruments available today, it was also a challenge to determine when the fermentation process was complete. Humberto suggests that it is likely that at the time of the Savior a partially fermented sweet wine (once again, where only parts of the sugars had been converted into alcohol and the remainder continued as sugars) was utilized. As a result, the alcohol levels in new wine would have been much lower and less inebriating.⁶ ¶ The expression יֵבֶה means a vine press or container where the juice was accumulated. These reservoirs may have been constructed by digging into the earth or hewing them out of a rock (Gesenius, HAL, BDB). The wine press is a type and shadow of the atonement (although there are also allusions to Judgment Day). “I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment” (ISAIAH 63:3). ¶ And he looked that it should bring forth grapes. After all these extensive preparations, the Lord of the vineyard could expect that the vineyard would bring forth grapes, or good works. ¶ And it brought forth wild grapes. Instead of bringing forth sweet wonderful grapes, the grapes were spoiled. The Hebrew word translated as *wild grapes* is בִּאֲשִׁים, from the root בָּאֵשׁ, representing something with a foul smell (Gesenius), most likely putrid: perhaps *botrytis bunch*

rot. Green supports the possibility of rotten grapes in his more literal interlinear text (but not in the side text). At the right time of the year, a rain might cause *botrytis* or other diseases to bring massive rot to the grapes in a whole vineyard. A grape that is not ripened is next in likelihood. These would indeed be small bitter or sour grapes. Finally, and least likely in a vineyard, there exists the possibility of the rootstock putting forth shoots⁷ and producing wild grapes. There are additional possibilities mentioned by some exegetes, such as the presence of noxious or poisonous weeds taking over the vineyard.⁸ The LXX (6) has, “Whereas I expected it to bring forth grapes, but it has brought forth thorns.” Returning to Isaiah, the בִּאֲשִׁים or “spoiled grapes” seem to represent evil works. “And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink” (ISAIAH 3:24a). Kay offers the following thought: “Israel, the ‘seed of Abraham, the friend of God’ (41:8), was a Vine of a noble stock, whose wine was to

⁷ The grapes that produce wine are mostly *vitis vinifera*, although there are other varieties that are sometimes used. Some varieties of “wild grapes” are often used today as rootstock to combat against root borne diseases, to which the scions (the top graft that produces the good grapes) would be susceptible if planted directly in the soil. With a few notable exceptions (such as Chile), most all countries in the world today require a rootstock to combat Phylloxera and other soil borne diseases. This was not always so, of course, before plant materials from one continent infested that of another. If vines are poorly tended, the graft might not work well and the rootstock might overpower the scion, thus producing wild grapes. In the winter of 1999-2000 we had a hard freeze in Modesto. The next winter, one of my daughters noticed that two huge lemons were growing in what had been an otherwise productive lemon tree. Each of these enormous lemons was almost the size of a person’s head. A colleague at the University of California quickly sized up the situation: “It is a ponderosa lemon,” he explained. A shoot from the rootstock had taken off. This branch had thorns and these two tremendous lemons. The lemons were mostly show. If one cuts through the middle he will find mostly rind, with a tiny little lemon inside. All show; no virtue. Exalted and boastful pride with nothing to show for it. By the time I removed the offending ponderosa limb, it had taken over a third of the tree, sapping much of the tree’s strength.

⁸ Lowth, for instance, explains that “בִּאֲשִׁים, not merely useless unprofitable grapes, such as wild grapes; but grapes offensive to the smell, noxious, poisonous. By the force of the intent of the allegory, to good grapes ought to be opposed fruit of a dangerous and pernicious quality.” Then he goes on to suggest another type of vine (נֶפֶל) rather than the grape vine (נֶפֶל דִּינִי) may be involved. Lowth quoted the story in 2 Kings 4:39-41, about Elisha and the poisoned pottage. Lowth quotes Fredric Hasselquist’s book of travels (*Voyages and Travels in the Levant*, 1766, p. 289) “I am inclined to believe that the Prophet here (ISAIAH 5:2, 4.) means the hoary night shade, *solarium incanum* : because it is common in Egypt, Palestine, and the East ; and the Arabian name agrees well with it. The Arabs call it *aneb el dib*, i. e. wolf-grapes. The Prophet could not have found a plant more opposite to the vine than this; for it grows much in the vineyards, and is very pernicious to them; wherefore they root it out: it likewise resembles a vine by its shrubby stalk.” Lowth also quotes Deuteronomy 32:32-33: “For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter: Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps.”

⁵ By the way, this is why the *Nazarites* were not permitted to eat grapes or raisins as some might have fermented. See Numbers 6:1-4.

⁶ Interview with Brother Humberto Vallejos P. on 27 May 2017, two days before his 78th birthday. Brother Humberto was baptized in February of 2014. Although he kept a Book of Mormon I had given him years earlier, I chuckle as my friend tells me that it was the Sister Missionaries who helped his conversion and I had nothing to do with it! He worked for our family vineyard, Barros Negros, for 39 years. Humberto was the agricultural technician and wine maker. As a pre-teenager, Humberto witnessed the making of artisanal wines that were produced the old fashioned way by his relatives, without added yeast, and crushed manually and then stored in barrels. The grapes were transported by oxen-pulled carts to the winepress. The leftover *orujo* (skins, seeds, and other residues) was given to the swine, who would get thoroughly drunk with it.

‘gladden God and men’ (Judges 9:13). It was planted amidst rich privileges, temporal and spiritual;—in a land that flowed with milk and honey and had the sanctifying presence of the Holy One with it. If the Vine had produced its fruit, it would have been a ‘blessing to all nations;’ making the ‘righteousness’ of faithful Abraham (Genesis 15:6) to overflow the earth. But Israel in the first cycle of its history—like the Nazarite⁹ Samson in the valley of Sorek—was seduced by the world; and became ‘a mockery’ to its neighbours” (Kay).

3 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.

And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah. This is a frequent prophetic device. The Lord is taking the role of a prosecutor in a court of law.¹⁰ One cannot fail but sense the tenderness of the Lord, despite His disappointment. ¶ *Judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.* The Lord here, as well as during His earthly ministry, used parables and illustrations to help hearers understand the justice of His perspective.¹¹

⁹ Nazarite, in the KJV. נָזִיר, one consecrated to the Lord, and as such would keep a strict law of conduct, including not partaking of alcohol, as we mentioned in a footnote above.

¹⁰ Two examples from Hosea are: “Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land” (Hosea 4:1) and “O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away” (Hosea 6:4).

¹¹ In the case of David and Bathsheba, the Lord used a similar approach. “And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man’s lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. And David’s anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity. And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; And I gave thee thy master’s house, and thy master’s wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to

Recalling the parable spoken regarding the Son who was killed by those husbandmen to whom the vineyard had been entrusted, here we see the question and answer approach: “When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof” (Matthew 21:40–43).

4 What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, it brought it forth wild grapes?

What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? What more could He have done as King and loving Lord, for the people to have repaid Him thus. ¶ *Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, it brought forth wild grapes.* One can read the melancholic disappointment. The Lord’s expectations were for good fruit, but instead found wickedness. See also the allegory of Zenos in Jacob 5.

5 And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard—I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; [and] I will break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down;

✓ for a treading

And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. The Lord is telling Judah and Jerusalem, as he did to King David, “Thou art the man,” and now would dictate the punishment that would follow. ¶ *I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and I will break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down.* The hedge, wall, or fence would be removed, allowing men and beasts who would devour it into the vineyard. Animals, such as horses, will not only eat the grapes, but the leaves, also. The Lord would now permit

be thy wife. Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun” (2 Samuel 12:1–12).

Assyria, Babylon, and other nations to trample the children of Jacob. In *Rain in Due Season* we read: “And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant: ... *then* I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: ...” (Leviticus 26:15, 33a). Micah also spoke of the utter destruction that Jerusalem would face: “Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest” (Micah 3:12, cf. Jeremiah 26:18). “For your sake” can be taken with at least two meanings: because of your fault, and for your benefit. Sometimes when we face difficult predicaments in life it is hard to see the benefit, yet except for sin, all things can work for our good. So would it be with the dispersion of Israel. The great sorrows would in the latter-days become multiplied joys. A good parent often hurts more than the child he punishes, but must follow through with the reprimand. Without the reproof, the child does not know his limits. Israel would now be scattered to every nation and corner of the globe, and fulfill a key role in the sharing of blessings with the whole world. Until the Lord would say enough, “For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee” (ISAIAH 54:7).

6 And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

And I will lay it waste: Once again, here is a series of direct allusions to the promises and curses in *Rain in Due Season*: “... and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste” (Leviticus 26:33). Assyria, Babylon, Rome and other nations would all have a role in laying cities waste in Israel. In the latter days, the nations of the world will turn against Israel. ¶ *It shall not be pruned, nor digged.* When a vine is not pruned, it produces lots of leaves but little fruit. Digging, or plowing, plays an important role in reducing earth compaction, increasing root aeration, and controlling and reducing weeds and noxious plants. From a spiritual perspective, pruning and digging may be equivalent to the teaching of the word of God among the people. Such spiritual manifestations and prophetic voices would be in times silenced, because of disobedience. “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it” (Amos 8:11–12). Similarly, the Spirit of the Holy Ghost is

offended and departs, as does the Spirit of Christ, through disobedience. ¶ *But there shall come up briers and thorns.* Briers and thorns come up when the earth is not plowed. Like the wild or putrid grapes, these may also represent evil works all around. ¶ *I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.* In *Rain in Due Season* the Lord promised those who kept His word, that they would have “rain in due season” (Leviticus 26:4b), but to those who turned away from Him, “I will make your heaven as iron” (Leviticus 26:19b). When the Lord makes the heavens as iron, He often is speaking just as much about the closing of the heavens for spiritual manifestations as that of physical precipitation and other types of blessings. This is, in essence, what happened to King Saul because of his disobedience: “And when Saul enquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets” (1 Samuel 28:6, see more in ISAIAH 26 notes). Perhaps the Holy Temple stands in a unique way, above all others, to show that communications between the heavens and the earth are open. In Solomon’s dedicatory prayer he was alluding at least in part to *Rain in Due Season*, when he prayed to the Lord and asked that He would forgive Israel if she turned away from doing that which was right: “When the heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; yet if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou dost afflict them; Then hear thou from heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, when thou hast taught them the good way, wherein they should walk; and send rain upon thy land, which thou hast given unto thy people for an inheritance” (2 Chronicles 6:26–27). In terms of both the scattering and subsequent gathering of Israel, the dedicatory prayer includes the following: “If they **return** (שׁוּבוּ) to thee with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, whither they have carried them captives, and pray toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, and toward the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house which I have built for thy name: Then hear thou from the heavens, even from thy dwelling place, their prayer and their supplications, and maintain their cause, and forgive thy people which have sinned against thee” (2 Chronicles 6:38–39). That the Lord heard the prayer was clearly manifested: “Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house. And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD’s house” (2 Chronicles 7:1–2). Furthermore, note what the Lord spoke to Solomon regarding this beautiful and inspired prayer: “And the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him,

I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice. If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, **and turn** (וְשָׁבוּ) from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:12–14). Note how the Lord loads with meaning the words, “... for an *house of sacrifice*.” By these words, the Lord not only was speaking of Solomon’s Temple, but of the House of Israel, who would be a house of sacrifice unto the Lord. First and foremost that House of Sacrifice would be the Lord Himself, who would give His life for us; and secondly, there is a reference to the suffering that the Jews and all of the house of Israel would be subjected to as part of the dispersion. What a glorious promise! In ISAIAH 5:2 we spoke of the *tower* as being a spiritual representation of the Holy Temple. It would make sense, then, that when revelations and Priesthood authority cease to be found upon the earth, that the Temple would also cease to be. The Targum (ܬ) has: “And now, now I will tell you what I will do to my people; I will cause my *Shekinah*¹² (שְׁכִינָה) to remove from them, and they

¹² So why is the word *Shekinah* substituted for *dwelt*? The following from J. F. Stenning, in the introduction to the Targum of Isaiah explains: “Since the main object of the Targumist was to render the Hebrew original intelligible to the ordinary people it is not surprising to find that its chief characteristic is the use of paraphrase. This is especially noticeable in the case of the Prophets, where a strictly literal translation would often have failed to convey the meaning of the Hebrew. But the desire to give an intelligible reproduction of the Hebrew text was not the only motive which prompted the translator: he was also concerned to avoid any rendering which seemed to conflict with later religious ideas. The most striking illustration of this motive is afforded by the treatment of those passages which relate to the Divine Being. From the standpoint of later Jewish theology the primitive representations of God in the Old Testament, and especially the anthropomorphic figures applied to Him ...” (Targum, p. xii). Sometimes great measures were taken to make changes, and it is surprising how well the scriptures have survived to our day, all things considered. “There were certain limits beyond which the translator could not venture without incurring the rebuke of the learned, but it does not appear that any definite rules were laid down for his guidance. The nearest approach to a general principle is the dictum ascribed to Jehuda ben Ilai (2nd century A.D., “Tos. Meg. end; Meg. 74d; Ber. 9c, is the Targum introductory footnote to this passage): ‘He who translates a verse quite literally is a liar, while he who adds anything thereto is a blasphemer.’ Thus Exodus 24:10 ‘and they saw the God of Israel’ must not be rendered literally since no man can be said to have seen God: on the other hand, to insert the word ‘angel’ (מַלְאָכָא) would be blasphemous, since an angel would be substituted for God. The correct rendering is ‘and they saw the glory (קִרְאָ) of the God of Israel’” (ܬ, p. ix). As LDS we believe that indeed God has a body, and that the scriptures did not need correcting in this respect. “The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us” (D&C 130:22).

shall be for a spoil; I will break down the house of their sanctuary, and they shall be for a treading down. I will make them abandoned ones; they shall not be visited, neither shall they be supported; and they shall be cast out and forsaken. I will command the prophets that they do not prophesy to them prophecy” (ܬ ISAIAH 5:5–6). Let us consider, for a moment, the word rendered as *Shekinah* (שְׁכִינָה), in the Targum (ܬ). *Shekinah* means *royal residence*, *royalty*, and most especially, *Divine Presence* (DOT). In the DOT we find a reference to Exodus 25:8, 22. “And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell (וְשָׁכַנְתִּי) among them” (Exodus 25:8). The root of the word is שָׁכַן, to *abide* or *dwelt*,¹³ related also to *habitation of God*, *the temple*, *the sacred tabernacle of the Israelites* (AHCL). TWOT has, “The verb שָׁכַן is used 129 times in the OT ... God is the designated subject of the verb 43 times. He may dwell on Mount Zion (Psalms 74:2). He dwells among his people (Exodus 25:8). He will dwell in Jerusalem (Zechariah 8:3).”

7 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts [is] the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant; ~ and he looked for judgment, but and behold, oppression ~; for righteousness, but behold, a cry.
✓ plant of his pleasures ✓ ✓ a scab

For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel. Now, the Lord explains the meaning of the parable. The vineyard represents the children of Jacob, or the house of Israel. The beloved, as we said, is the Great Jehovah, even Christ Jesus. ¶ *And the men of Judah his pleasant plant.* Each of the vines represent the men of Judah. Much of this parable applies to the whole house of Israel, however, with the men of Judah being a representative. ¶ *And he looked for judgment, and behold, oppression; for righteousness, but behold, a cry.* (See notes on ISAIAH 1:17.) A number of translations capture the mood of this verse: “He expected fair judgment, but found injustice, uprightness, but found cries of distress” (NJB); “And he waited For equity but lo! murderous iniquity, For the rule of right but lo! the cry of the wronged” (EB); and “Thus He looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed; For righteousness, but behold, a cry of distress” (NAS). The Tanakh and EB note the rhyme, paronomasia, or word play in the two set of Hebrew words, those corresponding to the words *judgment* (מִשְׁפָּט) /

¹³ A related word, מִשְׁכָּן, refers to the Tabernacle. (TWOT).

oppression (מִשְׁפָּח) as well as to righteousness (צְדָקָה) / cry (צִיָּקָה).

vv. 8–25. Here we have six woes against Israel based on sins she committed. These sins are the “wild grapes” mentioned in ISAIAH 5:2. Such wrongdoing included avarice, drunkenness, preference for sin over God, calling evil good and good evil, dishonesty and pride.

8 ¶ Woe unto them that join house to house, [that] lay field to field,* till [there] can [be] no place, that they~ may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!

✓ ye

* JST & KJV include “[that] lay field to field,” while Book of Mormon deletes.

Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there can be no place. A number of commentators have suggested that this verse speaks of those seek to greatly increase the size of their properties. The Targum (ⲧ), Syriac (Ⲫ) and LXX (Ⲭ) support that notion: “Woe unto them that join house to house, [that] attach the field [obtained] by oppression to their fields ...” (ⲧ¹⁴); “Woe to those who trespass the boundaries between houses, who remove the landmarks between the fields, to steal the land”; and “Woe [to them] that join house to house, and add field to field, that they may take away something of their neighbour’s” (Ⲭ). The implication here is that those riches were obtained through the exploitation and oppression of the poor, the widow, and the orphan, or outright theft.¹⁵ Barnes and Delitzsch well point out, that the Lord established the jubilee, so that those who ended up losing their land through either misfortune or mismanagement, would not have to always endure in their poor condition. The Law of Jubilee means that every 50 years the land reverted to the original owners.¹⁶ ¶ *That they may be placed alone in the midst*

¹⁴ Stenning.

¹⁵ So it was, for instance, that wicked Ahab and Jezebel by stratagem stole the vineyard or land of their neighbor (1 Kings 21:1–16). Other instances include: “Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children: and, lo, we bring into bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants, and some of our daughters are brought unto bondage already: neither is it in our power to redeem them; for other men have our lands and vineyards” (Nehemiah 5:5); “And they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away: so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage” (Micah 2:2).

¹⁶ “And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family” (Leviticus 25:10); “In the year of the jubile the field shall return unto him of whom it was

of the earth! Turning, once again, to the Targum (ⲧ), Syriac (Ⲫ) and LXX (Ⲭ), we have: “[Saying], Until we posses every place; and they think they shall dwell alone in the midst of the land” (ⲧ); “That they may dwell alone in the midst of the earth!” (Ⲫ); and, “Will ye dwell alone in the land?” (Ⲭ). It points to a greedy and insatiable need for obtaining or conquering more land. Henry pointed out that Alexander wept when he “fancied he had conquered the world,” as he contemplated that there was no more to subjugate. Delitzsch suggests that “luxury was the leading vice of Judah” at the time. Brigham Young warned Latter-day Saints, “The worst fear I have about this people is that they will get rich in this country, forget God and His people, wax fat, and kick themselves out of the Church and go to hell. This people will stand mobbing, robbing, poverty, and all manner of persecution, and be true. But my greater fear is that they cannot stand wealth.”¹⁷ With some concern, President Kimball, after quoting President Young, said, “To which I can hear many of you say, ‘Hasten the day.’” I have lived to see, sadly, this sort of pride manifested in intellectual arrogance on the part of a few ‘enlightened’ LDS, some of which trust more in the arm of the flesh than in the Brethren or in the Scriptures.

9 In mine ears, [said] the LORD~ of hosts, Of~ a truth many houses shall be desolate, [even] and great and fair cities, without inhabitant.

✓ This is in mine ears saith the LORD ✓ ✓ If not

In mine ears, said the LORD of hosts. (See also ISAIAH 22:14.) Ibn Ezra suggests that this expression means that the unjust nature of things had come to the attention of the Lord. Cheyne likewise explains that some words have fallen from the text, and that many have suggested the meaning to be something like, “The cry of the oppressed hath come up to my ears.” The LXX (Ⲭ) has, “For these things have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts: for thought many houses should be built, many and fair houses shall be no inhabitants in them.” The Talmud tradition (Seder Zera’im, Berachoth 58b) quotes this verse as “In mine ears, said the Lord of hosts: Of a truth many houses shall be desolate &c.” (Talmud, Soncino). ¶ *Of a truth many houses shall be desolate.* “Of a truth” (KJV, ASV), “surely” (Green, Tanakh, NAS, NRSV), or as in the margin ||, “if not” or

bought, even to him to whom the possession of the land did belong” (Leviticus 27:24).

¹⁷ Brown, James S., *Life of a Pioneer*, Salt Lake City: Geo. Q. Cannon and Sons Co., 1900, pp. 122–23, quoted by Elder Dean L. Larsen, *Beware Lest Thou Forget the Lord*, Ensign (CR), May 1991, p.10).

לֹא־אִם¹⁸ is, according to Delitzsch (and others), an oath formula. The complete formula being: לֹא־אִם־אֲנִי־חַיִּים, that is, “as I live, if not” (Delitzsch). “אִם in swearing is properly conditional, if, as in Samuel 3:17, God do so to thee, and more so, if thou, &c; but the form of imprecation is elsewhere omitted, and it is conveniently rendered by a negation, not, and לֹא־אִם by an affirmative” (AHCL). Although it may sound counter-intuitive, oftentimes an אִם introduces an emphatic negative while the clause לֹא־אִם, a forceful positive (BDB, Delitzsch). An example of the negative formula is: “The LORD hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works” (Amos 8:7, literally, *surely I will not forget forever* {Green}, and frequently translated as *never forget*). An example of the emphatic positive is: “The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand” (ISAIAH 14:24). לֹא־אִם, אִם, and חַיִּים often form part of an oath formula.¹⁹ In contrast to the riches spoken of in the previous verse, many houses would be left without inhabitant, abandoned. Few things can have as humbling an effect on a person of wealth as to lose their earthly possessions and find themselves to be as everyone else. ¶ *And great and fair cities, without inhabitant.* The cities, even the beautifully constructed ones, would not escape the desolating scourge that would come. These occurrences may have a man-based origin, or be the result of the forces of nature.

10 Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of an homer shall yield an ephah.

Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath. A bath was “a liquid measure roughly equivalent to five and one half gallons (U.S.) ... The bath was one-tenth of a homer” (HBD). An acre, אֵמָר, constituted the measure of land that could be ploughed by a team of oxen in one day (HBD, AHCL, TWOT) and corresponds roughly to a half acre in today’s measure (TWOT). Ten acres, then, would be equivalent to five in modern times. A viticulturist told me that one can count on harvesting about 5,000 gallons of grape juice

¹⁸ אִם stands for *if*, while לֹא for *no*, or *negation*. For more on oath formulas, see ISAIAH 22:14; and especially ISAIAH 62:8.

¹⁹ Another example is: “Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD; Surely, because thou ...” (Ezekiel 5:11a). Indeed, Ezekiel includes a number of variations on the oath formula. For instance, “As I live ... ye shall not” as in “As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel” (Ezekiel 18:3).

with that amount of land, or about 1,000 gallons per acre. ¶ *And the seed of an homer shall yield an ephah.* A homer could be represented either as a dry or liquid measure. As a dry measure, a homer would be equivalent to ten ephahs (HBD). It is easy to see the disaster, when a farmer’s return on investment would be one tenth. Such a farmer would have been better off not planting at all. In *Rain in Due Season* we have: “Thou shalt carry much seed out into the field, and shalt gather but little in; for the locust shall consume it ... Thou shalt plant vineyards, and dress them, but shalt neither drink of the wine, nor gather the grapes; for the worms shall eat them” (Deuteronomy 28:38a, 39). While the land of Israel today has been dedicated for the restoration of Israel, and it growing agricultural abundance is something very much taken for granted by our present generation, this was not so even two hundred years ago, before Elder Orson Hyde, one of the Lord’s Twelve Apostles at the time, dedicated the Land of Israel from the Mount of Olives, on October 24, 1841.²⁰ Barnes, speaking of the lack of fertility of the Holy Land in the early 1800s wrote: “At present, this formerly fertile country is among the most unproductive on the face of the earth” (Barnes). The vineyard of the Lord had been destroyed: “I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down” (Proverbs 24:30–31).

11 Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, [that] they may follow strong drink; and that continue until night, [till] and wine inflame~them!

✓ pursue

²⁰ Orson Hyde wrote: “On Sunday morning, October 24, a good while before day, I arose from sleep, and went out of the city as soon as the gates were opened, crossed the brook Kedron, and went upon the Mount of Olives, and there, in solemn silence, with pen, ink, and paper, just as I saw in the vision, offered up the following prayer to Him who lives forever and ever.” Among the things mentioned in that prayer were these words: “Grant, therefore, O Lord, in the name of Thy well-beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to remove the barrenness and sterility of this land, and let springs of living water break forth to water its thirsty soil. Let the vine and olive produce in their strength, and let the fig-tree bloom and flourish. Let the land become abundantly fruitful when possessed by its rightful heirs; let it again flow with plenty to feed the returning prodigals who come home with a spirit of grace and supplication; upon it let the clouds distil virtue and richness, and let the fields smile with plenty. Let the flocks and the herds greatly increase and multiply upon the mountains and the hills....” (Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, introduction and notes by B. H. Roberts, Volume 4, pp. 456, 457.) I had the great privilege of being at the Orson Hyde memorial in the Mount of Olives in September 2012.

Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink. That is, woe unto those persons who begin their day partaking of alcoholic beverages. שכר also means, beside strong drink, an alcoholic beverage with intoxicating qualities. That is, drinks with a higher concentration of alcohol. The higher the sugar content of a liquid before fermentation (measured in degrees Brix), the higher the *proof* or alcohol content. Lowth, based on some Syrian authorities, suggests that strong drink “meant properly *palm wine*, or date wine, which was and is still much in use in the Eastern countries. Judea was famous for the abundance and excellence of its palm tree; and consequently had plenty of this wine.” This is very likely the way ancient strong drink was made, and peoples everywhere have been known to make alcohol out of various fruits and concoctions. For instance, in Chile, a famous alcoholic beverage is *chicha*, made out of apple juice. ¶ *And that continue until night, and wine inflame them!* And then, who continue until late at night drinking, and continue to drink until they are utterly drunk. People can be inflamed by alcohol or lust. The word *inflame* implies a burning or increase in heat, such as from a flame. “The American Indians appropriately call [their alcoholic beverage] *fire-water*” (Barnes). Similar verses to ISAIAH 5:11–13 can be found in Amos: “Woe to them that are at ease in Zion Ye that put far away the evil day,²¹ and cause the seat of violence to come near; That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; That chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of musick, like David; That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph. Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed” (Amos 6:1a, 3–7). There are records among a number of native peoples that have documented this type of drinking parties that may have lasted for days.²²

12 And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the LORD, neither consider the operation of his hands.

²¹ Seems to be saying that the time when consequences are to be paid for wrongdoing are far away or can be ignored.

²² See for instance, *El Cautiverio Feliz*, by Angel Custodio González, which details these excesses among the Lamanites of Chile toward the end of the 1600s. This book also speaks much about the good qualities found in the native peoples.

And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts. Men may take extreme measures to make sure their feasts have every needful ingredient. ¶ *But they regard not the work of the LORD, neither consider the operation of his hands.* Yet when it comes to things of eternal worth, in contrast, little thought is given. Such as the price paid by the Savior if we will but follow Him.

13 Therefore, my people are gone into captivity, because [they have] no knowledge; and their honourable men [are] famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.

✓ glory are men of famine

Therefore, my people are gone into captivity. We again turn to *Rain in Due Season*: “The LORD shall bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone” (Deuteronomy 28:36). Here Isaiah is saying, furthermore, you have provoked the Lord with your continual wickedness so that time which was written of aforetime will now come to pass. ¶ *Because they have no knowledge.* What knowledge is being spoken about here? Knowledge of the Law and of the Covenant made with the Lord. “And thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee” (Deuteronomy 28:29). People will be blind to spiritual things. ¶ *And their honourable men are famished.* The idea of spiritual and physical bondage are both present (also see ISAIAH 5:6). ¶ *And their multitude dried up with thirst.* This thirst is associated with drought and famine of food and of the word of God. In *Rain in Dues Season* we have: “Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee” (Deuteronomy 28:48). Barnes applies this to the coming Babylonian captivity: “The punishment here specified, refers particularly to a journey through an arid, desolate region, where drink could be obtained only with difficulty. Such was the route which the nation was compelled afterwards to take in going to Babylon.” Certainly, the captivity and scattering of Israel into Assyrian and Babylonia is included.

14 Therefore, hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure; and their glory, and their multitude, and

their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.

Therefore, hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure. Hell is compared to a wild beast who has opened her mouth wide, and is ready to devour her prey. The Hebrew term for hell, as translated by the KJV, is **שְׁאוֹל** (*sheol*), and is often transliterated as *Sheol* in other scripture translations. “Therefore *Sheol* hath enlarged its desire, and opened its mouth without measure; and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth among them, descend into it” (ASV, cf. NAS, NRSV, REB, NJB, Syriac (S), Tanakh). Sometimes it is translated as “*nether world*” (NAB, JPS). The LXX (G) uses the Greek term *Hades*,

αδης. In the TWOT we read, “There is much difference of opinion on the meaning of the term, occasioned in part by differing approaches to the Old Testament teaching on a future life ... The New Testament verses are highly problematical [such as] Christ’s descent from heaven and return there.” Through modern-day revelation, as LDS we have a good understanding of these issues. It seems that the best equivalent to *Sheol* or *Hades* is the *Spirit World*. In the spirit world the righteous spirits of the dead go to *paradise*, while the wicked ones go to *spirit prison*. Here it seems to refer to the spirit prison, which seemed anxious to receive those who had done wickedly. D&C 138 is the beautiful and tender account of the visit of the Lord to the Spirit World, wherein “the Son of God appeared, declaring liberty to the captives who had been faithful.” And furthermore, “from among the righteous, he organized his forces and appointed messengers, clothed with power and authority, and commissioned them to go forth and carry the light of the gospel to them that were in darkness, even to all the spirits of men; and thus was the gospel preached to the dead.” ¶ *And their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.* All that is prideful and replete with vainglory will descend into that spirit prison.

15 And the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled:

And the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled. The thought is an allusion to ISAIAH 2:9, where we saw that both the mean (or common) man as well as the mighty one refused to humble themselves before the Lord. While both versions of ISAIAH 2:9 are understandable, the JST

correction makes the stronger contrast between a refusal to bow down before the Lord and subsequently being humbled before Him. ¶ LITV translates this clause as: “And man is bowed down, and man is humbled.” That is because two synonyms are used for the word *man* in the Hebrew: **אָדָם** (*adam* or man) and **אִישׁ** (*ish*, or man). Hebrew scholars suggest that the former is an ordinary man while the latter is a mighty one (also see ISAIAH 2:9). ¶ *And the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled:* Perhaps no other part of man can speak as eloquently the feelings and attitudes of a man as his eyes. So it will be that the prideful look of man shall also be brought down.

16 But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy~ shall be sanctified in righteousness.

✓ or, the holy God; the God, the holy.

Delitzsch suggests: “God, who is both exalted and holy in Himself, demanded that as the exalted One He should be exalted, and that as the Holy One He should be sanctified. But Jerusalem had not done that; He would therefore prove Himself the exalted One by the execution of justice, and sanctify Himself ... by the manifestation of righteousness, in consequence of which the people of Jerusalem would have to give Him glory against their will, as forming part of ‘the things under the earth’ (Philippians 2:10).” Similarly we have Rabbi Ibn Ezra’s comments: “Then the excellence of the Lord will be known by the judgment (**משפט**) which He will have executed on Israel, and His holiness will be revealed by the kindness (**צדקה**) shown to them.”

17 Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of the fat ones shall strangers eat.

This verse has been given a number of contrasting meanings.²³ The context is key in properly interpreting this verse. It appears that the verse is an allusion to the

²³ For instance, the Syriac (S) has a message of redemption: “Then shall the lambs feed there in their usual fashion, and the waste places that shall be rebuilt shall be the property of the rightful owners.” The Targum (T) has a message of reversed fortunes, between the rich and those they exploited: “And the righteous shall be nurtured as was promised concerning them, and the riches of the wicked shall the righteous possess.” The LXX (G) seems to indicate that the people who once lived lavishly would be reduced and humbled to the level of animals fed in pasture and carried away captive, while their own lands would be abandoned. “And they that were spoiled shall be fed as bulls, and lambs shall feed on the waste places of them that are taken away” (G).

contrast between ISAIAH 5:8 and the verses that follow—showing the great excesses of the day—and the desolation that would follow. Lambs now feed where the former beautiful and expensive homes and lands of the rich used to be. In my trip to the Holy Land I saw a shepherd feeding his flock in the ruins of one of the ancient buildings. Besides the literal lambs, these may also be meant to represent the poor of the people who were left behind after the Babylonian defeat of Judah.²⁴ In the 19th Century, Delitzsch observed, “And when we consider that the Holy Land is at the present time an extensive pasture-ground for Arab shepherds, and that the modern Jerusalem which has arisen from the dust is a Mohammedan city, we may see in this also a literal fulfillment of ISAIAH 5:17.” The *fat ones* represent the wealthy men of Judah, to whom the good things of the earth had been plentiful; the *stranger*, the foreign forces who took possession of the land.

18 ¶ Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope;

Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords (בְּחִבְלֵי) of vanity. It is instructive to see how the word *cord* is used elsewhere in scripture: “And if they be bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction” (Job 36:8); “Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us” (Psalms 2:3); “The LORD is righteous: he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked” (Psalms 129:4); and “His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins” (Proverbs 5:22). Cords can bind or hold something fast, as a prisoner. Sins can act to bind a man, taking away his freedom and obstructing his agency. To *draw* iniquity gives the impression of pulling or leading a prisoner with such cords: “lead captive silly women laden with sins” (2 Timothy 3:6b). Almost the same terminology is used of the opposite of sin, when man is drawn with the love of the Lord: “I drew them with cords (בְּחִבְלֵי) of a man, with bands of love: and I was to them as they that take off the yoke” (Hosea 11:4a). Matthew Henry suggests: “[Those intent on iniquity]

think themselves as sure of compassing their wicked project as if they were pulling it towards them with strong cart-ropes; but they will find themselves disappointed, for they will prove cords of vanity, which will break when they come to any stress.” Perhaps one can picture the building of an ancient bridge made out of rope. Those made out of *cords of vanity* will give way to their loads, sending those who have trusted in them into certain spiritual death; those who have trusted in the Lord will, instead, be able to cross their bridge in confidence and fall at the feet of the Lord with eternal tears of gratitude. ¶ *And sin as it were with a cart rope.* One may picture, perhaps, an ox pulling a cart full of sins. The Targum (ܬܪܓܡ) has: “Woe to them that begin to sin by little, drawing sins with the ropes of vanity, and they go on and increase until they are strong, and *their sins are* as a cart-rope” (ܬܪܓܡ). Kimhi explains, “An evil inclination is the beginning like a fine hair-string, but at the finishing like a thick cart-rope” (Kimhi from ancient Rabbins, in Lowth). Bishop Patrick Rhoades, of the Modesto 3rd Ward, once compared sin to a swimming pool in a hot summer day. It is unusual for people to jump head in into the pool. Most first put a toe in, and swirl it around a bit. Others may splash themselves a little with the water. But before a person knows it, the individual finds himself in the water, fully immersed. Likewise, sin may begin as a thin strand that can easily be broken, but when strand is added to strand, the force of habit before long can bind as a cord. The Talmud tradition (Seder Mo’ed, Sukkah 52a) explains the tyranny of addiction: “Rabbi Assi stated, The Evil Inclination is at first like the thread of a spider, but ultimately becomes like cart ropes, as it is said, Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart-rope” (Talmud, Soncino).

19 That say: Let him make speed, [and] hasten his work, that we may see [it]: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know [it]!

That say: Let him make speed, hasten his work, that we may see it. The essence of this verse seems to be a taunt by the unbeliever, as to when the prophecies of good, or warnings of punishment for evil, would come to pass (see also ISAIAH 66:5). Their taunt would soon enough be addressed, as the Lord would allow other nations to fall upon them (see ISAIAH 8:3). Just prior to the first coming, there was a great commotion manifested in the people of the American continent, as regarding the sign that would be given indicating that Christ would be born (3 Nephi 1:4–9). In the last days there will be a similar unbelief (ISAIAH 66:5), as manifested in the

²⁴ “And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem: And he burnt the house of the LORD, and the king’s house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man’s house burnt he with fire. And all the army of the Chaldees, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about. Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carry away. But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen” (2 Kings 25:8–12).

New Testament: “Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming?” (2 Peter 3:3–4a). ¶ *And let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it!* In this parallel thought, essentially the same idea is manifested, in a taunting voice toward the prophet, as well as the taking of the Lord’s name in vain. In the Targum (Ⲯ) we read: “That say, When will He hasten and reveal His miracle, that we may see *it*: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it!”

20 Woe unto them that call evil good,[✓] and good evil, that put darkness for light, and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

✓ or, Say concerning evil, It is good

Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil, etc. The same thought is repeated three times, contrasting good with evil with ever increasing strength, light with darkness, and sweet with bitter. Evil is described as dark and bitter; good as light and sweet. While it should be easy to tell good apart from evil, the day is here where people are so blind that they can no longer see in noon day because the Scriptures have been set aside as a thing of naught. Speaking of this verse, President Kimball taught, “The Savior said that if it were possible the very elect would be deceived by Lucifer. He uses his logic to confuse and his rationalizations to destroy. He will shade meanings, open doors an inch at a time, and lead from purest white through all the shades of gray to the darkest black.”²⁵ President James E. Faust observed: “The gap between what is popular and what is righteous is widening.”²⁶ In that same General Conference, Elder M. Russell Ballard observed: “Let me say again that the family is the main target of evil’s attack and must therefore be the main point of our protection and defense. As I said once before, when you stop and think about it from a diabolically tactical point of view, fighting the family makes sense to Satan. When he wants to disrupt the work of the Lord, he doesn’t poison the world’s peanut butter supply, thus bringing the Church’s missionary system to its collective knees. He doesn’t send a plague of laryngitis to afflict the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. He doesn’t legislate against green Jell-O and casseroles. When evil wants to strike out and disrupt the essence of God’s work, it attacks the family. It does so by attempting to

²⁵ Kimball, Spencer W. *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*. Edited by Edward L. Kimball. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1982. p. 279.

²⁶ President James E. Faust, “Lord, I Believe; Help Thou Mine Unbelief.” October 2003 General Conference.

disregard the law of chastity, to confuse gender, to desensitize violence, to make crude and blasphemous language the norm, and to make immoral and deviant behavior seem like the rule rather than the exception.”²⁷ Elder Durrel A. Woolsey said, “The war is for the souls of men. The battle lines have been drawn since Adam: evil versus righteousness. In this the final dispensation and in preparation for the Millennium, the forces of evil have intensified and united under the powerful influences of Satan. On the opposite side of the line, the kingdom of God is clearly sounding the trumpet of righteousness, as perhaps never before. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is on the offensive in the declaration of good to be good and evil to be evil.”²⁸

21 Woe unto ~~[them that are]~~ the wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight![✓]

✓ before their face

Jacob, the brother of Nephi, exclaims: “O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish. But to be learned is good²⁹ if they hearken unto

²⁷ Elder M. Russell Ballard, “Let Our Voices Be Heard.” October 2003 General Conference.

²⁸ Elder Durrel A. Woolsey, “A Strategy for War.” October 1995 General Conference.

²⁹ Without a doubt, the Saints have been commanded to study and not be ignorant: “And as all have not faith, seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom, seek learning even by study and also by faith; ... And do thou grant, Holy Father, that all those who shall worship in this house may be taught words of wisdom out of the best books, and that they may seek learning even by study, and also by faith ...” (D&C 109:7, 14). Furthermore, “And set in order the churches, and study and learn, and become acquainted with all good books, and with languages, tongues, and people” (D&C 90:15). We also learn that in the Church, the teacher is not to set himself higher than the student: “And when the priests left their labor to impart the word of God unto the people, the people also left their labors to hear the word of God. And when the priest had imparted unto them the word of God they all returned again diligently unto their labors; and the priest, not esteeming himself above his hearers, for the preacher was no better than the hearer, neither was the teacher any better than the learner; and thus they were all equal, and they did all labor, every man according to his strength” (Alma 1:26). When we leave this mortal life, we can take those things we have learned. “Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection. And if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come” (D&C 130:18–19). Knowledge ought to be searched by us not only through good books, but also through inspiration, as the Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “for

the counsels of God” (2 Nephi 9:28–29). Regarding the last days, we are told that men will be “Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” (2 Timothy 3:1–5, 7). We are also informed that in the last days a spirit of pride will be prevalent. “Yea, it shall come in a day when the power of God shall be denied, and churches become defiled and be lifted up in the pride of their hearts” (Mormon 8:28a).

22 Woe unto [them that are] the mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink;

Woe unto them that are the mighty to drink wine. By repetition (see ISAIAH 5:11) a woe is pronounced against those who drink wine in excess. Alcoholism is probably among the worst ills to affect mankind. Latter-day Saints who faithfully keep the modern day commandment—the Word of Wisdom—to not drink any alcohol at all, are greatly blessed. ¶ *And men of strength to mingle strong drink* (שִׁכָּר). Such as men who boast in their ability to drink strong liquor.

23 Which Who justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

The NAS has, “Who justify the wicked for a bribe, And take away the rights of the ones who are in the right!” Nyman cries out against a hypocritical stance that considers the man who committed the crime: “The gross dishonesty and distorted value system accepted by some in our day labels a man a thief for petty stealing, but regards unscrupulous business deals involving thousands or millions of dollars as just a good business.” Of course we know that both of these behaviors are wrong in the sight of God.

24 Therefore, as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, [so] their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossoms shall go up as dust; because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

✓ tongue of fire

Therefore, as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff. Stubble, or chaff, is the

one truth revealed from heaven is worth all the sectarian notions in existence” (TPJS, p. 338).

leftover stalk after the wheat, oats, or other grain is removed. This leftover plant would dry out as it was no longer attached to the roots. And in those cases where the crop was removed from the plant without separating it from the roots, it also dries out because it is no longer irrigated. Two properties of stubble are its (1) *lightness*, so the wind could easily remove it and allow the heavier grain to remain, and (2) its high combustibility, largely because of its dryness. So it is that the flame would consume it quickly. The more literal Hebrew in the margin ¶ depicts the fire as having a devouring tongue that licks up all that is in his way.³⁰ We read in Jeremiah: “I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them. Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far, O house of Israel, saith the LORD: it is a mighty nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say. Their quiver is as an open sepulchre, they are all mighty men. And they shall eat up thine harvest, and thy bread, which thy sons and thy daughters should eat: they shall eat up thy flocks and thine herds: they shall eat up thy vines and thy fig trees: they shall impoverish thy fenced cities, wherein thou trustedst, with the sword” (Jeremiah 5:14b–17). An important difference between the LDS and many other Christian faiths, is that as LDS we do not think the Lord has abandoned Israel in favor of the Gentile nations. “Nevertheless in those days, saith the LORD, I will not make a full end with you” (Jeremiah 5:18). The scriptures are replete with promises to Israel, for the Lord would in the last days begin to recover His people Israel from every corner of the earth. ¶ *Their root shall be rottenness.* Hosea used quite a similar expression and reasoning: “Ephraim is smitten, their root is dried up, they shall bear no fruit: yea, though they bring forth, yet will I slay even the beloved fruit of their womb. My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations” (Hosea 9:16–17). Root rot is a major and serious disease of plants. One cause of root rot is overwatering. ¶ *And their blossoms shall go up as dust.* The blossom is what turns into a flower and then into the fruit. When there is excess blossom fall, then trees and plants yield little fruit. How different from the promise of the Lord to those who would keep His statutes: “For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you” (Leviticus 26:9, *Rain in Due Season*). When Matthew Henry says, “The sin of unfruitfulness is punished with the plague of unfruitfulness” he is more correct than he could have ever imagined, as it is only in the highest degree of the

³⁰ The ASV uses the margin in this verse: “Therefore as the tongue of fire devoureth the stubble, and as the dry grass sinketh down in the flame.”

Celestial Kingdom that man will be able to have increase and posterity. ¶ *Because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.* This is a reminder that the people of Israel had not kept the Law, and would now suffer the consequences described in *Rain in Due Season*: “...and ye shall sow your seed in vain ... neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits” (Leviticus 26:16b, 20b,); “The LORD shall smite thee ... with mildew ... Thou shalt have olive trees throughout all thy coasts, but thou shalt not anoint thyself with the oil; for thine olive shall cast his fruit. (Deuteronomy 28:22, 40).

25 Therefore, is the anger of the LORD kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them; and the hills did tremble, and their carcases [were] torn in the midst of the streets. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand [is] stretched out still.

✓ cut off

Therefore, is the anger of the LORD kindled against his people. We have seen the kindling of fire on the chaff, now we see the kindling of the indignation of the Lord. For “He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes” (Proverbs 13:24); and “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth” (Hebrews 12:6a). But there is a pattern in all of this. The Lord does not destroy at the first sign of disobedience, but rather, after iniquity has ripened.³¹ ¶ *And he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them.* The outstretched hand of the Lord is symbolic of either judgment toward the children of Jacob, or mercy toward them. Here it is judgment. ¶ *And the hills did tremble.* Barns says: “Gesenius supposes that the expressions which follow are descriptive of pestilence. Lowth and Rosenmüller

³¹ Abraham would be greatly blessed of the Lord in the land of Canaan: “And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever” (Genesis 13:14–15). This promise is later clarified, as it would not take place during Abraham’s own lifetime. Before this would happen, Israel would become a captive people in Egypt. The Lord would not displace the Amorites who inhabited the promised land quite yet: “And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full” (Genesis 15:13–16).

suppose that they refer to the earthquakes which occurred in the days of Uzziah, and in the time of the prophets.” It has also been suggested that during the Syro-Ephraimitish war (and one could add others such as the Syrian, Babylonian, and Roman invasions, for instance) that “the mountains may then have trembled with the marching of troops, and the din of arms, and the felling of trees, and the shout of war” (Delitzsch). ¶ *And their carcases were torn in the midst of the streets.* The Targum (☩) reads, “And their carcases were cast out as dung into the midst of the streets.” The picture is one of distress and pain. So we read in Jeremiah: “And the carcases of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth; and none shall fray them away (Jeremiah 7:33)”; as well as, “And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; and they shall have none to bury them, them, their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters: for I will pour their wickedness upon them. Therefore thou shalt say this word unto them; Let mine eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease: for the virgin daughter of my people is broken with a great breach, with a very grievous blow. If I go forth into the field, then behold the slain with the sword! and if I enter into the city, then behold them that are sick with famine!” (Jeremiah 14:16–18a). ¶ *For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.* This phraseology is a *formula* similar to that in *Rain in Due Season* (“And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring seven times more [punishment] upon you according to your sins,” Leviticus 26:21, 24, 27, 28) for the multiplication of punishments to fall upon mankind in an effort to reclaim souls.

vv. 26–30. In Isaiah, we often see parallel structures that seem to be a simple repetition. Yet in them, we sometimes find that the Lord has a *hidden* statement within one of these parallel halves. Likewise, it would be easy to think that verses 26 through 30 are simply a description of further punishments to be poured out against Judah by the hand of a nation or nations to come from the north, namely Assyria and Babylonia. Alexander writes about the folly of *forced parallelism*, “These [false] constructions are so violent, and the contrary usage so plain, that the question naturally arises, why should the latter be departed from at all? The answer is, because the favorite notion of exact parallelism requires it. All the writers who maintain this opinion assume that the second clause must express the same idea with the first, and in the same order ... the modern writers must have parallelism still more exact, and to this rhetorical chimera both the syntax and the true sense of the passage must be sacrificed.” ¶ The reason these verses are challenging, is that *ensigns* can

be raised for war as much as for spreading the gospel. **Jeremiah 4** includes almost every single allusion in these verses in ISAIAH 5:26–30 and yet appears to be a warning to Judah to turn to the Lord or face dire consequences.³² We see the standard or ensign (v. 6), the lion (v. 7), swift chariots (v. 13) and horses (v. 13, 29), the coming from a far country (v. 16), and the impending darkness (v. 23, 28), the shaking mountains (v. 24), the bowmen (v. 29). But when we turn to Jeremiah 50, the tides have changed. It is now Babylon and Assyria—the subject that attacked Israel in Chapter 4—who is being pursued with force. So it is that in **Jeremiah 50** we have the ensign (v. 2); a nation that comes out of the north against Babylon (v. 3); even “an assembly of great nations from the north country” (v. 9, also v. 41); Israel is redeemed in tears of joy, “In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the LORD their God” (v. 4); bowmen of great accuracy, “their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain” (v. 9, also vv. 14, 29); although Israel had been devoured and her bones broken by the lion of Assyria and Babylon (v. 17, also 44), Jehovah would punish Assyria and Babylon (v. 18) and “bring Israel again to his habitation” (v. 19); a fire would be kindled (v. 32); the nations who shall fight against Babylon shall roar like the sea (v. 32); mighty horsemen (v. 42); and the voice of the armies shakes the land (v. 46)! ¶ In these verses the Lord *hisses* for the obedience of the nations from afar. In ISAIAH 18 we also see the speed with which the Lord’s ambassadors are sent to recover Israel. ¶ In ISAIAH 5:25 we read that the Lord’s hand is raised and stretched out still, ready to fall again on Judah. If ISAIAH 5:26 ff. are not about Judah being punished, it means that the Lord was left with the hand in the air. Is there any other analogous case? The answer is a resounding YES! Speaking of ISAIAH 9:21, Skinner says: “...we feel that the last word has not been spoken: the hand is still outstretched, we wait to hear of the final blow.” Indeed, there is nothing more frightening than a *vague* threat. The hanging expression is certainly filled with a great rhetorical power. ¶ Rawlinson, based on Oppert (*Inscriptions des Sargonides*, pp. 45, 46), wrote that “Sennacherib says in one of his inscriptions, that he carried off to Nineveh 200,150 captives on his first expedition against

Jerusalem.” Furthermore, we also know the Babylonians took thousands of captives also. Kay, however, makes a beautiful set of connections here: (1) “Of old the Lord had been Himself a ‘standard’ for His people to fight under,” as shown in Exodus 17:15, “And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovahnissi³³.” (2) “The description in ISAIAH 5:29 is plainly parallel to Hosea 5:14: ‘For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none shall rescue him.’” (3) Rather than “and shall carry it away safe” read, “‘he shall take alive.’ This is a singular expression; which almost compels us to think of God Himself as the real Invader (cp. especially ISAIAH 31:4–6). The verb means to ‘liberate’ from danger, to ‘cause to escape.’” ¶ The opposite word to Invader is Savior. And thus we would see this logical development, from the perspective of the LDS, as one where Christ is the Savior of His people Judah and Israel. Of course He sends His army to the ends of the earth to proclaim the good news, but it is He, even Jesus Christ who is the **Redeemer of Israel**. ¶ In Deuteronomy 28:39, *Rain in Due Season*, the Lord teaches Israel that if she is disobedient, “The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand.” In ISAIAH 18, however, we see how the Lord would bless Israel in the end of days. After the nations shall have trodden Israel under foot and punished her, in the last days a great blessing would come upon her, “In that time shall the present be brought unto the LORD of hosts of a people scattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, the mount Zion.” And furthermore, we read: “Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: And they *shall be my people*, and *I will be their God*: And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them.” (Jeremiah 32:37–40, emphasis added). To summarize then, while these verses in ISAIAH, on the surface, appear as an impending punishment, they are in reality a message of hope and deliverance. The source of all hope is Jesus the Christ. The glorious Gospel Standard has been erected, to go out to every corner of the world in order to gather Israel.

³² Elder Orson Hyde quoted some of these key verses in modern day, in a letter to Brother Joseph, while in route to Jerusalem. They appear to have been given as a summary of the suffering of the Jews, but also of yet future troubles to come upon Israel. Despite all that, the Lord would soon bless Judah. See Elder Orson Hyde’s Letter to Rabbi Hirschell, in Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, introduction and notes by B. H. Roberts, 4:375–378.

³³ That is, “The Lord is my banner,” or, יְהוָה נִסִּי

26 And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth; and, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly; none shall be weary nor stumble among them.*

* KJV begins new verse with "None shall be weary nor stumble among them."

And he will lift up an ensign to the nations (לְנָחִים) from far. Speaking of the gathering of Israel and the flow of nations unto the House of the Lord, Joseph Field Smith taught: "This prediction has been literally fulfilled. Thousands of people have come to the valleys of these mountains from all lands and climes, proclaiming these words of Isaiah³⁴ and Micah,³⁵ and here they have found the word of the Lord and have entered into the covenants, in the house of the Lord which the prophets said would be offered them that they might walk in his ways. No other place on the earth is there to be found a place which fits this description and unto which the people are gathering. Isaiah said further: 'And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth: and, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly: None shall be weary nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken: Whose arrows are sharp, and all their bows bent, their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind ...' This may not have been fulfilled yet in completeness, but people have gathered swiftly. They have crossed the continent on trains without unlatching their shoes or removing their clothes, on their way to Zion. The time may not be far distant when they will come by air and thus fulfill all the rest of this prophecy. Then in speaking of horses' hoofs and wheels, may it not be that the prophet endeavored to picture the railroads on which the people should travel? Remember, this prophecy was spoken in Palestine and that is about as far away from these valleys as need be to fulfill the prophecy."³⁶ Elder Orson Pratt likewise taught: "'Where was Isaiah when he delivered this prophecy? In Palestine. Do you think you could get much further from Palestine and have an ensign raised up from afar? It is not an ensign that is to be raised up in the land of Palestine, right where the prophet predicted it; but he saw from afar, from a great distance,

the great work God would perform in the latter day. 'Lift up an ensign for the nations;' not for one nation, not for a few people; but it was a work that was general in its nature—an ensign or standard the raising of which was to affect all the inhabitants of the earth."³⁷ Speaking of the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Joseph Fielding Smith also taught: "That ensign was the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which was established for the last time, never again to be destroyed or given to other people. It was the greatest event the world has seen since the day that the Redeemer was lifted upon the cross and worked out the infinite and eternal atonement. It meant more to mankind than anything else that has occurred since that day. No event should have been heralded among the people with greater effectiveness and received with greater evidence of joy and satisfaction. The nations should have rejoiced and welcomed it with gladness of heart, for with it came the establishment of divine truth in the earth—the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation unto all who believe. The world had been without this gospel for many hundreds of years, ever since the great apostasy and turning away from the truth which had been established by the primitive Church. Following the raising of this ensign, the Lord sent forth his elders clothed with the priesthood and with power and authority, among the nations of the earth, bearing witness unto all peoples of the restoration of his Church, and calling upon the children of men to repent and receive the gospel; for now it was being preached in all the world as a witness before the end should come, that is, the end of the reign of wickedness and the establishment of the millennial reign of peace. The elders went forth as they were commanded, and are still preaching the gospel and gathering out from the nations the seed of Israel unto whom the promise was made."³⁸ ¶ *And will hiss unto them from the end of the earth.* This hissing or whistling refers to a signal that beckons, summons, or invites people to come. Cyril is often quoted in this respect. In Lowth we have: "The metaphor is taken from the practice of those that keep bees; who draw them out of their hives into the fields, and lead them back again, συρισμασι, by a hiss or a whistle." Rawlinson likewise explains Cyril's words: "'Hissing' is said to have been practiced by bee-keepers to draw their bees out of the hives in the morning, and bring them home again from the fields at nightfall." We might say: to first disperse the children of Jacob to the four corners of the earth, but then to call Israel back home with tender mercies.

³⁴ ISAIAH 2:2.

³⁵ Micah 4:1.

³⁶ Joseph Fielding Smith, *The Restoration of All Things*, p.143–144.

³⁷ Pratt, Elder Orson, "The Restoration of the Jews, Etc." *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 14, No. 9, May 26, 1871, pp. 58–70.

³⁸ Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, edited by Bruce R. McConkie, 3:254–255.

¶ *And, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly.* The response to the call to come to Zion shall be a quick one, as a parallel passage in Zechariah: “And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am the LORD their God, and will hear them. And they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine: yea, their children shall see it, and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the LORD. I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them: and they shall increase as they have increased. And I will sow them among the people: and they shall remember me in far countries; and they shall live with their children, **and turn again** (וָשׁוּבוּ)” (Zechariah 10:6–9). The Lord’s armies of missionaries shall go out swiftly among the nations to help bring in the harvest of souls. The Targum (ܬܠܡܝܬ) has: “And He will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and he will call him from the end of the earth: and, behold, a king with his army shall come swiftly, as light clouds” (ܬܠܡܝܬ). ¶ *None shall be weary nor stumble among them.* All of this would take place at a time when travelers would cover great distances in trains, boats and airplanes.

27 None shall be weary nor stumble among them;* None shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken;

* Book of Mormon begins this verse with “None shall slumber ...”

28 Whose arrows [are] shall be sharp, and all their bows bent, and their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind, their roaring [shall be] like a lion.*

* KJV begins new verse with “Their roaring [shall be] like a lion.”

29 Their roaring like a lion.* They shall roar like young lions; yea, they shall roar, and lay hold of the prey, and shall carry [it] away safe, and none shall deliver [it].

* Book of Mormon and JST begins new verse with “They shall roar like young lions ...”

Lowth says, regarding these verses, “Kimhi has well illustrated this continued exaggeration or hyperbole, as he rightly calls it.” Kimhi, the Jewish exegete said,

“Through the greatness of their courage, they shall not be fatigued with their march; nor shall they stumble, though they march with the utmost speed: they shall not slumber by day, nor sleep by night; neither shall they ungird their armour, or put off their sandals, to take their rest: their arms shall be always in readiness, their arrows sharpened, and their bows bent: the hoof of their horses are hard as a rock; they shall not fail, or need to be shod with iron: the wheels of their carriages shall move as rapidly as a whirlwind” (Kimhi, in Lowth). There is much less hyperbole involved than what it appears to Kimhi and many other commentators. Elder Orson Pratt spoke of the swiftness with which the Saints would migrate to Zion: “‘Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows?’ (ISAIAH 60:8). Sure enough we come with great speed. As Isaiah has said in the fifth chapter—the Lord should hiss unto thee from the ends of the earth, he should lift up an ensign for the nations, and they should come with speed swiftly; just as you emigrants do when you get on board of these railroads, when, instead of being ninety or a hundred days coming to this elevated region, as was the case for several years, you come in two or three days. ‘They shall come with speed swiftly, and he shall lift up an ensign from afar.’”³⁹ Similarly, Elder LeGrand Richards wrote: “Since there were neither trains nor airplanes in that day, Isaiah could hardly have mentioned them by name. However, he seems to have described them in unmistakable words. How better could ‘their horses hoofs be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind’ than in the modern train? How better could ‘their roaring . . . be like a lion’ than in the roar of the airplane? Trains and airplanes do not stop for night. Therefore, was not Isaiah justified in saying: ‘none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken’? With this manner of transportation the Lord can really ‘hiss unto them from the end of the earth,’ that ‘they shall come with speed swiftly.’ Indicating that Isaiah must have foreseen the airplane, he stated: ‘Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?’ (ISAIAH 60:8).”⁴⁰ The Lord’s armies surely will be a great force, but at the end, it is only the converting power of the Spirit of the Holy Ghost that provides any safety. The Savior, as we alluded to in Hosea 5:14 is our Redeemer: “For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none shall rescue him.”

³⁹ Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*, 16:85.

⁴⁰ LeGrand Richards, *Israel! Do You Know?*, p.182.

30 And in that day they shall roar against them like the roaring of the sea: and if ~~[one]~~ **they** look unto the land, behold, darkness **[and]** sorrow, [✓] and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof. [✓]

✓ or, distress

✓ ✓ or, when it is light it shall be dark in the destructions thereof

And in that day they shall roar against them like the roaring of the sea: It seems that Isaiah was getting excited with the day of restoration, but as often happened in his prophecies, returned to the impending gloom that would precede the Second Coming. *In that day* refers to the end of days. The coming forth of the Gospel light would make the contrast all the more pronounced. And even after the Restoration, there would be gloomy times ahead, such as the Holocaust and the commotion of the earth in preparation for the Second Advent of our Lord and Savior. Regarding the times when there would be great devastation to come forth we read: “Wherefore, be not deceived, but continue in steadfastness, looking forth for the heavens to be shaken, and the earth to tremble and to reel to and fro as a drunken man, and for the valleys to be exalted, and for the mountains to be made low, and for the rough places to become smooth-and all this when the angel shall sound his trumpet. But before the great day of the Lord shall come, Jacob shall flourish in the wilderness, and the Lamanites shall blossom as the rose. Zion shall flourish upon the hills and rejoice upon the mountains, and shall be assembled together unto the place which I have appointed. Behold, I say unto you, go forth as I have commanded you; repent of all your sins; ask and ye shall receive; knock and it shall be opened unto you.

Behold, I will go before you and be your rearward; and I will be in your midst, and you shall not be confounded. Behold, I am Jesus Christ, and I come quickly. Even so. Amen” (D&C 49:23–28). ¶ *And the light is darkened in the heavens thereof.* “But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light” (Mark 13:24); “But, behold, I say unto you that before this great day shall come the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall be turned into blood, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and there shall be greater signs in heaven above and in the earth beneath; And there shall be weeping and wailing among the hosts of men; And there shall be a great hailstorm sent forth to destroy the crops of the earth. And it shall come to pass, because of the wickedness of the world, that I will take vengeance upon the wicked, for they will not repent; for the cup of mine indignation is full; for behold, my blood shall not cleanse them if they hear me not. Wherefore, I the Lord God will send forth flies upon the face of the earth, which shall take hold of the inhabitants thereof, and shall eat their flesh, and shall cause maggots to come in upon them; And their tongues shall be stayed that they shall not utter against me; and their flesh shall fall from off their bones, and their eyes from their sockets; And it shall come to pass that the beasts of the forest and the fowls of the air shall devour them up. And the great and abominable church, which is the whore of all the earth, shall be cast down by devouring fire, according as it is spoken by the mouth of Ezekiel the prophet, who spoke of these things, which have not come to pass but surely must, as I live, for abominations shall not reign” (D&C 29:14–21).

11 November 2000

Isaiah 6

ISAIAH 6 is one of the most glorious chapters in Scripture. Isaiah sees the Living God and is commissioned to preach the gospel. Important implications about the nature of God cannot be swept aside as a consequence of the resulting theophany. Isaiah's stewardship is a type of that of the Savior: "Here am I; send me."

vv. 1–4. Isaiah's glorious vision was much like that of Ezekiel and that of John the Beloved,¹ he had seen the Savior seated on His throne.

1 ¶ IN the year that king Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train[✓] filled the temple.

✓ or, the skirts thereof

IN the year that king Uzziah died, around 750 BC. Kay points out that 758 B.C. was a jubilee year, marked with associated forgiveness (see ISAIAH 6:7). The Targum (ⲧ) reads instead, "In the year in which King Uzziah was smitten with the leprosy." With reference to the latter, Barns explains: "The Rabbins say that the meaning is, that he then became *civilly* dead, by ceasing to exercise his functions as a king, and that he was cut off as a leprous man from all connection with the people, and from all authority." At any rate, Henry explains that Isaiah was called to preach, and "Those

¹ "After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, LORD God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created" (Revelation 4:1–11).

who are to teach others the knowledge of God ought to be well acquainted with him themselves." This certainly was the case with the Prophet Joseph Smith, who was intimately acquainted with the Lord. How he wished that others could come to an understanding of spiritual things: "It is my meditation all the day, and more than my meat and drink, to know how I shall make the Saints of God comprehend the visions that roll like an overflowing surge before my mind."² The Prophet Joseph Smith was well acquainted with God, and had seen both the Father and the Son. Brother Joseph had a great desire, as we said, for all to be partakers of the same knowledge: "There are but a very few beings in the world who understand rightly the character of God. The great majority of mankind do not comprehend anything, either that which is past, or that which is to come, as it respects their relationship to God. ... The scriptures inform us that 'This is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.'"³ ¶ The Talmud tradition (Seder Nashim, Yevamoth 49b) has amora⁴ Rabbah Bar Nahmani speaking as if he were addressing himself directly to Isaiah and asking the Prophet to explain a seeming contradiction: "Raba said: Your teacher Moses said, 'For men shall not see Me and live' and you said, 'I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up'" (Talmud, Soncino). ¶ Yet we know that there was no contradiction, only a corruption of the Scriptures in some places—as well as a misunderstanding of them. Here, Isaiah was being called to the ministry. Such a calling is not to be taken lightly. Nor does man have a right to enter into such without the proper authority: "Behold, I command you that you need not suppose that you are called to preach until you are called ... Seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word, and then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit and my word, yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men." (D&C 11:15, 21); "Again I say unto you, that it shall not be given to any one to go forth to preach my gospel, or to

² *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith.*

³ Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, introduction and notes by B. H. Roberts, 6:303–304.

⁴ Talmudic Jewish scholar (The Standard Jewish Encyclopedia).

build up my church, except he be ordained by some one who has authority, and it is known to the church that he has authority and has been regularly ordained by the heads of the church” (D&C 42:11). ¶ Matthew Henry, who died before the Gospel was restored, admitted: “None are allowed to go for God but those who are sent by him; he will own none but those whom he appoints.” Furthermore, those who are called must *teach by the Spirit*: “And the Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith; and if ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach” (D&C 42:14). ¶ *I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up*. Many read this verse to mean that it was the throne which was exalted (e.g., Ibn Ezra, Delitzsch, and Barnes). I have, rather, always felt it was the Lord Himself who was exalted, but among the exegetes only find agreement from Kay. And now, over fifteen years later (August 2016), I also find agreement from Shalom Paul [in his exegetical words regarding ISAIAH 57:15—GB, *עַל־כִּסֵּא רָם וְנִשָּׂא*, *upon a throne, high and lifted up*], “According to the straightforward reading of ISAIAH 6:1, *רָם וְנִשָּׂא* refers to the divine throne. The Masoretic vocalizers, however, placed a pausal accent under *כִּסֵּא*, since according to the Masoretes only the Lord himself is ‘high and lofty’ (see S. Kogut, *The Bible: Punctuation and Exegesis* [Jerusalem, 1994], 139, 216–17, 238 [Heb.].” ¶ We can contrast the exalted nature of the Lord in a latter chapter: “For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones” (ISAIAH 57:15, cf. 52:13). Even before the foundation of this world, our Savior was exalted and revered; He was the Yahweh⁵ of the Old Testament. He who sat on the throne magnified the throne. ¶ Isaiah had seen the Lord! Jehovah (or Yahweh) was the name for the premortal Messiah. This is admitted by a number of exegetes. For

⁵ John the beloved testifies that Yahweh is Jesus. It is clear from these verses in Isaiah that the Seraphim are giving glory to Yahweh. For instance, see ISAIAH 6:3, *Holy, Holy, Holy* is *Yahweh Tzebaoth*: *יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת*; as well ISAIAH 6:5, “*The King Yahweh Tzebaoth*,” *יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת*. Since these Isaianic verses refer to Jehovah, now we can see that *יְהוָה* is Jesus the Christ, according to the Testimony of John regarding these same verses: “While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things *spake Jesus*, and departed, and did hide himself from them. But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. *These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him*” (John 12:36–41, emphasis added).

instance, Delitzsch says: *יְהוָה צְדִיקְנִי* (Jehovah our Righteousness) is also used as a name of the Messiah,—a Messianic name [one also included in Jewish teachings] (vid. *Midrash Mishle* 57a, where this is adduced as one of the eight names of the Messiah).⁶ ¶ But here we depart from the beliefs of our fellow Christian brothers, who believe in the mystery of the Holy Trinity, wherein God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one and three in a way that cannot be explained. And that Jesus Christ is the incarnate expression of that Holy Trinity. Before I had ever heard of the Prophet Joseph and his glorious vision in which he saw both the Father and the Son, or before I ever held a copy of the Book of Mormon in my hands, it was revealed to me that the Godhead is composed of three distinct beings but one in purpose (see introduction). For a long time I did not know how peculiar a doctrine it was. The Prophet Joseph Smith explained: “Paul says there are Gods many and Lords many;⁷ and that makes a plurality of Gods, in spite of the whims of all men ... I testify that Paul had no allusion to the heathen gods ... The heads of the Gods appointed one God for us; and when you take [that] view of the subject, it sets one free to see all the beauty, holiness and perfection of the Gods” (TPJS, pp. 372). Joseph Smith taught that beginning with Genesis 1:1, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” what we have is not a correct translation of God, which should read Gods in the plural, or Elohim. A better rendition is that found in Abraham: “And then the Lord said: Let us go down. And they went down at the beginning, and they, that is the Gods, organized and formed the heavens and the earth” (Abraham 4:1). Joseph taught that the original in the Bible read ““In the beginning the head of the Gods brought forth the Gods,” or, as others have translated it, ‘The head of the Gods called the Gods together’” (TPJS, p. 371). Brother Joseph taught that the Hebrew word for beginning, *Bereshit* (*בְּרֵאשִׁית*), is a corruption with someone adding the letter *bet* (*ב*) to it, and should have been rendered *rosh* (*רֹאשׁ*), or head, instead, with the *ת* attached (*רֹאשִׁית*) being simply a

⁶ See Delitzsch on ISAIAH 9:6, plus here there is a reference to the Lord as Messiah in Jeremiah, *יְהוָה צְדִיקְנִי*: “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS” (Jeremiah 23:5–6).

⁷ “For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him” (1 Corinthians 8:5–6).

grammatical termination (TPJS, p. 371). ראש and ראשית both can also have reference to the beginning, thus having a double meaning.⁸ Professor, W. H. Chamberlin, of BYU, wrote an excellent paper on the plural nature of the word Elohim of which we quote but a very brief summary.⁹ We know that Christ is Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. The commentator on the Jewish Pentateuch and Haftorahs wrote: “[Genesis 1:1] is a majestic summary of the story of Creation: God is the beginning, nay, the Cause of all things” (Hertz). ¶ Brother Joseph also taught that that in John 17:21, the expression “*be one*” would more correctly be translated from the Greek as *be agreed*¹⁰: “‘I am agreed with the Father and the Father is agreed with me, and we are agreed as one.’ The Greek shows that it should be agreed. ‘Father, I pray for them which Thou hast given me out of the world, and not for those alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be agreed, as Thou, Father, are with me, and I with thee, that they may also be agreed with us,’ and all come to dwell in unity, and in all the glory and everlasting burnings of the Gods” (TPJS, pp. 372–373). ¶ **Anthropomorphic Nature of God.** Delitzsch has, “There the prophet sees

the Sovereign Ruler ... seated upon the throne, and in human form (Ezekiel 1:26), as is proved by the robe with a train, whose flowing ends or borders (*fimbriae: shūilm*, as in Exodus 28:33–34) filled the hall. The Septuagint, Targum, Vulgate, etc., have dropped the figure of the robe and train, as too anthropomorphic. But John, in his Gospel, is bold enough to say that it was Jesus whose glory Isaiah saw¹¹ (John 12:41).” Such anthropomorphic theophany has some people throughout time uncomfortable. Many Jewish and Christian philosophers of today and yesteryear believe that God is a formless being, else, they argue, how could he dwell in the heart of men? How could His influence be so widespread? How could God be perfect and powerful if He is limited to a physical body? After the Hellenization of Israel,¹² during the intertestamental period, these strange notions of a God without a physical body came to prevail among both Jew and Gentile. Recently, a number of interesting books, quite a few written by Jews, have fallen into my hands, showing that indeed the ancient peoples did believe that God had a body. J. F. Stenning, in the introduction to the Jewish *Targum of Isaiah* explains: “Since the main object of the Targumist was to render the Hebrew original intelligible to the ordinary people it is not surprising to find that its chief characteristic is the use of paraphrase. This is especially noticeable in the case of the Prophets, where a strictly literal translation would often have failed to convey the meaning of the Hebrew. But the desire to give an intelligible reproduction of the Hebrew text was not the only motive which prompted the translator: he was also concerned to avoid any rendering which seemed to conflict with later religious ideas. The most striking illustration of this motive is afforded by the treatment of those passages which relate to the Divine Being. From the standpoint of later Jewish theology the primitive representations of God in the Old Testament, and especially the anthropomorphic figures applied to Him ...” (p. xii). Rawlinson is honest enough to ask: “How we are to reconcile Exodus 33:20¹³ with this passage, Job 42:5, and Ezekiel 1:26–28, is uncertain.” The Ezekiel verses read as follows: “And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire

⁸ See, for instance, Brown-Driver-Briggs, BDB.

⁹ W. H. Chamberlin of the Brigham Young College Logan Utah, “Use of the Word Elohim.” *Improvement Era* 1902. “Two words, El, of which Elim was the plural form, and Eloah, of which Elohim was the plural, were applied generally to Deity by the Hebrew people. All these forms are found in the other Semitic languages, and are, therefore, very ancient in origin. Under severest discipline the people of Israel were educated in the school of monotheism, in order that God’s nature might be revealed to man, and in order that unity might be introduced into the moral life of man. Under this discipline, the people of Israel must have learned to apply the plural form Elohim, which their fathers had used of Deity, in speaking of the one God whom they had been taught to serve. The Hebrew language would allow them to do this, for a few nouns, when used by them in the plural, seemed to magnify the original idea. In such cases the plural form was treated grammatically as singular. An example may be found in Job 40:15 where the plural form behemoth is used to intensify the image of the animal there being described, as is shown by context. In the same verse, the behemoth is referred to by the singular pronoun he. But the use of Elohim, in this sense, by the later writers of Israel, is not necessarily opposed to the view that in the earliest documents or writings which the Hebrews possessed, it was applied to a plurality of Gods. The objection to this view has been made that, with the plural form Elohim, in Genesis 1, the singular verb is used. Such a use of a singular predicate with a plural subject is, however, common in Hebrew [see] page 111 of *Harper’s Hebrew Syntax*.”

¹⁰ Regarding εν (εἷς, μία, ἓν), see the various lexicons for concurrence with the Prophet Joseph, including the *New American Standard Exhaustive Concordance* (concept of agreement); *Theological dictionary of the New Testament* (unanimous, as well as concept of unity between the Father and the Son, as well as with the Church, 2:440); *Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament* (of union and concord); *Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (to be united most closely, in will or spirit; and not given to dissensions); *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian Literature* (be of one mind).

¹¹ See my footnote on the same topic, above.

¹² Shayne J. D. Cohen suggests that all Jews were Hellenized; the question is to what degree. *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah*.

¹³ See notes on ISAIAH 6:5. We read in Exodus: “And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live” (Exodus 33:20). This text has been greatly corrupted, however, and the original was “And he said unto Moses, Thou canst not see my face at this time, lest my anger be kindled against thee also, and I destroy thee, and thy people; for there shall no man among them see me at this time, and live, for they are exceedingly sinful. And no sinful man hath at any time, neither shall there be any sinful man at any time, that shall see my face and live” (JST).

stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.” A quote of interest from Shayne Cohen is: “The God of the Hebrew Bible is for the most part an anthropomorphic and anthropopathic being, that is, a God who has the form and emotions of humans. He (it is a he) walks and talks, has arms and legs, becomes angry, happy, or sad, changes his mind, speaks to humans and is addressed by them, and closely supervises the affairs of the world. ... Philo is particularly careful to sanitize the anthropomorphic and anthropopathic passages ... Perhaps some Jews were concerned about the very unphilosophical image of God in the Hebrew scriptures, but most Jews were not. Apocalyptic visionaries and mystics persisted in seeing God sitting on his throne surrounded by his angelic attendants. The rabbis had no difficulty in believing in a God who loves and is loved and with whom one can argue. ... In the fourth century most of the monks in Egypt understood the anthropomorphisms of scripture literally. ... After hearing a pastoral letter from the Bishop of Alexandria and sermon from his abbot which insisted that the scriptural anthropomorphisms were to be understood allegorically because God has no shape, one elderly monk arose to pray but could not.”¹⁴ This last story is quoted by Robinson, who gives additional detail: “One Serapion, an elderly monk of great reputation, found himself unable to pray to the new God ... [and] falling to the ground he groaned: ‘Woe is me! They have taken my God away from me, and I have none to grasp, and I know not whom to adore or to address.’ Ultimately the anthropomorphic monks simply rebelled and refused to accept the new view, successfully forcing the bishop Theophilus into an abrupt about-face.”¹⁵ Do the Rabbis react to the anthropomorphism as do the philosophers? Is God really concerned about the doings of man? “The answers the Rabbis give indicate no concern with the problem of anthropomorphism. Is it possible to say that ‘the Lord went before them by day?’ Rabbi (Judah the

Prince) replies by telling of how Antoninus would himself take the torch and light the way for his sons in the darkness, and that he would say to the notables who offered to perform that service: ‘It is not that I have no one to take the torch and light the way for my sons. But it is thus that I make known to you how beloved my sons are to me, so that you should treat them with respect.’ And Rabbi adds, ‘In like manner, the Holy One blessed be He made known to the nations of the world how beloved Israel is to Him: He Himself went before them, so that they (the nations) should treat them with respect’ (Mekilta, I. pp. 185–186). Obviously, no attention is paid here to the problem of anthropomorphism” (Max Kadushin, *The Rabbinic Mind*, pp. 274–275). Alfred Edersheim, a Jewish scholar who converted to Christianity had this to say about changes made to the scriptures in the LXX (6), “Difficulties—or what seemed such—are removed by the most bold methods, and by free handling of the text; it need scarcely said, often very unsatisfactorily. More especially a strenuous effort is made to banish all anthropomorphisms, as inconsistent with their ideas of the Deity” (Edersheim, Alfred, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, 3rd Edition, 1886, p. 28). The philosophers and others, then, have tended to put their own limitations upon God. Many attempts have been given to minimize the importance of Isaiah’s vision, as well as that of Joseph Smith.¹⁶ I declare, that I know with every fiber of my being that indeed Joseph Smith did see the Father and the Son, and that Isaiah saw Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel. I know, for the Spirit of the Lord has revealed it unto me (see introduction). ¶ *And his train filled the temple.* The train, or as in the margin ||, the skirts, could be representative of the faithful Saints, dressed in white raiment (cf. Revelation 4:4). Rawlinson suggests that *train* means “*the skirt of his robe*” rather than “*train of attendants*,” and shows that indeed one of the meanings of the word is the latter. While for some the temple represented here is that of Jerusalem (e.g., Barnes, Lowth), for others it is one in heaven (e.g., Delitzsch) like the one seen by John the beloved, or in some way a combination of both.

2 Above it stood the seraphims; each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

Seraphims, or more correctly, *seraphim* (שֶׁרָפִים), which is the plural of *saraph*¹⁷ (שָׂרָף). These seraphim

¹⁴ Cohen, Shayne, *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah*, vol. 7 of the *Library of Early Christianity*, Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987, pp. 86, 87.

¹⁵ Chadwick, *The Early Church*, and Chadwick, *Western Asceticism*, Philadelphia: Westminster Press and Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1958 & 1976, respectively, in Robinson, *Are Mormons Christian?* 1991, pp. 83–84.

¹⁶ Joseph Smith—History, verses 23–25, Pearl of Great Price.

¹⁷ Seraph in English.

stood above, or perhaps about Him.¹⁸ In other Scripture we read: “And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, LORD God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come” (Revelations 4:8); Regarding these the Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “Q. What are we to understand by the eyes and wings, which the beasts had [in the verses in Revelation 4]? A. Their eyes are a representation of light and knowledge, that is, they are full of knowledge; and their wings are a representation of power, to move, to act, etc.” (D&C 77:4). In Ezekiel 1 these creatures are further described under the name of cherubim: “As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning. And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning” (Ezekiel 1:13–14, also see Ezekiel 10 & 41). In the Targum (T) the seraphim are translated as “holy ministers.” In Hebrew the root term *saraph*, שָׂרַף, or שָׂרָף, or plural *seraphim*, שְׂרָפִים, is pronounced essentially the same as in English. The root, means to burn or consume, and can also mean a possibly venomous serpent” (AHCL, BDB, TWOT). The use for the serpent may come from the “burning” pain or effect of its poison (BDB, TWOT). We also see שָׂרָף in ISAIAH 14:29 and 30:6, where it is translated as “a fiery flying serpent” in the AV. It is clear that the Lord abides in everlasting and glorious burnings (ISAIAH 33:14b). The seraphim were “angelic creatures ... These angelic beings were brilliant as flaming fire, symbolic of the purity and power of the heavenly court” (TWOT). Such a meaning corresponds well with Joseph Smith’s own description: “And help us by the power of thy Spirit, that we may mingle our voices with those bright, shining seraphs around thy throne, with acclamations of praise, singing Hosanna to God and the Lamb!” (D&C 109:79b). In the Pseudepigraphical work 2 Enoch, we read that Enoch had a similar experience to that of Isaiah. Enoch is said to have seen “cherubim and seraphim” around the throne, “six-winged and many eyed” (2 Enoch 21:1, MSS J, Andersen), and among them also “the fiery armies of the great archangels” (2 Enoch 21:1, MSS J, Andersen), or “the fiery armies of the incorporeal ones, archangels ...” (2 Enoch 20:1, MSS A, Andersen). Perhaps the word incorporeal here means pre-mortal, unembodied spirits, before these beings obtained a body upon the earth. Angels do not

have wings,¹⁹ as Charles Penrose explained: “The popular notion that angels are winged beings, because it is stated by some scripture writers that they saw them ‘flying through the heavens,’ is a fallacy. Cherubim and Seraphim spoken of by Ezekiel and Isaiah, are not to be classed with the angels, for the angels are of the same race and descent as men, whether in body or in spirit, and do not need wings for locomotion, nor do they appear in birdlike form. They are of the family of Deity in different degrees of progression and are ‘in the image and likeness’ of the Most High.”²⁰ We also know that some aspects of these descriptions are symbolic, a representation of light, knowledge, and power to move and act.

3 And one cried unto another, [✓] and said: Holy, holy, holy, [is] the LORD of hosts; the whole earth [is] full of his glory. ^{✓ ✓}

✓ or, this cried to this

✓ ✓ or, his glory is the fulness of the whole earth

And one cried unto another, and said. We know little about the nature of the crying from the book of Isaiah. While the exact approach is not certain, various possibilities have been suggested. “The meaning is not that they all lifted up their voice in concert at one and the same time ... but that there was a continuous and unbroken antiphonal song. One set commenced, and the others responded, either repeating the ‘Holy, holy, holy,’ or following with ‘filling the whole earth is His glory’” (Delitzsch). In 2 Enoch we read that this was a “singing with [a] gentle voice in front of the face of the LORD” (2 Enoch 21:1, MSS J, Andersen). Another Pseudepigraphical work that speaks in great detail in

¹⁹ My daughter Cristina said: “And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life” (Genesis 3:14). Do you suppose that before that serpent had legs?” *Out of the mouth of babes!* (Psalm 8:2a). Certainly, the thought had crossed my mind. Perhaps we may think of the Seraphim as glorious beings around the throne of God, including angels, who have much power as indicated by the symbolism of the eyes and wings. Instead of the loss of legs, perhaps the serpent in Genesis 3:14 is the representation of the fallen angels, including Satan, who have lost their fire, or *light*. “There are fallen angels, too, who were cast down for transgression, as mentioned by Jude (verse 6), chief among whom on this earth is Lucifer or Satan, who has sought on many occasions to appear as an ‘angel of light’ to deceive and lead astray, and who tempted the Son of God, but failed in his efforts as he did with Moses and with the Prophet Joseph Smith (see Luke 4:1–13; Visions of Moses 1:12–22; D&C 128:20). That great spiritual personage was an angel of God in his ‘first estate,’ and yet never had a body of flesh, but ‘was in authority in the presence of God’ as a spirit, before he rebelled and was ‘thrust down.’ (D&C. 76:25–28.)” (Charles W. Penrose, “Who and What are the Angels,” *Improvement Era*, August 1912.)

²⁰ Charles W. Penrose, “Who and What are the Angels,” *Improvement Era*, August 1912.

¹⁸ Sperry, Sidney B. Book of Mormon Compendium. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1968, p. 193.

regard to the beautiful hymns of praise that are sung to God and the Lamb, is the Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah (AscenIs) to which we have already alluded to. There are portions of this manuscript that are sublime beyond description. Isaiah is pictured as journeying through seven heavens, in order to see how the condescension of Jesus Christ would take place. Isaiah was first taken above the firmament to the first heaven. Each heaven had some similarities, such as a throne and the singing of praise towards the “the One who sits in the seventh heaven, the One who rests in the holy world, and to his Beloved” (AscenIs 7:17, Knibb). The glory of the angels on the right hand side was superior to the ones on the left, and so were their voices. All sung in one accord, however, toward the throne in the middle. The second heaven was like unto the first, except that “there was great glory in the second heaven.” They, likewise were united in praise. A personage was sitting on the throne, who was filled with more glory than both those on the left and on the right. Isaiah is said to have fallen on his face to worship, so great was the glory of this being, but was forbidden by his guide, “Worship neither throne, nor angel from the six heavens, from where I was sent to lead you, before I tell you in the seventh heaven” (AscenIs 7:21, Knibb). With each step toward a higher heaven, the glory of the persons in these heavens, as well as their singing, was greater, all the way to the fifth heaven. From the sixth heaven and above, there were no differences between those on the left and the right, nor was there a throne however. But the glory of the personages as well as of their singing continued to increase. Isaiah was, as he moved up through each of these heavens, transformed so his countenance began to be glorified more and more, and his voice was given like ability to those around him. The praises now also included those toward the Holy Ghost: “And there they all named the primal Father and His Beloved, the Christ and the Holy Spirit” (AscenIs 8:18, Charles). So very bright was the light in the sixth heaven, that “I thought the light which I had seen in the five heavens but darkness. And I rejoiced and praised Him who hath bestowed such lights on those who wait for His promise. And I besought the angel who conducted me that I should not henceforth return to the carnal world” (AscenIs 8:21–23, Charles). When Isaiah arrived at the seventh heaven, we read, “And then I heard the voices and the hymns of praise which I had heard in each of the six heavens—which I had heard as I ascended there; and all (the voices and hymns of praise) were directed to that Glorious One whose glory I could not see ... And all the praise which was sent (up) from the six heavens was not only heard, but seen” (AscenIs 10:1–2, 5). What happens next is beautiful beyond description; our Beloved Savior is commissioned to descend through each of the heavens, by the Father, until he takes upon Himself mortality. In

each of the heavens the Savior changes His glory to match where He is. While those in the sixth heaven were allowed to recognize and worship our Savior, from there on, no knew who He was, for the Christ was made like unto those among whom He walked. (AscenIs, Knibb; AscenIs, Charles). I would love to say more, but shall leave the reading of this beautiful narrative to those who wish to rejoice and have their hearts filled—for I cannot read and meditate upon these things without tears of joy and gratitude. There are a number of special and sacred lessons to be gained from such a reading, especially by the LDS. For instance, these writings concur with the words of the Prophet Joseph Smith that God the Father presides in the Godhead; that the Godhead is composed by three distinct beings but one in purpose, and that the Holy Spirit is an actual male being, and not some disassociated matter. Knibb says, somewhat astounded, “What he has to say about the Trinity is of particular interest ... a superior status is attributed to the Father in that ‘the Lord’ and the angel of the Holy Spirit are presented as worshipping him.”²¹ Now I feel I have a better understanding of what is meant by the *condescension* of God, spoken about by Nephi (1 Nephi 11:14 ff.), who seems to have been privileged to see much of what Isaiah was shown, in terms of the miraculous birth, life upon the earth, death by crucifixion, and resurrection of Christ (see AscenIs 9:12–14; 11:1 ff.). The similarities between these writings and those of Nephi in this regard are compelling (see notes under ISAIAH 53:2). ¶ *Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts* (see also, Revelation 4:8). In Enoch we have: “Holy, Holy, Holy, LORD Sabaoth, Heaven and earth are full of his glory” (2 Enoch 21:1, MSS J, Andersen). In Hebrew the equivalent grammar of increasingly more holiness, as in holy, holier, or holiest (or holy, more holy, most holy) is not represented in the same way. By a three-time repetition of the word holy, קדוש, through a *trishagion*, the Hebrew (מ) conveys the same idea, perhaps in an even more powerful fashion. The Targum (ܬ) offers an interesting reading: “Holy in the highest and exalted heavens is the house of his Shekinah, holy upon the earth is the work of his might, holy for ever, world without end, is the Lord of hosts.” Before leaving this section that makes use of the repeated holiness of the Lord, several commentators have suggested that it is from this experience that Isaiah was moved to call Yahweh by yet another sacred name, that of **קדוש ישראל** “Holy One of Israel.”²² ¶ *The whole*

²¹ Michael A. Knibb, “The Ascension of Isaiah,” *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, (James H. Charlesworth, Editor), Volume 2, p. 154.

²² “All the prophecies of Isaiah carry this name of God as their stamp. It occurs twenty-nine times (including ch. x. 17, xliii. 15, xlix. 7), viz. twelve times in ch. 1–xxxix., and seventeen times in ch. xl.–lxvi. As Luzzatto has well observed, ‘the prophet, as if with a

earth is full of his glory. The Targum (Ⲯ) reads, “The whole earth is full of the brightness of His glory.” Jerome suggested, that the whole earth would be full of His glory, “and that the Jewish temple alone should not be, as formerly, the place of the Divine glory, for the whole earth should be filled with it” (Jerome, in Clarke).

4 And the posts of the door[✓] moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

✓ thresholds

And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried. Or, “And the posts of the threshold of the temple moved at the voice of him that cried” (Targum, Ⲯ). Delitzsch suggests that it was “the foundations of the thresholds” that shook. As the passing of a train shakes the ground, and lightning the sky; oh how beautiful it would be if our hearts would tremble to do the work of the Lord. The very foundations shook as they did when the Lord descended upon Sinai: “And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly” (Exodus 19:18). The *fear of the Lord*, to me, is not the trepidation and anxiety brought upon by terror, but rather, a great internal desire to please the Lord. To be more concerned with what the Lord would have us think, say, and do, than with that of any other consideration. We read, “... but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word” (ISAIAH 66:2b). ¶ *And the house was filled with smoke.* Smoke is representative of prayer, as it reaches God. “And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand” (Revelation 8:4). *Hallelujah, Praise ye the Lord,* *הַלְלוּ־יְהוָה*. Smoke also represents the Glory of the Lord: that the Lord has accepted man’s offering or dedication.

vv. 5–8. Isaiah feels awe, for he has seen the living God. One of the seraphs takes a live coal from the altar and applies it to Isaiah’s lips, thus cleansing Isaiah of his sins. Isaiah is commissioned to preach the Gospel.

presentiment that the authenticity of the second part of his book would be disputed, has stamped both parts with this name of God, “the Holy One of Israel,” as if with his own seal.’ The only other passages in which the word occurs, are three times in the Psalms (Psalm 71:22; 78:41; 89:19), and twice in Jeremiah (Jeremiah 50:29, 51:5), and that not without an allusion to [the writings of] Isaiah” (Delitzsch).

5 ¶ Then said I: Woe [is] unto me! for I am undone;[✓] because I [am] a man of unclean lips; and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

✓ cut off

Then said I: Woe is unto me! for I am undone. *Woe* means anguish and despair. To be undone, like the margin ||, means to be cut off. Some suggest that Isaiah had been reduced to silence. The Hebrew word for *I am undone* is *נִדְמִיתִי*, and its root, *דָּמָה* or even, some suppose from the unused root, *דָּמָה* (pronounced *damah* and *dum*, respectively). As a result, Isaiah was not able to join in the singing of praises, for he had not yet been cleansed by the atonement. “There is something exceedingly affecting in this complaint,” suggests Clarke, demanding a certain amount of introspection. “I am a man of unclean lips; I cannot say, Holy, holy, holy! which the seraphs exclaim. They are holy; I am not so: they see God and live; I have seen him, and must die, because I am unholy. Only the pure in heart shall see God; and they only can live in his presence for ever. Reader, lay this to heart; and instead of boasting of thy excellence, and trusting in thy might or comforting thyself in thy comparative innocence, thou wilt also be dumb before him, because thou hast been a man of unclean lips, and because thou hast still an unclean heart.” ¶ *Because I am a man of unclean lips.* All men who have reached the age of accountability are unclean: “If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us” (1 John 1:10). Yet we know that Isaiah was a righteous and noble man, “Among the great and mighty ones who were assembled in this vast congregation of the righteous [was] Isaiah, who declared by prophecy that the Redeemer was anointed to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that were bound, were also there” (D&C 138:38, 42). The prophets are great men who have lost their desire for sin: “The nearer man approaches perfection, the clearer are his views, and the greater his enjoyments, till he has overcome the evils of his life and lost every desire for sin” (TPJS, p. 51). Yet, Isaiah felt overwhelmed by being in the presence of Yahweh. ¶ *And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.* Isaiah felt unclean, and in contact with others who were unclean. Under the Law of Moses, any physical contact with that which was unclean made a person unclean and required a physical purging: “And whosoever toucheth any thing that was under him shall be unclean until the even: and he that beareth any of those things shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until

the even” (Leviticus 15:10). We must even more so guard ourselves from coming into contact with that which is spiritually degrading: “Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD” (ISAIAH 52:11). ¶ *For mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.* This is one of the key lines upon which much of this discussion revolves: Isaiah had *seen the living God!* This seems natural to us as LDS. Not so to the Jews of a later period, as well as the Christian churches, for they believed that man could not see God and live. The Jewish tradition is that Manasseh, son of Hezekiah, sawed Isaiah through with a wooden saw, because Isaiah had claimed to have seen²³ the Living God. Belkira²⁴ brought railing accusations against Isaiah and the prophets as follows: “And Isaiah himself has said, ‘I see more than Moses the prophet.’ Moses said, ‘There is no man who can see the LORD and live.’²⁵ But Isaiah has said, ‘I have seen the LORD, and behold I am alive.’ Know therefore, O King, that they [are] false prophets. And he has called Jerusalem Sodom, and the princes of Judah and Jerusalem he has declared [to be] the people of Gomorrah.’ And he brought many accusations against Isaiah and the prophets before Manasseh ... Because of these visions, therefore, Beliar was angry with Isaiah, and he dwelt in the heart of Manasseh, and he sawed Isaiah in half with a wood saw” (AscenIs 3:7b–10; 5:1, Knibb).²⁶ A few

more words from the story of Isaiah’s martyrdom are of interest: “And while Isaiah was being sawed in half, his accuser, Belkira, stood by, and all the false prophets stood by, laughing [maliciously] ... And Belkira said to Isaiah, ‘Say, “I have lied in everything I have spoken; the ways of Manasseh are good and right, and also the ways of Belkira and who are with him are good.”’ And he said this to him when he began to be sawed in half” (AscenIs 5:2, 4–6). Why is it that Satan seeks to make people *deny* what they know to be truth? The Lamanites, for instance, “... put to death every Nephite that will not deny the Christ. And I, Moroni, will not deny the Christ ...” (Moroni 1:2b:3a). Zeezrom tried to bribe Amulek so Amulek would deny Christ. “And Zeezrom said unto him: Behold, here are six onties of silver, and all these will I give thee if thou wilt deny the existence of a Supreme Being. Now Amulek said: O thou child of hell, why tempt ye me? Knowest thou that the righteous yieldeth to no such temptations? Believest thou that there is no God? I say unto you, Nay, thou knowest that there is a God, but thou lovest that lucre more than him” (Alma 11:22a–24). So again, why is it that Satan tries to get men to deny Christ? The answer was given by Christ himself, as recounted by Nephi, “But, behold, my beloved brethren, thus came the voice of the Son unto me, saying: After ye have repented of your sins, and witnessed unto the Father that ye are willing to keep my commandments, by the baptism of water, and have received the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost, and can speak with a new tongue, yea, even with the tongue of angels, and after this should deny me, it would have been better for you that ye had not known me” (2 Nephi 31:14, cf. words of Sherem in Jacob 7:19). ¶ The notion that man cannot see God is indeed a mistaken one. In Exodus we read: “And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live” (Exodus 33:20). Who is *He* in “And he said”? It is the Savior who is speaking, even Yahweh. Verses 17 and 21 make it clear that these verses, including verse 20, refer to יהוה. Yet there are multiple references about the children of Israel seen the Lord in the Old Testament. These include Isaiah’s vision. In future times, because of the condescension of our Savior, there would be thousands who would see Him. So we must understand this verse as speaking to seeing the Lord in his glory. The Inspired Version corrects this verse to read: “... for there shall no man among them see me at this time, and live, for they are exceeding sinful. And no sinful man hath at any time,

²³ The God of the Jews is an anthropomorphic one (also see notes on ISAIAH 5:6). Many scriptures make this absolutely clear: “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Genesis 1:27); “And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved” (Genesis 32:30); “And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend” (Exodus 33:11); “And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face” (Deuteronomy 34:10). Now, Isaiah had been added to this select group who had seen the Lord face to face. Joseph Smith, Jr., Lorenzo Snow, and others would follow in the latter-days.

²⁴ A number of names for Satan are used in the Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah, including Belkira, Beliar, and Sammael Satan, and some variations of these. “According to Jewish tradition Sammael was originally one of the chief archangels, but after inciting the serpent to tempt Eve he became the leader of the Satans. It is in such a role that he appears in AscenIs, where Sammael seems to be merely another name for Beliar. ... Malkira, used here as an additional name for Sammael, means in Hebrew “king of evil”; elsewhere this name occurs as a variant of Belkira, the name of the Samaritan opponent of Isaiah” (Knibb, footnote u, in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. 2, Charlesworth, J. H., editor, p. 157).

²⁵ See notes on ISAIAH 6:1, including JST for Exodus 33:20.

²⁶ “According to the tradition preserved in the Babylonian Talmud (Yeb 49b) Isaiah was put on trial by Manasseh on a variety of charges; included among these is the charge made in the Ascension (3:8f.) that Isaiah claimed to have seen God, despite the fact that Moses said that no one can see God and Live. ... According to the Jerusalem Talmud Isaiah hid in a cedar to escape from Manasseh, but the fringes of his garment stuck out and betrayed his presence. Manasseh ordered the tree to be cut, and Isaiah was discovered” (Knibb, M. A., in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. 2,

Charlesworth, J. H., editor, p. 151). In The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews we find that there were those “Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season” (Hebrews 11:25). A list of people of faith is included, as well as the martyrs of the faith, and how they died, including “They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword ...” (Hebrews 11:37a).

neither shall there be any sinful man at any time, that shall see my face and live” (JST Exodus 33:20). After Christ was resurrected and took upon Himself a glorified an exalted body, we read: “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have” (Luke 24:39). Joseph Smith had not only seen the Living God, but also the Father! Furthermore we read about transfiguration as: “The condition of persons who are temporarily changed in appearance and nature—that is, lifted to a higher spiritual level—so that they can endure the presence and glory of heavenly beings.”²⁷ It is interesting that while the philosophers insist on a God without form or feelings, the believer in God—who hears about the true nature of God, both Father and Son with exalted bodies, as separate distinct glorified beings—can only express, “I knew that in my heart all along!”

6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand,[✓] [which] he had taken with the tongs from off the altar;

✓ and in his hand a live coal

Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand. Isaiah—like Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden—has realized that he is “naked” or impure in the presence of God. This is a wonderful realization, indeed. Moses said: “Now, for this cause I know that man is nothing, which thing I never had supposed. But now mine own eyes have beheld God; but not my natural, but my spiritual eyes, for my natural eyes could not have beheld; for I should have withered and died in his presence; but his glory was upon me; and I beheld his face, for I was transfigured before him” (Moses 1:10b–11). The desire to turn and follow the Lord can only come as we realize our nothingness, and the infinite worth of the atoning sacrifice brought about by Him in whom there is no sin. Isaiah is in a state of humble despair, and of recognition of his un-holiness. ¶ *Which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar.* At the very moment of despair, He who is Most Holy commands a seraph to take a live coal from the expiatory altar. The allusion to the entering of the High Priest on Yom Kippur, or Day of Atonement, **וּם כְּפָרִים**, within the veil of the Most Holy Place (also called the Holy of Holies, **קֹדֶשׁ הַקִּדְשִׁים**,”) with burning coals and sweet incense²⁸ is an

²⁷ Transfiguration in the LDS “Guide to the Scriptures.”

²⁸ “And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail” (Leviticus 16:12).

unmistakable type and shadow of the atonement. We now partake of the Sacrament in memory of the expiatory sacrifice. Henry wrote, “[The high priest] took a censer of burning coals and a dish full of the sweet incense and then went into the holy of holies, set the coals down upon the floor, and scattered the incense upon them, so that the room was immediately filled with smoke. The Jews say that he was to go in *side-ways*, that he might not look directly upon the ark where the divine glory was, then he must come out *backwards*, out of reverence to the diving majesty ...” (Henry). And furthermore we read, “Standing before the ark, he deposited the censer of coals on the floor, emptied the plate of incense into his hand, poured it on the burning coals; and the apartment was filled with fragrant smoke, intended, according to the Jewish writers, to prevent any presumptuous gazer prying too curiously into the form of the mercy seat, which was the Lord’s throne” (Faussett). The coal was so very hot that it required tongs to remove it from the altar.

7 And he laid[✓] [it] upon my mouth, and said: Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

✓ caused it to touch

And he laid it upon my mouth, and said: Lo, this hath touched thy lips. James explained that when a man can control his speech, that he can control every aspect of his being: “If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body” (James 3:2). Thus, the importance of the lips. The Sacrament that we partake each Sabbath day, likewise, touches our lips. ¶ *And thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.* When a person who has been baptized worthily partakes of the Sacrament, and covenants to always remember the Lord, such a person may rejoice in the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost (Moroni 4:3). This powerful gift “acts as a cleansing agent to purify a person and sanctify him from all sin” (LDS BD).

8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here [am] I;[✓] send me.

✓ Behold me

This is the same question the Father asked in our pre-mortal existence: “And the Lord²⁹ said: Whom shall I

²⁹ LORD, here, refers to God the Father, Elohim (see LDS FN)

send? And one answered like unto the Son of Man: Here am I, send me” (Abraham 3:27a). When the Father asked for volunteers, Jesus Christ stood up to take upon himself this infinitely difficult and almost incomprehensible task of being the Savior of mankind. Jesus desired all the glory to go to the Father: “But, behold, my Beloved Son, which was my Beloved and Chosen from the beginning, said unto me, Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever” (Moses 4:2). This sequence with Isaiah seems to be a type and a shadow of what the Savior went through. Isaiah was ready, he said, “Here am I; send me.” In those Heavenly councils did we also volunteer for specific jobs to be had during this mortal probation? Are we living up to those obligations and pre-mortal covenants? Do we seek to glorify God? Elder Maxwell taught: “The men and women of Christ magnify their callings without magnifying themselves.”³⁰

vv. 9–13. Isaiah understands that his task will be a strenuous one. The people will hear with their ears but not comprehend with their hearts, and thus will not be converted. Isaiah desires to know how long it will be that such a state of blindness will prevail.

9 ¶ And he said: Go, and tell this people-- Hear ye indeed, ✓ but understand they understood not; and see ye indeed, but perceive they perceived not.

✓ or, without ceasing; HEBREW, in hearing

The Hebrew text (מ) is corrupted at this place and makes it seem as if the Lord was telling Isaiah that He did not wish the people to understand, be converted, and healed. The Book of Mormon preserved the correct rendering of the text: “And he said: Go and tell this people—Hear ye indeed, but they understood not; and see ye indeed, but they perceived not” (2 Nephi 16:9). The Targum (ט)³¹ reads very closely to the Book of Mormon: “And he said, Go and speak unto this people that hear indeed but understand not, but see indeed but know not.” Delitzsch and Kay note that the Lord here does not call Israel “my people” עַמִּי, but rather by the more impersonal, “this people” לְעַם הַזֶּה (see notes on ISAIAH 3:12, and *Rain in Due Season* introductory chapter).

10 Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their

eyes—lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and be converted, and be healed.

This verse shows a typical chiasmus pattern:

- A. Heart, “*Make the heart of this people fat,*”
- B. Ears, “*And make their ears heavy,*”
- C. Eyes, “*And shut their eyes,*” then a reversal,
- C. Eyes, “*Lest they see with their eyes,*”
- B. Ears, “*And hear with their ears,*” and back to
- A., Heart, “*And understand with their heart.*”

And as a result of that, “And be converted, and be healed.” We find in Zechariah: “And the word of the LORD came unto Zechariah, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother: And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart. But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts. Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the LORD of hosts: But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid the pleasant land desolate” (Zechariah 7:8–14). ¶ *Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes.* The LXX (Ⲅ) seems to give the proper meaning, not that the Lord had made people’s hearts and minds dull, but rather, this was a description of what already existed: “For the heart of this people has become gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed.” ¶ *Lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and be converted, and be healed.* This whole expression (ISAIAH 6:9–10)³² forms part of an uninterrupted,

³² So also Jeremiah, “But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and *I will be your God*, and *ye shall be my people*: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward. Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them: Yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers. Therefore thou shalt speak all these words unto them; but they will not hearken to thee: thou shalt also call unto them; but they will not answer thee” (Jeremiah 7:23–27, emphasis added).

³⁰ Neal A. Maxwell, *Men and Women of Christ*, p.13.

³¹ Stenning.

unified statement taken to its most happy conclusion (conversion³³ followed by spiritual healing through the atoning sacrifice of our Lord) for those might have been willing to heed and return unto the Lord. Throughout the Standard Works one can find invitation after invitation to *turn or return* unto the Lord. Isaiah is told that the people would not accept such an invitation with its sublime consequences, but would rather, instead, choose obstinacy and spiritual death. Thus the lamentation: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” (Matthew 23:37). Bryan Weston shared a few thoughts about how hens protect their chicks. He said that the hens, when they sense danger, will spread their wings in a protective fashion and all the chicks will run for cover, after which the hen covers her brood. The hen is willing to give her life, if needed, to protect her chicks.³⁴ Even though the hen offers the chicks protection, and even her life if need be, only the chicks who run for cover and hide under the hen obtain that refuge. The chicks that do not seek for asylum fend for themselves. So it is with Christ’s invitation to us. There are at least two important teachings to be derived from the Scriptures regarding such matters of inviting. **The first** is that from the beginning of days the Lord has sent his messengers to *invite all to come unto Christ*. “...and he inviteth them all to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and all are alike unto God, both Jew and Gentile” (2 Nephi 26:33b). The Scriptures are replete with such invitations to come. **The second** principle is that of mercy. A person who has been warned may be subject to more serious consequences if he does not heed the invitation. While the Spirit will touch our hearts to do something, it is never done in a forceful or compulsive manner. The Spirit does not nag. If we ignore the Spirit, eventually *the Spirit withdraws*. This is a source of mercy, for

³³ President Lee taught, “The greatest responsibility that a member of Christ’s church has ever had is to become truly converted—and it is just as important to stay converted. But again I ask, what is conversion? Some clues are given by the Lord. In answering a question as to why He spoke in parables, He quoted a scripture from Isaiah: ‘Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.’ (ISAIAH 6:10.) As you can see, one is converted when he sees with his eyes what he ought to see; when he hears with his ears what he ought to hear; and when he understands with his heart what he ought to understand. And what he ought to see, hear and understand is truth—eternal truth—and then practice it.” (*Stand Ye In Holy Places: Selected Sermons and Writings of President Harold B. Lee*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1988, p. 92).

³⁴ A. Bryan Weston, “Pioneers, Gatherings to Zion, and the Lord’s Loving Kindness.” 1977 CES Book of Mormon Symposium.

otherwise the condemnation would be even greater, as people would *sin against the greater light*.³⁵ “For of him unto whom much is given much is required; and he who sins against the greater light shall receive the greater condemnation” (D&C 82:3). Alma teaches, “And now Alma began to expound these things unto him, saying: It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God; nevertheless they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of men, according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him. And therefore, he that will harden his heart, the same receiveth the lesser portion of the word; and he that will not harden his heart, to him is given the greater portion of the word, until it is given unto him to know the mysteries of God until he know them in full. And they that will harden their hearts, to them is given the lesser portion of the word until they know nothing concerning his mysteries; and then they are taken captive by the devil, and led by his will down to destruction” (Alma 12:9–11a). In the New Testament, the Savior teaches: “And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them” (Matthew 13:10–15). ¶ Why is this such a serious matter? To be healed of the Lord? The Lord explains that when we have repented and turn back to our wicked ways, we are worse off than before: “[When] ...the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth *it* empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself,

³⁵ I wonder if that is not the reason why the Lord’s disciples did not receive the Holy Ghost (John 14:16–18) as a constant companion until *after* He ascended back to the Father. Otherwise the people would have had a witness from two members of the Godhead, and their rejection of Christ would have been a greater cause for condemnation.

and they enter in and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first” (Matthew 12:43–45a).

11 Then said I: Lord, how long? And he answered said: Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate;✓

✓ desolate with desolation

Then said I (אמר): Lord, how long? This is the question of the ages. It could mean anything from how long would Isaiah have to preach, to how long before the people would open their eyes, to how long before the coming of the Messiah, or how long would there be suffering. One of the attributes we are upon this earth to learn is patience. ¶ *And he said (אמר): Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate.* Note that the Book of Mormon and JST render the literal Hebrew, אמר, said rather than answered. ¶ Above all, this verse seems to point to the end of times, and is alluded to in ISAIAH 24:10 and 12, among others. The preaching and teaching would have to go until the very end, whether by the mouth of missionaries or else as a consequence of natural disasters. The Essenes (who lived in Qumran, the community who preserved the (Q) Dead Sea Scrolls) felt the time of desolation would be soon—which indeed was true ... for them. The Romans heaped destruction in Judea around 70 AD. Likewise, this scripture can be likened unto us. The time will come when all these things shall be fulfilled and we will have to stand before the bar of God. The Brethren have cautioned us against complacency, but also admonished us not to become paralyzed by thoughts of doom and gloom.³⁶

12 And the LORD have removed men far away, and for [there] shall [be] a great forsaking in the midst of the land.

And the LORD have removed men far away. Or, “... and the Lord have removed the children of men far away” (Targum, T). This seems to have reference to the scattering of Israel. So enormous has been the effect of the scattering, that among some earlier Jews, the Rabbis held that “if at present a non-Jew weds a Jewess, such a union was to be respected, since the stranger might be a

descendant of the ten tribes.”³⁷ ¶ *For there shall be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.* Or, “and the forsaken places be many in the midst of the land”

(ASV). The word translated as forsaken in the KJV,

הַעֲזוּבָה (the forsaking) is also translated as the

desolation (עֲזָבָה³⁸) and related synonyms. The root, עָזַב, indeed means to leave, abandon, desert, or forsake. The idea in the KJV seems to indicate that the people had greatly forsaken the Lord in the midst of the land (which certainly was true), while most translations give the idea that the land was abandoned (which was also true).

13 But yet in it there [shall be] a tenth, and [it] they shall return, and shall be eaten,✓ as a teil-tree, and as an oak, whose substance✓✓ [is] in them, when they cast [their leaves; so] the holy seed [shall be] the substance✓✓ thereof.

✓ or, when it is returned, and has been broused³⁹

✓✓ or, stock, or, stem

I have chosen four translations from diverse sources:

(1) “But while a tenth part yet remains in it, it shall repent. It shall be ravaged like the terebinth and the oak, of which stumps are left even when they are felled: its stump shall be a holy seed” (Tanakh). (2) “And they that remain in it shall be a tenth, and again they shall be burned and shall be made like the terebinth or like an oak which is fallen from its stump. The holy seed is the source thereof” (Syriac, S). (3) “But yet in it shall be a tenth; And it shall revive (or restore), though it be [given] to barrenness; For as the ilex, or the oak, though felled down, Hath its vitality remaining in it, So the holy seed shall have a vitality within it” (SOT). (4)

“And there shall be left in it righteous men (צדיקים [righteous men]; in the Royal Polyglot omitted), one out of ten: they shall return, and they shall be for poverty, as the terebynth and the oak when their leaves fall, they are like to dry trees, nevertheless, they are moist to raise up seed from them; thus the captivity of Israel shall be gathered, and shall return to their land, for the seed which is holy is their plantation” (Targum, T). Much of the beauty and strength of a particular passage is in the word plays and allusions to other scriptures. Kay, for instance, noticed the great similarities found this verse

³⁷ Referring to the Talmudic book of Yebamoth (16b), in *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, by Alfred Edersheim, Vol. I, p. 15

³⁸ The Targum uses the word צַדִּיקוּתָא whose root is צָדִיק (cf. with Hebrew lexicons, for root צָדַק) and also means to remove, make desolate, or depopulate.

³⁹ Or, burnt (ASV)

³⁶ Packer, Boyd K. *Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1991, pp. 51–52. Also see, “Guilt is a warning to heed; repent and prepare for long life,” LDS Church News, Deseret News. 1997. Salt Lake City: Deseret News Publishing Company.

and Leviticus 27:20, 32: “And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD’S: it is holy unto the LORD ... And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD.” Let us examine the various parts of the verse separately. ¶ *But yet in it there shall be a tenth, and they shall return.* A tenth is a significant number, as it pertains to tithing. Henry has, “It is that which, under the law, was God’s proportion; they shall be consecrated to God as the tithes were, and shall be for his service and honour. Concerning this tithe, this saved remnant ... [they] shall return out of captivity to their own land. God will turn them, and they shall be turned.” Yet they would be consumed again, and only a remnant of that would remain: a tenth of a tenth, if you please. While the people of Israel paid their tithes to the Levites, these, in turn, would pay a tenth to the priests. “Thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up an heave offering of it for the LORD, even a tenth part of the tithe” (Numbers 18:26). The remnant represents either those who are left behind during the deportation of Judah into Babylon, or those who return from the Babylonian captivity. ¶ **Remnant that stayed behind during the Babylonian deportation.** Some suggest that this remnant consisted of the “poor of the land” who were left behind in Judah under the rule of Gedaliah—who had been made ruler of Judah by the king of Babylon. “Now when all the captains of the forces which were in the fields, even they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land, and had committed unto him men, and women, and children, and of the poor of the land, of them that were not carried away captive to Babylon; Then they came to Gedaliah ...” (Jeremiah 40:7–8a). The Jews who had escaped from Judah across the Jordan also made their way back to Judah. “Likewise when all the Jews that were in Moab, and among the Ammonites, and in Edom, and that were in all the countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had set over them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan; Even all the Jews returned out of all places whither they were driven, and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah, unto Mizpah, and gathered wine and summer fruits very much” (Jeremiah 40:11–12). Jeremiah (and also Gedaliah) promised this remnant that they would be safe if they would serve the *Chaldeans* (i.e., here used interchangeably with *Babylonians*). Promises of protection were made void, however, if the people chose to lean upon Egypt and flee there for refuge. “And I will take the remnant of Judah, that have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, and they shall all be consumed,

and fall in the land of Egypt; they shall even be consumed by the sword and by the famine: they shall die, from the least even unto the greatest, by the sword and by the famine: and they shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach. For I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: So that none of the remnant of Judah, which are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall escape or remain, that they should return into the land of Judah, to the which they have a desire to return to dwell there: for none shall return but such as shall escape” (Jeremiah 44:12–14) and “Yet a small number that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah, and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know whose words shall stand, mine, or their’s” (Jeremiah 44:28, for a more complete overview see Jeremiah chapters 40–44). Sadly, the people of Judah did not trust in the Lord and fled to Egypt despite the explicit warnings. “And as for the people that remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, even over them he made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, ruler. ... And Gedaliah sware to them, and to their men, and said unto them, Fear not to be the servants of the Chaldees: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon; and it shall be well with you. ... And all the people, both small and great, and the captains of the armies, arose, and came to Egypt: for they were afraid of the Chaldees” (2 Kings 25:22, 24, 26). Those who rebelled against Gedaliah took Jeremiah captive with them into Egypt, along with the remnant that had been left in the land of Judah. Matthew Henry summarizes as follows: “We have attended Jerusalem’s funeral pile, and have taken our leave of the captives that were carried to Babylon, not expecting to hear any more of them in this book: perhaps we may in Ezekiel; and we must in this and the four following chapters [referring to Jeremiah 40–44] observe the story of those few Jews that were left to remain in the land after their brethren were carried away, and it is a very melancholy story; for though at first there were some hopeful prospects of their well-doing, they soon appeared as obstinate in sin as ever, unhumbled and unreformed, till, all the rest of the judgments threatened in Deuteronomy 28 [*Rain in Due Season*—GB] being brought upon them, that which in the last verse of that dreadful chapter completes the threatenings was accomplished, ‘The Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again.’” ¶ **Remnant who returned from the Babylonian deportation.** *Ephraim*, or the Northern kingdom, was taken captive by the Assyrians. They were soon lost to the world and became known as the Lost Tribes. *Judah*, or the Southern kingdom, the smaller of the two kingdoms, was deported into Babylon. After 70 years of Babylonian captivity or

Diaspora, when the Jews would be allowed to return to Judea, there would be relatively few who would do so. The Hebrew for the word *return* in the KJV is שָׁבָה.

Meanings for the root שָׁבָה include mostly the notion of being taken captive or prisoner. A related root, to which the word seems to be associated or derived, is שׁוּב, whose meaning is to turn, return, turn back, repent or be converted. In this verse, then, the idea is that the people would return שָׁבָה to the Holy Land and to the Lord. ¶ *And shall be eaten, as a teil-tree, and as an oak.* Even that tenth that returns, however, will be eaten, smitten, ravaged, or burnt, too. After the death of Christ, the scattering of this tenth took place. The Hebrew for the KJV *eaten* is בָּעַר. It often means to be burned or consumed. ¶ *Whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves; so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof.* Out of Judah, and out of David, was born Messiah (the Anointed One). As a trunk of an oak or terebinth tree could seem dead, and a tree can grow again, so would it be that God would grow no ordinary tree out of the stump of the Davidic line, for it would be a *Holy Seed*, even the *Holy One of Israel* in the flesh, *Jesus the Christ*. In ISAIAH 11, with important allusions to the Messiah, to the prophet Joseph Smith, and to the restored Church, the ideas in this verse are greatly

expanded upon. A second allusion is to the role of the scattering and gathering of Israel, which would be scattered to every corner of the globe as seed is scattered. The Northern Kingdom, or Ephraim, would at first be scattered by the Assyrians; the Southern Kingdom, or Judah, would at first be scattered by Babylon. But the Lord would gather holy seed (contrast this with ISAIAH 1:4) in due time, as spoken by the prophet Zenos, in Jacob 5. This remnant of Israel would be put through the refiner's fire. The restoration of Israel is one of the core beliefs of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. As LDS we testify that indeed the process of restoration has begun to take place throughout the world beginning with Ephraim. Those who stay firm in the faith will be transformed through the cleansing of the Holy Ghost and through the expiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We may be touched by the live coal of the atonement, and not be destroyed at the Second Coming. Those who thus endure will have within them holy seed, that is, the opportunity to receive of the Celestial glory and have eternal increase of posterity.

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Isaiah 7

Some commentators feel to group ISAIAH 7 through 9:7 (e.g., Barnes, and cf. Clarke) while others suggest that ISAIAH 7 all the way through 14 are very strongly connected (Kay). Lowth says that in these chapters we see “the manifestation of Messiah; the transcendent dignity of his character; and the universality and eternal duration of his kingdom.” Isaiah warns King Ahaz of Judah, to stay—or lean—upon the Lord and not upon the strong nations of the day. The *Immanuel* prophecy is given: that is, the virgin birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, the light that would shine in darkness. Punishments that would come to an unbelieving people are announced against Judah.

HISTORICAL NOTE: After the death of Solomon (922 BC),¹ Israel was split in two. Although from time to time the kingdoms of Ephraim and Judah had acted together in friendship during the period of the divided kingdoms, the relationship between them was strained at best.

VV. 1–9. The chapter opens as Syria and Ephraim—governed by King Rezin and King Pekah respectively—joined forces against King Ahaz of Judah. From 2 Kings 15:32–38, one may gather that such antagonism was not new, but carried over from the times of King Jotham (father of Ahaz). The exact timing and chronology of these events, however, are not clear from the Biblical narrative.² Some have supposed that the contention was fueled by Jotham’s unwillingness to join forces with these nations against Assyria. Now, the plan was to unseat Ahaz and place a puppet king, the son of Tabeel, on the throne, and thus force Judah into submission. We find ourselves with a very agitated

King Ahaz at the news of wars and rumours of wars. Isaiah was sent to invite Ahaz to put his confidence in the Lord, rather than a foreign power. Ahaz was more inclined to lean on Tiglath-pileser³ of Assyria.

1 ¶ AND it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, [that] Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up toward Jerusalem to war against it, but could not prevail against it.

AND it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah. Amaziah, was the father of Uzziah (sometimes known as Ozias or Azariah), who was the father of Jotham, who was the father of Ahaz, who was the father of Hezekiah, who was the father of Manasseh. Regarding the King, we read: “Twenty years old was Ahaz when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem, and did not that which was right in the sight of the LORD his God” (2 Kings 16:2a). These are piercing words. The scriptures tell us a little regarding what made him such a wicked king: “But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, yea, and made his son to pass through the

¹ Dates are approximate, and follow those given by John Bright, *A History of Israel*, 3rd Edition.

² The scriptures in 2 Kings 15 had already given us the summary of events for the life of King Jotham, ending up with the traditional formula: “Now the rest of the acts of ... and all that he did, are they not written ...” (v. 36). The actual death of Jotham is not mentioned until v. 38, while the alliance of the two kings against Judah is sandwiched in between these two verses (v. 37). This is probably what has led commentators and historians to suggest that Ahaz inherited this trouble from Jotham. The actual point in time may be further obscured because kings often ruled as co-regents before their fathers died. An argument to place the date after the death of King Jotham is that nations often took advantage of the death of a strong monarch to wage a war against their enemies. Beside the question of the date, there is yet another question: did the combined forces of Syria and Israel attack Judah more than once? There are some who feel that this is the second time that such an alliance had come against Judah during the time of Ahaz. From the scriptures it is hard to ascertain this question. What seems to be clear is that Syria and Israel actually did come upon Judah and caused some major damage, even though they “could not prevail against” her. Regarding such chronological uncertainty, Delitzsch says, “Indisputable as the credibility of these events may be, it is nevertheless very difficult to connect them together, either substantially or chronologically, in a certain and reliable manner”

³ While Owen C. Whitehouse calls Ahab’s action in seeking Assyrian help one of *intelligence* (DOTB, Vol. 3, p. 736), the move was hardly so, and a “fatal misstep” instead (Bright, p. 273). Rogers compares Ahaz to his grandfather Uzziah, “Ahaz was a weakling—of that the sequel leaves no doubt whatever; but he was also stiff-necked and unwilling to take counsel, however excellent. The wisdom of the prophet Isaiah, who was also an acute statesman, was lost on him. But in the nature of the case a man who, like him, gave little heed to the religion of Jehovah would be less likely to listen to a prophet’s words than to the words of foreign kings. His introduction of the manners, customs, and worship of foreign nations shows how open he was to outside influences (2 Kings 16:10, and comp. 2 Kings 23:12). Coward though he was personally, he was king of a land with great resources for defensive war, as Uzziah had sufficiently shown” (Rogers, Robert William, *A History of Babylonia and Assyria*, Volume II, p. 127.)

fire,⁴ according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel. And he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree” (2 Kings 16:3–4). To say that “he walked in the way of the kings of Israel” (*Israel* here stands for the Northern Kingdom, also known as Ephraim) was a great insult. These ten tribes had been led by idolatrous rulers. He had done no better than the ancient inhabitants of Canaan: “...for every abominable thing which the LORD hates, they have done for their gods; for they even burn their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods” (RSV, Deuteronomy 12:31b, cf. 2 Kings 17:17, 31), or “... for even their sons and their daughters do they burn in the fire to their gods” (TPAH, Deuteronomy 12:31b). The idolatrous worship in high places was associated, according to some scholars, with immoral sexual rituals. It is likely that such sexual transgressions were one of many forms of idolatry. When Ahaz died, he did not merit to be buried with the rest of the kings of Judah. “And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, even in Jerusalem: but they brought him not into the sepulchres of the kings of Israel” (2 Chronicles 28:27a). The greatest wickedness of Ahaz was that of not putting his trust in the Living God. ¶ *That Rezin king of Syria*. Or rather, *Aram* (אֲרָם), as the word Syria does not appear in the Hebrew text (אֲרָם).⁵ Aram lied above the Northern Kingdom of Israel, north of Galilee. Asshur and Aram were children of Shem, and fathers of Assyria and Syria respectively: “The children of Shem; Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram” (Genesis 10:22). The Aramaic language was spoken at the time of Christ. ¶ Damascus was one of the best known cities in Syria. At the time of our narrative, Rezin was king of Syria. The scriptures have little to say about Rezin, other than his joining forces with Pekah. According to Nägelsbach, Rezin was the last king of Syria before it became absorbed by Assyria. ¶ *And Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel*. Regarding Pekah, the King of the Northern Kingdom, we know that: “In the two and fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign

over Israel in Samaria, and reigned twenty years.⁶ And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD ...” (2 Kings 15:27–28a). Pekah seized the throne by murdering king Pekahiah (see 2 Kings 15:23, 25). Most of the kings of Judah were direct line descendants of the former king. In contrast, most of the kings of Israel usurped power by murdering the previous king. According to the Biblical account, it was on the 17th year of Pekah’s reign, that Ahaz began to reign in Judah (2 Kings 16:1). ¶ *Went up toward Jerusalem to war against it, but could not prevail against it*. Some exegetes feel that the Isaiah and Kings narratives are at odds with the one in Chronicles.⁷ Others suggest that multiple events are described in these chapters, not a single war. Thus, making it possible for Judah to have suffered the serious reversed mentioned in 2 Chronicles 28, yet for Jerusalem herself not to have fallen to the enemy at that time. Whether part of one war or many we read: “And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel” (ISAIAH 8:8). So when we read, “*but could not prevail against it*,” the narrative refers to Jerusalem.

2 And it was told the house of David, saying: Syria is confederate with Ephraim. And his heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.

✓ resteth on

And it was told the house of David, saying. The house of David is another expression for Judah, the Southern Kingdom. David was born of the lineage of Judah, and the Savior would be born of the lineage of David. Ahaz, then heard about this trouble. ¶ *Syria is confederate with Ephraim*. Syria and Ephraim had joined forces to come against Judah. Henry observes, “Ephraim did indeed envy Judah (ISAIAH 11:13) and sought the ruin of that kingdom, but could not prevail; for the sceptre should never depart from Judah till the coming of Shiloh.”⁸ ¶ *And his heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind*. In the strong biting force of Isaiah’s language, we find out that Ahaz, and all of the people of Judah also, trembled with fear: their hearts were agitated as trees

⁴ “He even burned his son as an offering,” RSV. In the Chronicles narrative, it implied that Ahaz “burnt his children in the fire.” Note the plural. (See 2 Chronicles 28:1–6.)

⁵ “The name [Syria] does not occur in the Masoretic Text (אֲרָם) nor the Peshitta of the Old Testament (ܣܝܪܝܐ), but is found in the Septuagint (Ἰσὴν), in the Peshitta of the New Testament (ܣܝܪܝܐ) and in the Mishna. In the Septuagint (Ἰσὴν) it represents ‘Aram’ in all its combinations, as Aram-zobah, etc.” (ISBE). Regarding Aram we read: “The word [Aram] means high, or highlands, and as the name of a country denotes that elevated region extending from the northeast of Palestine to the Euphrates. It corresponded generally with the Syria and Mesopotamia of the Greeks and Romans.” (*Eaton’s Bible Dictionary*).

⁶ Bright feels that the actual reign of Pekah was much shorter: “Perhaps he had in fact exercised semi-autonomous authority in Gilead (cf. v. 25) since the death of Jeroboam ...” (Bright, p. 273).

⁷ See 2 Kings 16; and 2 Chronicles 28.

⁸ “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be” (Genesis 49:10).

violently moved by the wind. “Ahaz, what a wicked man!” I thought some years ago as I was studying this verse of Isaiah. “Why did you not place your confidence and trust in the Lord?” The Spirit of the Lord rebuked me, “You are like Ahaz!” And then I remembered what had happened the previous week. I had gone to a soccer referee clinic, in which the referee director was chastising some of the referees for an incident that had transpired the previous Saturday. “But it was not my fault,” I had protested at the meeting, and began to defend myself; and worse, I had begun to lay blame elsewhere. The referee director turned to me and quietly said, “Gregorio, I was not talking about you ...” I had, in essence, fell into my own trap: “...and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth” (Leviticus 26:36b, *Rain in Due Season*). But the Lord is merciful, and He does not teach us a lesson without giving us another chance, that is, another opportunity to learn from that lesson. It was a short while after that I was publicly criticized in my position at the University of California. Gladly, the words of the Spirit were still ringing in my ears regarding my overdefensive attitudes. This time I placed my trust in the Lord. Although I felt a little numb from the unjustified attack, I responded with a simple but frank apology. What happened next was interesting. Several of the people involved wrote privately and congratulated me on the hard work and success of my program. The colleague who had written the original letter accepted my apology. This little incident proved to be a great blessing. I hate to think of the consequences that a defensive response would have caused. ¶ When we rely on the Father, He sends a defender: “Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you” (2 Chronicles 20:17). Alma taught his son as follows: “And now, O my son Helaman, behold, thou art in thy youth, and therefore, I beseech of thee that thou wilt hear my words and learn of me; for I do know that whosoever shall put their trust in God shall be supported in their trials, and their troubles, and their afflictions, and shall be lifted up at the last day” (Alma 36:3).

3 Then said the LORD unto Isaiah: Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou and Shearjashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field;

✓ That is, the remnant shall return

✓ or, causeway

Then said the LORD unto Isaiah: Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou and Shearjashub thy son. Isaiah was sent to speak to Ahaz. Isaiah was to take his son—pronounced *Shear-Yashuv* שְׂאָר יָשׁוּב, whose name in Hebrew means “A remnant shall return” — to visit with Ahaz. In ISAIAH 6:13 we read about the remnant that would return. Isaiah and Hosea were two prophets who were instructed by the Lord to give their children names that would help them better teach the message that was intended for the people. The Lord used several types of teaching tools to make His point, including making an object lesson out of the names given to the children of the prophets. We have said that the word apostasy in Hebrew literally means “turn around backwards,” as in “they are gone away backward” (ISAIAH 1:4b). Wade suggests: “Isaiah, in taking his son with him to meet the king, perhaps hoped to convey to Ahaz a tacit warning not to precipitate by unbelief the calamity of which the boy’s name was ominous.” McFadyen says: “The prophet takes with him his son **Shear-jashub**, whose name means *a remnant shall turn* (i.e. to Jehovah), and who is therefore in his own person, even though no words be spoken, a living embodiment of Isaiah’s message of judgment and hope for a better Israel to be.” Such a return implies repentance and a course correction, as much as the turning around backwards signifies an apostasy. Isaiah, as a prophet and servant of the Lord was in tune with the Spirit, and heeded the command to go and speak to the King Ahaz of Judah and take his own son along for an object lesson. ¶ *At the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field.* Isaiah and his son where to go to the “end of the aqueduct of the upper pool, at the highway of the fuller’s field” (SOT). The Targum (T) reads “at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, which is by the way of the field of the spreading of the fullers.” Webster explains that fuller means someone who ‘fulls’ cloth, and *full* means to “to shrink and thicken (woolen cloth) by moistening, heating, and pressing” (Webster). Fuller כֹּבֵס, comes from the Hebrew root כָּבַס, “to tread” and is used to describe how clothes were washed by treading (HBD, BDB) them by foot with putrid urine as a cleanser, and thus an activity carried out beyond the city walls—because of the smell! (HBD). In the LDS BD we find, “Their work was to cleanse garments and whiten them. The soap they employed consisted of salts mixed with oil, and was of two kinds, made with carbonate of soda or with borax. The Fuller’s Field ... was close to the walls of Jerusalem, possibly on the east side.” The term also appears once in the New Testament, “And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them” (Mark 9:3). ¶ We shall meet with the same location, “the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field,” in ISAIAH 36:2, when the king of

Assyria sent an envoy to meet with Hezekiah, king of Judah. ¶ Why was King Ahaz outside the city walls by the upper pool? Barnes suggests that perhaps it was the fear of an impending siege, and that even in those early times the inhabitants of Jerusalem were seeking a way to protect their water source. Yet it would be Hezekiah *ben* Ahaz who would eventually build an underground structure to protect the water, when he was threatened by Assyria. “And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem, He took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains which were without the city: and they did help him. So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land, saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water? (2 Chronicles 32:2–4). In fact, Hezekiah, in contrast to his father, would almost repeat Isaiah’s words (see ISAIAH 7:4–14 that follows) in the process of calming those who were afraid of the then impending attack by Sennacherib King of Assyria. Kay observes: “In 2 Chronicles 32:7, 8, when Hezekiah was standing near the spot where this prophecy was delivered, he all but quotes both Isaiah’s words in v. 4 and the great name *Immanu-el* **עִמָּנוּ אֵל**. ‘Be ye strong and courageous; fear not, neither be dismayed, because of the king of Assyria and of all the multitude that is with him: for with us (*‘immanu* **עִמָּנוּ**) is a Greater than is with him. With him is an arm of flesh; but with us (*‘immanu* **עִמָּנוּ**) is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles” (p. 79). See also ISAIAH 36–39.

4 And say unto him: Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be faint-hearted[✓] for the two tails of these smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah.

✓ let not thy heart be tender

And say unto him: Take heed, and be quiet. Take heed means to listen up and take council, to obey. *Take heed* **הִשָּׁמֶר**, as Kay points out, is the frequent admonition of Yahweh to the children of Israel, “It is the word that is used so often in law (e.g., Exodus 34:12; Deuteronomy 4:9; 6:12; 12:13, 19, 30), when Israel is cautioned against heathen alliances and practices.” Obedience is one of the most essential elements of religion, that of subjecting our own will to that of God. “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of

Israel” (Exodus 19:5–6). *Be quiet* is an invitation to calm down, to be still, to listen: “Be still, and know that I am God” (Psalms 46:10a). Rawlinson notes the contrast with “For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength” (ISAIAH 30:15a). ¶ *Fear not, neither be faint-hearted.* This is an invitation not to fear anything but God. The sentiment is first recorded in Deuteronomy: “... let not your hearts faint, fear not” (Deuteronomy 20:3), and repeated by Jeremiah as well: “Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee ...” (Jeremiah 30:10a). Calvin says, “It is impossible, I acknowledge, not to *fear* when dangers threaten, for faith does not deprive us of all feeling ... for no man has made such proficiency [of faith] as not to have any remains of that distrust against which we ought continually to strive.” Henry adds, since “God is found of those who seek him not, much more will he be found of those who seek him diligently.” So, let us seek after the Lord! Also, remember this beautiful scripture: “I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me” (Proverbs 8:17). ¶ *For the two tails of these smoking firebrands.* Or, “... because of these two stubs of smoldering firebrands” (NAS). The word *firebrand* is synonymous to someone who stirs the pot, or is a troublemaker. A *smoking firebrand* gives the impression of a bully who is more smoke than fire. Several commentators describe it as torches that once burnt brightly but now have nothing more to give than annoying smoke. To Nägelsbach, it is “the charred stick of wood that may have been used to stir the fire.” ¶ *For the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah.* Or, “By the fierce anger of Rezin, and by the son of Remaliah” (Syriac, **§**). The **§** leaves out the words “of Syria.” These smoldering tails represent Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel. Most commentators feel these words are full of sarcastic contempt for Pekah, since Isaiah only calls him the son of Remaliah. “It is by way of contempt that the king of Israel is not called by his own name. The Hebrews and Arabians, when they wish to speak reproachfully of any one, omit his proper name and call him merely the son of this or that, especially when his father is but little known or respected. So Saul names David, in contempt, the son of Jesse; 1 Samuel 20:27, 31 (Hengstenberg in Barnes). To the Arabians of the desert, even today, “it is an insult of the worst sort to ask a man his father’s name—such a question is equivalent to telling an adult male that he, ‘with all his inches of beard, is nothing save by virtue of being his father’s son.’”⁹ Two sources of possible

⁹ Youssouf, Ibrahim Ag; Grimshaw, Allen D.; and Bird, Charles S. “Greetings in the Desert.” In *A Cultural Approach to Interpersonal*

contempt towards the son of Remaliah are (1) the way Pekah gained power, by assassinating his predecessor, Pekahiah, and (2) the idea that Judah would be attacked by her very brothers, the Northern Kingdom. *Fierce anger* against us can do little¹⁰ if we are willing to put our trust in the Lord.

5 Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah, have taken evil counsel against thee, saying:

Syria (through Remaliah) and Ephraim (through Pekah) had plotted harm, or taken evil counsel, against Judah. No evil counsel will triumph against a people the Lord wishes to protect. Regarding the Lord's Church today, the Prophet Joseph Smith taught, "...the Standard of Truth has been erected; no unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly and independently, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country and sounded in every ear; till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the great Jehovah shall say the work is done."¹¹

6 Let us go up against Judah, and vex it[✓], and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, *yea* [even] the son of Tabeal.

✓ or, waken

Communication: Essential Readings (Leila Monaghan and Jane E. Goodman, editors), Blackwell Publishing, 2007, p. 58.

¹⁰ See the April 2004 General Conference talk by Elder Dennis E. Simmons of the Seventy, "But if not." Elder Simmons said: "Centuries ago, Daniel and his young associates were suddenly thrust from security into the world—a world foreign and intimidating. When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to bow down and worship a golden image set up by the king, a furious Nebuchadnezzar told them that if they would not worship as commanded, they would immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace. 'And who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?' The three young men quickly and confidently responded, 'If it be so [if you cast us into the furnace], our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and *he will deliver us out of thine hand.*' That sounds like my eighth-grade kind of faith. But then they demonstrated that they fully understood what faith is. They continued, '*But if not, . . . we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.*' That is a statement of true faith. They knew that they could trust God—even if things didn't turn out the way they hoped. They knew that faith is more than mental assent, more than an acknowledgment that God lives. Faith is total trust in Him."

¹¹ Smith, Joseph Jr. *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. Edited by B. H. Roberts. 2nd ed., rev. Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1932-51, 4:540.

Let us go up against Judah, and vex it. The margin || suggests that they would go up against Judah to wake her up, to help her realize her obligation. Other words for *vex* include annoy, disturb, bother, irritate; but here, to attack her. ¶ *And let us make a **breach** therein for us.* To make a *breach* has reference to the fact that Jerusalem was fortified, and they planned to make a whole, aperture, or opening in wall through which they could enter and take the city. פתח often has violent connotations as in the **ripping open** of pregnant women or bursting into a city to capture it by force (see Gesenius, BDB, Nägelsbach). **Breach** can also mean, as Kay explains, to "**take by storm**" (2 Chronicles 32:1). The verb is used for the final 'breaking up' of Jerusalem at the end of the Chaldean siege, Jeremiah 39:2; 52:7)." A breach, then, in this context, meant that pressure was put upon the wall until it would give in one spot. Likewise, in our own personal lives, Satan attacks us in our weakest points (or even where we might, in prideful confidence, believe *all is well*¹²), coming against us with his battering rams. We must lean on the Lord for strength. ¶ *And set a king in the midst of it, yea even the son of Tabeal.* We know little of this *ben* Tabeal (i.e., God is good),¹³ but can assume he would have been either a puppet king, or someone who was of the same philosophy of the Ephraimite and Syrian kings. This idea of setting kings loyal to the conquering powers is seen often during this time period in the orient.

7 Thus saith the Lord GOD: It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.

Isaiah spoke on behalf of the Lord, that despite all the planning, plotting and evil counsel against Judah, nothing would come of it. Kay suggests: "Whatever Ahaz's guilt might be, God would be faithful to His covenant with David." Certainly, "no unhallowed hand" would be permitted to touch Judah and Israel without the consent of the Lord.

8 For the head of Syria [is**] Damascus, and the head of Damascus, [**is**] Rezin; and within three score and five years shall Ephraim be broken that it be not a people.[✓]**

✓ from a people

¹² Elder Dallin H. Oaks, Our Strengths can become our Downfall, BYU Devotional Address, 7 June 1992; October 1994 *Ensign*.

¹³ This name has its origin in Syriac (ܐ) rather than the Hebrew tongue (Kay) and the spelling in the Hebrew (מ) has been changed so the name instead reads "Good for nothing" (Holman, Nägelsbach).

Kay as well as Nägelsbach perceptively point out that the *head* of these nations is a man! In contrast, “Behind Jerusalem and the house of David, stands the Lord as the true head in chief of Israel” (Nägelsbach). When the titular head of Judah, Ahaz, would not trust in the true Head,¹⁴ he would be removed. This would be true until the House of David had fulfilled its mission with respect of the Messiah. The idea of the scripture here in Isaiah is similar to the often quoted, “as night follows the day, so will....” The first fact here is that “as surely as the head or capital of Syria was Damascus,” and the second fact is “as surely as the head or leader of Damascus was Rezin,” just as surely it would follow that “Ephraim (Northern Kingdom) would cease to be, and would be broken up, all within the space of *three score and five years*, that is, 65 years.” The head of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the Lord. President Brigham Young taught: “The Lord Almighty leads this Church, and he will never suffer you to be led astray if you are found doing your duty. You may go home and sleep as sweetly as a babe in its mother’s arms, as to any danger of your leaders leading you astray, for if they should try to do so the Lord would quickly sweep them from the earth. (9:289).”¹⁵

¶ Ephraim would be taken captive to the north, and the ten northern tribes would be lost to the world. This prophecy was fulfilled, explains Lowth, “to the total depopulation of the kingdom of Israel by Esarhaddon, who carried away the remains of the *ten* tribes which

¹⁴ This point, about *who is*, or shall we say *ought to be*, our head reminds me of one of the most tender and striking exegeses presented by a BYU religion scholar M. Catherine Thomas at a CES meetings regarding Paul’s writings: “But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman: but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels. Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God” (1 Corinthians 11:3-12). Sister Thomas was able to explain how the word *head* needs to be understood in its proper context to our Head, Christ, and to the Temple ordinances. But our Head is Christ, “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence” (Colossians 1:16-18). M. Catherine Thomas. “Paul and the Daughters of Eve,” CES New Testament Symposium, 1992.

¹⁵ Young, Brigham. Discourses of Brigham Young. Compiled by John A. Widtsoe. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978, p. 137.

had been left by Tiglath Pileser, and Shalmaneser, and who planted the country with new inhabitants. That the country was not totally stripped of its inhabitants by Shalmaneser appears from many passages of the history of Josiah, where Israelites are mentioned as still remaining there, 2 Chronicles 34:6, 7, 33; 35:18; 2 Kings 23:19, 20.” Delitzsch also calculates that “we get exactly sixty-five years from the second year of the reign of Ahaz to the termination of Ephraim’s existence as a nation (viz. Ahaz 14; Hezekiah, 29; Manasseh, 22; in all, 65) ... [assuming] this took place in the twenty-second and twenty third years of Manasseh ...”¹⁶ Kay agrees, “If the second year of Ahaz (741 B.C.) be taken as the starting-point, the 65th year would be 677 B.C.—the 22nd year of Manasseh; in which (according to the ‘Seder Olam’) he was carried away (2 Chronicles 33:11) by the Assyrian armies to Babylon. It is most probable that the importation of Cuthaeans into Samaria (2 Kings 17:24; Ezra 4:2),—the event which sealed the doom of Ephraim,—took place at the same time. From that time onward Ephraim has been scattered and lost among the nations.” ¶ What do we know about Esarhaddon? He was the son of Sennacherib, the King of Assyria who came so close to overpowering Jerusalem at the time of Hezekiah King of Judah, were it not for the intercession of the Lord (see ISAIAH 37). The accounts in Isaiah and Kings are silent about what involvement he may have had in the murder of his father (see 2 Kings 19:36–37). Very little is known about this campaign by Esarhaddon against Israel. From the present threats by Tiglath-pileser (who reigned between 745–727 BC), other kings of Assyria included Shalmaneser V (726–722 BC, who began the horrible three year siege of Samaria), Sargon II (721–705 BC, during the fall of Samaria in Israel), Sennacherib (704–681 BC, related to the troubles with Judah) and Esarhaddon (680–669 BC).¹⁷ These deportations took place in waves. The policy of Assyria was to move people around and thus reduce their political strength. But there were some Israelites left who were not deported and who intermingled with a new people, thus

¹⁶ “Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon.” (2 Chronicles 33:11) This marked an important break in the kingdom of Manasseh after which he was restored to the throne. Delitzsch suggests that this would have been a natural time for Esarhaddon to have taken the rest of Israel captive (beside those who were left behind and never taken, and eventually mingled with other peoples and became the Samaritans. Returning to Manasseh, King of Judah, we read, “And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, And prayed unto him: and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God” (2 Chronicles 33:12-13).

¹⁷ See Bright, *History of Israel*. Chronological Chart VI.

forming a much loathed group from the perspective of the Jews, the *Samaritans*.

9 And the head of Ephraim [is] Samaria, and the head of Samaria [is] Remaliah's son. If ye will not believe surely ye shall not be established.✓

✓ or, Do ye not believe? it is because ye are not stable

Using the very same logic and construction, we likewise see that as it follows that (1) the head or capital of Ephraim was Samaria and (2) the head or leader of Samaria was Remaliah's son (Pekah), so (3) would it follow that Judah would also suffer for her disobedience (as Ephraim would suffer for hers). Judah would be permitted to return to her land, but this return would be relatively short-lived. ¶ Lowth, leaning upon Secker and Durell, suggests that perhaps the original reading was not "If ye will not believe surely ye shall not be established," but rather, "If ye will not believe *me* ye shall not be established." The Hebrew for *surely*, כִּי, could have been misread for that of *me*, בִּי. Lowth notes support for this concept in the Chaldee, "If ye will not believe in the words of the prophet."¹⁸ Lowth often gets carried away with suggested changes in the text, however. ¶ Ahaz here stands for all of Judah, being a type and a shadow. And why would Ahaz not be established? Ahaz would turn to Assyria and idolatry for help rather than to the Lord. Speaking of the second clause in this verse, Kay suggests: "There is an assonance in the Hebrew between the two clauses which cannot well be transferred. The effect is:—"Be *firm in faith*, or ye will not be made *firm in fact*." God's faithfulness is as the strong mountains; if ye would be strong, ye must plant your feet on His promise." The paronomasia is as follows¹⁹:

אִם	לֹא	תֵאֱמִינוּ
If	not	will-ye-believe
כִּי	לֹא	תֵאֱמִינוּ
surely	not	shall-be-ye-established

When we lean upon the Lord for our stay and our staff, we can act in confidence: "... for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your reward" (ISAIAH 52:12b).

¹⁸ Or rather, "the words of the prophets." See also, *The Aramaic Bible*.

¹⁹ Cf. with Green.

vv. 10–25. The Lord, through Isaiah, offers Ahaz the opportunity to put Him to the test, by asking for a sign. Ahaz, like Satan, distorts the scriptures and through false piety refuses to accept a sign. The Lord gives a sign anyway: the *virgin shall conceive, and shall bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel*. Thus, the birth of the Christ child is predicted over 600 years before it takes place. The death of the kings of both Israel and Syria, presently a threat to Judah, is also announced.

10 ¶ Moreover, the LORD spake again✓ unto Ahaz, saying:

✓ And the LORD added to speak

The Lord spoke again to Isaiah, giving him a message for Ahaz. The prophets have, from the beginning of times, prophesied of the coming of the Messiah and have testified of Jesus Christ. From the Talmudic Tractate, we have:

כל הנביאים כולן לא
תנבאו אלא לימות המשיח

That is, "All the prophets prophesied not but of the days of the Messiah," (Sanhedrin 99a).²⁰ There is an interchange of voices between those of the Prophet Isaiah and the Lord. This interchange is so natural, that it takes place not only between the Prophet and the Lord, but also between Yahweh and Elohim. Through the principle of *Divine Investiture* the Lord speaks for Elohim (John 12:49, also see Introduction).

11 Ask thee a sign of the LORD thy God; ask it either in the depths,✓ or in the heights above.

✓ or, make thy petition deep

Ask thee a sign of the LORD thy God. Is this not in a way, what is happening to those who receive the Book of Mormon and the message of the restored gospel truths? "And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost. And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things" (Moroni 10:4–5).²¹ Is not the Lord saying to

²⁰ This from the Talmud, as quoted in *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (3rd Edition), Alfred Edersheim, E.R. Herrick & Company, New York: New York. 1886, p. 1.

²¹ The truth will be manifested with as much strength as is needed for that individual to know for a certainty that this truth came from God.

us, “prove me now herewith ...” (Malachi 3:10)? Ask me for a sign. It is wonderful and truly astonishing. Ahaz had the opportunity to ask for a sign from the Lord. ¶ *Ask it either in the depths, or in the heights above.* Ahaz was asked to put the Lord to the test: to prove Him.²² Whether it be in the heights above, such as what took place in the day of Ahaz (ISAIAH 38:8) or in the depths of the earth. The Scriptures are full of promises if we are willing to keep the associated commandments: “And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated” (D&C 130:21). The key is that the Lord *wants us* to obtain these blessings.

12 But Ahaz said: I will not ask, neither will I tempt the LORD.

Satan attempted to tempt Jesus by twisting the scriptures to fit his evil purposes, with the words “it is written.” So did Ahaz distort the scriptures under Satan’s influence: “Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God ...” (Deuteronomy 6:16). Kay observes: “In speaking of Ahaz, God had condescendingly said: ‘Ask of the Lord, thy God.’ Ahaz replied distantly: ‘I will not tempt the Lord;’” omitting the privileged expression ‘my God.’ The prophet now supplies the missing term: ‘Will ye weary out my God?’” Nägelsbach has, “The insult to his God is the *chief matter* to the Prophet. Notice that by ‘my God’ here [ISAIAH 7:13], he in a measure retracts the ‘thy God.’” King Ahaz was too proud to humble himself before the Lord, or to put the Lord to the test. Ahaz had no trouble, however, debasing himself—and desecrating the temple—before the King

There is an important pattern in the verses Moroni 10:3-5. The Lord will manifest the truth through personal revelation to the individual who has a grateful disposition, and asks the Father sincerely in the name of Christ. When as a youth of 15 I opened the Book of Mormon and read those words for the first time, I was overpowered with the warmth of the Spirit of the Holy Ghost.

²² The lack of rain was apparent during my 1988 Sabbatical trip to Chile where I taught a course for the University of Chile. The Lord has told us that if we walk in His statutes, and keep His commandments, that we will have “rain in due season” (Leviticus 26:4). As I now prayed for the needed moisture in Chile, I felt the time was not right, not just yet. Instead, I felt to pray that when the time would be right, that I would be prompted to ask for rain. Several months later, such a day came when I did pray for rain. I had been informed that the barometric pressure was such that there were no chances of rain. As I prayed for rain before retiring for bed, the Spirit chided me somewhat. That eventually it would rain—in a week or a month—and I would attribute it to the Lord. I felt inspired, instead, to pray that it would rain *before* the night was over. I broke into a cold sweat of fear as I tried my faith in prayer. A few hours later I was awakened by my wife who told me it was raining. It poured for ten hours. The Lord has a great love for each one of us. It is His desire to pour rain upon us, not just physical rain, but the type of rain that will help us bring forth fruits of repentance and of good works. But we must ask and we must walk in His ways.

of Assyria (2 Kings 16:7–19). It is somewhat ironical that the very people who Ahaz sought to make an alliance with, would be the ones who not much later would cause so very much harm to Judah. King Ahaz sought Assyria as a protector against Syria and Ephraim. The history of Judah shows that this move was of only temporary satisfaction, as Judah then had to pay tribute to Assyria and lost strength through adopting her idolatrous ways (2 Chronicles 28), for we read: “And Tilgathpileser king of Assyria came unto him [i.e., Ahaz], and distressed him, but strengthened him not” (2 Chronicles 28:20). Had Ahaz trusted in the Lord, matters would have ended differently. Let us, rather, not be afraid to put our confidence in God, and be ever ready to follow the Brethren and whisperings of the Spirit. “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding” (Proverbs 3:5).

13 And he said: Hear ye now, O house of David; [is it] a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?

And he said: Hear ye now, O house of David. Ahaz was of the house of David, from the tribe of Judah. But here the meaning seems to be deeper, calling upon the house of David to be a witness of what Ahaz was saying this day, and his refusal to put his trust on the Lord. The sign to follow was given to the *house of David, not to Ahaz*. ¶ *Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?* Or, “... is it not enough for you to try the patience of men, that you try the patience of my God also?” (Berkeley).

vv. 14–16. Faithful Christian commentators all agree that ISAIAH 7:14 has reference to the miraculous birth of the Savior. There has been much effort, however, for others to attempt to destroy all Messianic scriptures, including this one.

14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign—Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and shall bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

✓ or, thou, O virgin, shalt call

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign.

Therefore or לָכֵן. Kay has, “There is a similarly weighty *Therefore* in ISAIAH 28:16;²³ where a most comforting promise to the faithful, and a most solemn

²³ “Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste” (ISAIAH 28:16).

menace to the perverse, are combined, as here.” This sign is given—not for Ahaz—but to those who would look forward to the birth of Messiah. The sign was given to Judah, or the house of David, and to all those who waited for Messiah. And also for a sign and a wonder for all who believe in Jesus the Christ and see in Him and in none else the fulfillment of this wonderful sign. ¶ *Behold, a virgin shall conceive.* Barnes writes, “This interjection [i.e., behold, lo, הִנֵּה] is a very common one in the Old Testament. It is used to arrest attention; to indicate the importance of what was about to be said.” Delitzsch says that in Isaiah, הִנֵּה is used to introduce a future event. The expression is *not* עֲלָמָה but rather הַעֲלָמָה, and should have been rendered “*the virgin*” (as does LITV). Likewise, in Isaiah 7:16 it is *not* “a child” but rather “*the child*,” הַיֶּלֶד. The use of the word *the*, makes it so it “points to some special virgin, preeminent above all others” (Rawlinson). Every effort has been set forth to attempt to explain that עֲלָמָה does not mean *virgin*, but simply any *young woman*. TWOT well indicates that “There is no instance where it can be proved that עֲלָמָה designates a young woman who is not a virgin” (TWOT). There is no agreement on the exact publication date of the LXX (6), the Hebrew to Greek translation of the Old Testament), but all agree it was finished well before the birth of the Savior (at least 80 years before). The translators used the word παρθένος, *virgin*. They had no way of knowing the pivotal significance this would have. ¶ This scripture in Isaiah was used to *comfort* Joseph, espoused to Mary: “the argument that convinced Joseph was the fact, pointed out to him by the angel, that such an event had already been predicted by Isaiah” (TWOT): “Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife” (Matthew 1:22–25). The testimony of the Book of Mormon is also clear on this subject: “Behold, the virgin whom thou seest is the mother of the Son of God” (1 Nephi 11:18b); “And behold, he shall be born of Mary, at Jerusalem which is the land of our forefathers, she being a virgin, a precious and chosen vessel, who shall be overshadowed and conceive by the power of the Holy Ghost, and bring forth a son, yea, even the Son of God” (Alma 7:10). ¶ *And shall bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.* The male child that the virgin would give birth to would be called Immanuel, or *God is with us*, or *with us is God*. Nägelsbach explains that the Savior would “spring as a son of a virgin from the apparently

dried up root” of the house of David. The Hebrew for Immanuel,²⁴ or rather *Immanu-el*, is אֱמַנּוּ אֵל, where *El*, אֵל means *God* and *עִמָּנוּ*, *with us*.

15 Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and to choose the good.

Butter and honey shall he eat. Or perhaps, curd²⁵ and honey. Some have suggested that this is food intended for royalty while others for the common people. I suspect that curd and especially wild honey were the foods for those who traveled in the desert wilderness.²⁶ And certainly, Jesus was involved in much such travel—as he went to Egypt and returned to the Holy Land upon the death of Herod. They traveled past Judea onto Nazareth in Galilee. His family traveled yearly from Nazareth to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover (Luke 2: 41). This included the better known visit when He was twelve, and was found at the Temple expounding Scriptures with the learned. Once the Savior entered His full ministry we know he constantly traveled in the wilderness: “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head” (Matthew 8:20b). ¶ *That he may know to refuse the evil, and to choose the good.* That is, that Messiah would be born of a mortal mother and immortal Father. In other words, Messiah would be afforded the same opportunity given to every person who has come upon this earth: that of taking upon himself a mortal tabernacle with all its attendant frailties. Another characteristic of mortality is that those who reach the age of accountability must continually make choices between right and wrong; between good and evil. In the Scriptures we read that the Savior “was

²⁴ Barnes notes: “Nothing was more common among the Jews than to incorporate the name, or a part of the name, of the Deity with the names which they gave to their children. Thus, *Isaiah* denotes the salvation of JEHOVAH; *Jeremiah*, the exaltation or grandeur of JEHOVAH, each compounded of two words, in which the name JEHOVAH constitutes a part. Thus, also in *Elijah*, the two names of God are combined, and it means literally, God the JEHOVAH. Thus also, *Eliab*, God my father; *Elidada*, knowledge of God; *Eliakim*, the resurrection of God; *Elisha*, salvation of God.”

²⁵ Barnes writes, “The word rendered butter (חֲמָצֵת), denotes not butter, but thick and curdled milk. This was the common mode or using milk as an article of food in the East, and is still. In no passage of the Old Testament does butter seem to be meant by the word.”

²⁶ “So the LORD alone did lead him, and *there was* no strange god with him. He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock; Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape” (Deuteronomy 32:12–15).

in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15b). So “that he may know to refuse the evil, and to choose the good,” then, is an allusion to the great condescension of God,²⁷ that Yahweh indeed took upon himself a mortal tabernacle.

16 For before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.

For before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good. It seems that Isaiah has now stopped speaking of the Christ child and is now giving Ahaz yet another sign. Such a sign was to take place very soon, one that Ahaz would come to recognize and remember. It would be in relation to Isaiah’s own son. There are several definitions that one might use to say that a child is of an age to understand the difference between good and evil. A child (1) begins to have a measure of understanding between 3 and 8 years old; (2) at 8 enters the age of spiritual accountability; and (3) at 12 years old, the age of accountability or coming of age for Jewish children. ¶ *The land that thou abhorrest* (אֶרֶץ) shall be forsaken (אֶזְזַב) of both her kings. Gill explains: “... but the land of Israel [i.e., Ephraim] and Syria, called one land, because of the confederacy between the kings of them, Rezin and Remaliah’s son, which Ahaz and his nobles abhorred, because of their joining together against them; and so it was, that in a very little time both these kings were cut off; Pekah the son of Remaliah was slain by Hoshea the son of Elah, who reigned in his stead (2 Kings 15:30), and Rezin was slain by the king of Assyria (2 Kings 16:9). So also Barnes: “The land concerning which thou art so much ‘alarmed or distressed,’ that is, the united land of Syria and Ephraim. It is mentioned here as ‘the land,’ or as one land, because they were united then in a firm alliance, so as to constitute, in fact, or for the purposes of invasion and conquest, one people or nation. The phrase, ‘which thou abhorrest,’ means properly, which thou loathest, the primary idea of the word - קִוִּי – being to feel a nausea, or to vomit. It then means to fear, or to feel alarm; and this, probably, is the meaning here. Abaz, however, evidently looked upon the nations of Syria and Samaria with disgust, as well as with alarm.”

vv. 17–25. Judah would not be left unscathed but would suffer greatly. Such punishment would come from Assyria and from Egypt. The desolation would be as total as a person being shaved of all his body hair. The

few people who would be left in the land would take upon them a nomadic rather than agricultural life.

17 ¶ The LORD shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah; [even] the king of Assyria.

The LORD shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house. The punishment that would now come upon Ahaz, the people of Judah, and the monarchy, would be devastating. ¶ *Days that have not come from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah.* The Lord would bring such punishment upon Judah as she had not seen since the civil war had divided the nation in two. ¶ *The king of Assyria.* While Judah would eventually fall to Babylon, she was about to be scourged by Assyria. Delitzsch well says: “The very king to whom Ahaz had appealed in terror, would bring Judah to the brink of destruction.” Jerusalem would survive by a thread through a miraculous intervention.

18 And it shall come to pass in that day [that] the LORD shall hiss for the fly that [is] in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that [is] in the land of Assyria.

And it shall come to pass in that day that the LORD shall hiss. Just as we saw in ISAIAH 5:26, the word hiss (יִשְׁרַק) means to summon. ¶ *For the fly that is in the uttermost part of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria.* The fly and the bee seem to be nicknames for Egypt and Assyria, respectively.²⁸ These two nations are specified because Judah was predisposed to lean upon them—rather than on the Lord—for help. Yet each of these powers would bring much mischief upon Judah. During Isaiah’s lifetime it would be the Assyrian attacks that would be the more salient than those of Egypt. Isaiah was looking at future times, even to the time of Jeremiah, when Pharaoh

²⁸ Delitzsch explains: “The Egyptian nation, with its vast and unparalleled numbers, is compared to the swarming fly; and the Assyrian nation, with its love for war and conquest, to the stinging bee which is so hard to keep off (Deuteronomy 1:44, Psalms 118:12). The emblems also correspond to the nature of the two countries ... Egypt abounds in gnats, etc., more especially in flies (*muscaria*), including a species of small fly (*nemath*), which is a great plague to men throughout all the country of the Nile (see Hartmann, *Natur-geschichtlich-medizinische Skizze der Nilländer*, 1865, pp. 204-5) ... and the bee to the more mountainous and woody Assyria, where the keeping of bees is still one of the principal branches of trade.”

²⁷ 1 Nephi 11:1, 14-20, 26-33.

Nechoh would put the king of Judah in bands and place upon the throne a king of his liking (2 Kings 23:29–37).

19 And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all bushes. ✓

✓ or, commendable trees

And they shall come, and shall rest all of them. They, that is, the enemies of Judah, shall settle (נָחָה) themselves in her land. ¶ *In the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all bushes.* They shall be a complete nuisance, leaving no spot where they shall not conquer. The allusion of the fly and the bee is continued in the form of pestilence. Thorns were abundant in the Holy Land. Kay explains: “*the thorns* (or ‘prickly lotus;’ only here and in ISAIAH 55:13), which were so abundant; and upon *the bushes*, or, ‘spiny thickets’ (here only). It is noticed that ‘there are at least eighteen Hebrew words used to express different kinds of prickly shrubs or weeds’ in the Bible; and that Palestine, from ‘the combined heat and dryness of its climate’ and the rockiness of its surface, has a peculiar ‘tendency to form thorns even in groups where we would least expect them’ (Dr. Tristram, ‘N.H.B.’ p. 423.) ISAIAH 55:13,²⁹ The only other place where the ‘prickly lotus’ is mentioned, helps suggest the right view of the figurative language here made use of: 32:13.”³⁰ These happenings are a *type* of the Second Coming when the wicked: “shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth” (ISAIAH 2:19b).

20 In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, [~~namely~~], by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet; and it shall also consume the beard.

In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired. Or, in that day יוֹם יְהוָה will the Lord (ASV). The Lord does not need to personally castigate His people, but rather, does it through a “hired razor.” That is, a foreign force that would humble Judah. Kay (following Duguet) and Nägelsbach suggest that *it was Ahaz who*

hired the razor himself. The word *razor* is very descriptive of the attacking armies, who would shave their captives, as a sign of dominion over them. Being shaved was a sign of defeat and ignominy, and often a sign of slavery over the conquered people: “Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and shaved off the one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, even to their buttocks, and sent them away” (2 Samuel 10:4). Or of coming humiliation, to be acted out by Ezekiel before the fact: “And thou, son of man, take thee a sharp knife, take thee a barber's razor, and cause it to pass upon thine head and upon thy beard” (Ezekiel 5:1a). Ludlow offers additional reasons for the shaving of slaves: hygiene and insurance against escape. An escaped slave would not blend with the people and could thus easily be recaptured. The figure of the razor is also one that points to the ceremonial purification of the leper (Kay, Henry, Nägelsbach), for Judah was now full of disease from the top of the head down to the feet: “And he that is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, that he may be clean: and after that he shall come into the camp, and shall tarry abroad out of his tent seven days. But it shall be on the seventh day, that he shall shave all his hair off his head and his beard and his eyebrows, even all his hair he shall shave off: and he shall wash his clothes, also he shall wash his flesh in water, and he shall be clean” (Leviticus 14:8–9). It could well be said that the process of scattering and gathering of Israel is one of cleansing, also. ¶ *By them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria.* The *river* (נָהָר) is thought to be the Euphrates. It is much like in modern day when we say, *the city*. If you live close to New York City, or San Francisco, the expression *the city* stands for those places. The Lord would bring upon Judah the king of Assyria, from the other side of the Euphrates. ¶ *The head, and the hair of the feet; and it shall also consume the beard.* This hired razor or foreign army would shave the hair of the head as well as the beard. The hair of the *feet* may be a euphemistic expression for *pubic hair* (e.g., see Gill, and Tanakh footnote). Lowth rather suggests: “To shave with the hired razor the head, the feet, and the beard, is an expression highly parabolical; to denote the utter devastation of the country from one end to the other, and the plundering of the people, from the highest to the lowest. *** The hairs of the head are those of the highest order in the state; those of the feet, or the lower parts, are the common people; the beard is the king, the high priest, the very supreme in dignity and majesty.”

21 And it shall come to pass in that day, [that] a man shall nourish a young cow and two sheep;

²⁹ “Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.” (ISAIAH 55:13)

³⁰ “Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briars; yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city.” (ISAIAH 32:13)

Commentators seems to be agreed that this is an allusion to the poverty to which those who would be left behind in the Holy Land would be subjected to. To nourish, or “keep alive” (Green) a *young cow* or *heifer* עֵזְרָה, is probably to keep her for milking purposes.

22 And it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk [that] they shall give he shall eat butter; for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the land.

✓ the midst of

And it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk they shall give he shall eat butter. The general view among commentators is that there will be such a reduced number of animals, that there will be plenty of feed for them to produce sufficient milk; and furthermore, that there will be so few people left in the land, that those who are left will have plenty of milk or milk products to drink and eat. ¶ *For butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the land.* This seems to be an allusion to the type of food that would be consumed, the food of shepherds and caravans, not that of stationary and cultivated agriculture. The foodstuff of kings was also the foodstuff of those surviving of the wilderness. Furthermore, if the swarms of bees were also literal, beside the invading nation of Assyria, then there would be plenty of honey, also.

23 And it shall come to pass in that day, [that] every place shall be, where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings, it which shall [even] be for briers and thorns.

Where grapevines used to grow, they shall be replaced by briers and thorns. Barnes suggests: “The word rendered ‘silverlings’ here—כֶּסֶף—denotes, properly, *silver*, of any amount. But it was also used to denote the *silver coin* which was in use among the Jews, the *shekel*. Perhaps this was the only silver coin which, in early times, they possessed, and hence the word *shekel* is omitted, and so many pieces of *silver* are mentioned.” As in the Song of Solomon, what seems to be meant in this verse, is that the proceeds from a single harvest would yield this sum, rather than the sale of the whole vineyard: “Solomon had a vineyard at Baalhamon; he let out the vineyard unto keepers; every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand pieces of silver” (Song of Solomon 8:11). The contrast is between a very productive vineyard of great worth being compared to a

worthless one that has now been overcome by briers and thorns.

24 With arrows and with bows shall [men] come thither, because all the land shall become briers and thorns.

The land would become a wild place, suitable for hunting wild animals. Nägelsbach, leaning on Gesenius, feels that people went in with bows not only to hunt animals but for self-protection. Such devastation, when contrasted with the former days of grapevines, olive and fig trees is painful. Like her sister Ephraim to the north, Judah’s fruitful treasures would be removed from her: “And I will destroy her vines and her fig trees, whereof she hath said, These are my rewards that my lovers have given me: and I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them” (Hosea 2:12).

25 And [the] all hills that shall be digged with the mattock, there shall not come thither the fear of briers and thorns; but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and for the treading of lesser cattle.

And all hills that shall be digged with the mattock. Many moderns use the word *hoe* instead of *mattock*. A mattock is an implement that has a pick on one side and an ax or adz (sharp cutting tool set at 90 degree angle to the handle) on the other (Webster). The adz side is a heavy duty hoe. I have seen the mattock used as a weeding instrument in a horse pasture at our farm in Chile. This heavy instrument can get at the roots of difficult weeds, where the work of a hoe would be more cosmetic, and only remove the tops of weeds while leaving the roots intact. In ancient Israel, such a tool would be particularly valuable in hilly terrain, where it would be difficult to cultivate with oxen or horses. ¶ *There shall not come thither the fear of briers and thorns.* Or perhaps rather, as the AB, “you will not go there for fear of briers and thorns.” ¶ *But it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and the treading of lesser cattle.* This land, which at one time was highly cultivated and contained precious grapevines would now serve for pasturage for cattle, sheep and goats. The term used in the KJV translation is *oxen*, from the Hebrew שֹׁר. The oxen, a castrated male, is primarily used as a beast of agricultural husbandry. The Hebrew is less specific, and may include “single head of cattle, without emphasis on sex” (BDB); or “without distinction of age or sex” (Gesenius). A more generic translation that includes bullocks, oxen, and cows makes sense, given that they would have plentiful milk

from cows. Perhaps it compares to the use of the word horse today. Depending on the context, it could mean any equine from a stallion to a mare, colt or filly, or even a gelding (a castrated male). The term translated as *lesser cattle* in the KJV is שִׁירָה. It is based on the root שִׁיר, and can refer to *sheep* or *goats* (Gesenius). See

also Jastrow's *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*.

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Isaiah 8

After leaving the subject of the birth of the Savior for a moment—Isaiah now speaks of the punishment that would befall Ephraim and Syria. In ISAIAH 9 the prophet returns to the Messianic prediction with great force.

VV. 1–4. The Lord commands Isaiah to write upon a large tablet the words, **מָהֵר שָׁלַל חָשׁ בָּז**, *Maher-shalal-hash-baz*, representing the impending attack of Assyria upon the Northern Kingdom and her partner in crime, Syria. Through the law of witnesses, Isaiah is commanded to make this event perfectly clear in the minds of the people. The prophet's wife gives Isaiah a new son, who is to be named: **מָהֵר שָׁלַל חָשׁ בָּז**.

Before Isaiah's son could cry **אָבִי** (*my daddy*) or **אִמִּי** (*mi mommy*) Assyria would be upon Ephraim and Syria.

1 ¶ MOREOVER the word of the LORD said unto me: Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man's pen, concerning Maher-shalal-hash-baz. ✓

✓ In making speed to the spoil he hasteneth they prey, or, Make speed &c.

MOREOVER the word of the LORD said unto me. The Prophet Joseph Smith clarified the passage to include the “word of the Lord,” **דְּבַר יְהוָה**. This is similar to what we find in Jeremiah 1:4 and 1:13. There are many ways individuals can receive the word of the Lord, including seeing an apparition, hearing an audible voice, or being moved by the still small voice of the Spirit. ¶ *Take thee a great roll.* Gesenius explains that a **גְּזֵיזִין**, or tablet, was normally “made of wood, stone, or metal, on which anything is inscribed.” HALOT adds leather or papyrus to this list. Metal tablets or plates are of special interest to us as LDS, as the Book of Mormon was inscribed on thin metal plates.¹ The etymology of the word tablet (**גְּזֵיזִין**) is interesting, as it is associated by Hebrew scholars to Amos 3:7, the process of revealing hidden things to the Lord's servants, the prophets (TWOT), or to uncover, make clear or clarify (HALOT). This is to be no ordinary roll, but rather, a large tablet, **גְּזֵיזִין גָּדוֹל**. ¶ And write in it. Either write or engrave upon it, as in Jeremiah 31:33b, “I will put

my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and *will be their God*, and they *shall be my people*” (emphasis added). Barnes explains: “On these tablets, or smooth plates, writing was performed by cutting the letters with an iron *stylus*, or small chisel. The process was slow, but the writing was permanent.” ¶ *With a man's pen*, **בְּחֶרֶט אָנוּשׁ**. Rather than pen, with an engraving tool. A similar expression, “after a cubit of a man” **בְּאַמַּת־אִישׁ**, is found in Deuteronomy 3:11b.

Except that in Deuteronomy for ‘man’ we have **אִישׁ** instead of **אָנוּשׁ**. A number of commentators suggest that there is an intended connection here, especially since the Syriac (ܫ) in Deuteronomy has “... according to the measure of the cubit of giants.” The idea is that the engraving would be quite large, as if written by a giant. ¶ *Concerning Maher-shalal-hash-baz.* It is quite possible that Isaiah was simply commanded to fill the large tablet only with the words: **מָהֵר שָׁלַל חָשׁ בָּז**, (or, *To speed to the spoil, he hasteneth the prey*, LDS HEB). That is, the Lord would fall upon the enemies of Judah. These characters would have had to be quite large to fill the large tablet. A sort of banner, if you will. Perhaps it was placed in such a way that passersby may have been able to gaze upon it (Calvin). Much like the *Title of Liberty* in the Book of Mormon. ¶ Isaiah had been commended to *write down* this prophecy. Keeping a journal of our spiritual experiences is a way to show gratitude to the Lord for the manifestation of His holy hand in our lives.

2 And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah.

And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record. Knowing of the incredulity of man, the Lord takes pains to command Isaiah that he seek for witnesses who can later testify of the truth of this prophecy regarding the Assyrian invasion of Damascus and Samaria. This is a frequent theme in Isaiah, that the Lord shows His mighty hand: “Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses” (ISAIAH 44:8a). The key point here

¹ On the topic of ancient metal plates or tablets, used to inscribe writings, see Chapter 10, “Ancient Records on Metal Plates” in Franklin S. Harris, Jr., *The Book of Mormon: Message and Evidences*, 2nd. ed, Chapter 10, pp.98–108.

is the *lest thou shouldst say* principle (that is, the giving of credit to anyone or anything instead of God): “I have even from the beginning declared *it* to thee; before it came to pass I shewed *it* thee: lest thou shouldst say...” (ISAIAH 48:5a). The Lord knew that *evil and designing men* would, both in that day and in the latter days, teach that prophets were wise men who could discern the signs of their own times—but could not predict the future through divine revelation. To them, “prophecy is nothing more than an expression of men’s fears and longings,” and furthermore, “The fundamental principle of the rationalistic school is that *there cannot be distinct foresight of the distant future.*”² In order to counteract the wresting of the scriptures, the Lord has given us the law of witnesses, such that “In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established” (2 Corinthians 13:1b). ¶ *Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah*. While it is possible that Uriah was the same individual in 2 Kings 16, I go along with Nägelsbach in suggesting the evidence is simply too flimsy to make such an assertion—contrary to the many exegetes who so have.

3 And I went[✓] unto the prophetess; and she conceived and bare a son. Then said the LORD to me: Call his name, Maher-shalal-hash-baz.

✓ approached

And I went unto the prophetess; and she conceived and bare a son. The prophetess³ (הַנְּבִיאָה) here stands for the wife of the prophet (הַנְּבִיא) Isaiah. She conceived a baby boy. ¶ *Then said the LORD to me: Call his name, Maher-shalal-hash-baz.* This is the name inscribed in the scroll mentioned in ISAIAH8:1, מְהֵרָה שְׁלַל חֵשׁ בָּז, i.e., *To speed to the spoil, he hasteneth the prey* (LDS

² Elliott, Charles. *Old Testament Prophecy: Its nature, organic connection with Old Testament history, messianic prophecy, and New Testament fulfilment*. New York, A. C. Armstrong and Son. 1889, p.58.

³ Joseph Smith, when confronted as to whether he was a prophet quoted from Revelation 19:10b. In the TPJS (emphasis added) we have: “If any person should ask me if I were a prophet, I should not deny it, as that would give me the lie; for, according to John, *the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*; therefore, if I profess to be a witness or teacher, and have not the spirit of prophecy, which is the testimony of Jesus, I must be a false witness; but if I be a *true teacher and witness, I must possess the spirit of prophecy, and that constitutes a prophet*; and any man who says he is a *teacher or a preacher of righteousness*, and denies *the spirit of prophecy*, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; and by this key false teachers and impostors may be detected” (30 December 1842). Any woman who is a *preacher of righteousness*, then, and is filled by the Holy Ghost with the testimony of Christ, may likewise be called a *prophetess* (also see *prophet*, LDS Bible Dictionary).

HEB). Once again, the Lord would permit great damage to come upon the enemy of His people.

4 For before behold, the child shall not have knowledge to cry, My father, and my mother, before the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria.[✓]

✓ or, he that is before the king of Assyria shall take away the riches, &c.

For behold, the child shall not have knowledge to cry, My father, and my mother. The child mentioned here is Isaiah’s newly born son. Among the first words that infants speak are those equivalent to father and mother in their native languages. Or, as Rawlinson points out, the Hebrew equivalent is closer to *papi* or *mami*. The Hebrew for *my father* is אָבִי (avi), and for *my mother* אִמִּי (im-mi).⁴ Before מְהֵרָה שְׁלַל חֵשׁ בָּז could say either אָבִי or אִמִּי, the prophecies mentioned next would come to pass. Depending on how precocious children are, the time may vary for such verbalization. The indication, at any rate, is that the time was imminent. Lowth puts a time period as follows: “The prophecy was accordingly accomplished within three years; when Tiglath Pileser, king of Assyria, went up against Damascus, and took it, and carried the people of it captive to Kir, and slew Retzin [KJV renders it Rezin but it is as Lowth has it, רִצְיִן—GB]; and also took the Reubenites and the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, and carried them captive to Assyria, 2 Kings 15:29; 16:9; 1 Chronicles 5:26.” Delitzsch feels the time between the child’s birth and the coming invasion was closer to a year.⁵ Delitzsch also informs us that there was nothing consolatory in the nature of the prophecy, as Assyria would also come upon Judah. ¶ *Before the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be*

⁴ Interestingly, my first granddaughter, Eliza Marie Billikopf, calls my wife אִמִּי (im-mah).

⁵ “It is true that Tiglath-pileser only conquered Damascus, and not Samaria; but he took from Pekah, the king of Samaria, the land beyond the Jordan, and a portion of the land on this side. The trophies, which he took thence to Assyria, were no less the spoil of Samaria than if he had conquered Samaria itself (which Shalmanassar did twenty years afterwards). The birth of Maher-shalal took place about three-quarters of a year later than the preparation of the table ...; and the time appointed, from the birth of the boy till the chastisement of the allied kingdoms, was about a year. Now, the Syro-Ephraimitish war did not commence later than the first year of the reign of Ahaz, i.e. the year 743, and the chastisement by Tiglath-pileser occurred in the lifetime of the allies, whereas Pekah was assassinated in the year 739, the interval between the commencement of the war and the chastisement of the allies cannot have been more than three years; so that the preparation of the table must not be assigned to a much later period than the interview with Ahaz” (Delitzsch).

taken away. Damascus was the capital of Syria, and Samaria, the capital of Ephraim. The capitals were the center of the riches of many nations, and also the capitals often stand for the nations themselves. ¶ *Before the king of Assyria.* The word *before* לְפָנַי, literally means *before the face*. They were brought into the presence of the King of Asshur (מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר). Calvin says: “alluding perhaps to an ancient custom of carrying the spoils of the enemy *before* the chariot of those who received a public triumph. In like manner shall the spoils of Samaria and Damascus be carried *before the king of Assyria*.”⁶

VV. 5–8. The people of Israel and Judah had rejected the gentle waters of Shiloah, which represented the Temple and the Savior. Now the torrential waters of the Euphrates, or Assyria, would come upon them. In time, Assyria would not only attack the Syro-Ephramite coalition, but also Judah, and come to surround Jerusalem. Although the *daughter of Zion* would be spared, the surrounding cities that formed Judah would not. In these verses the Lord directs His comments to both houses of Israel.

5 The LORD spake also unto me again, saying:

The Lord continues speaking to the Prophet. This may mean a brief interruption, or a longer one. Or a completely new revelation. In my own life I have noticed a pattern wherein the Spirit may reveal something to me and while I am still pondering the wonder of it all, a second wave descends upon me with additional information.

6 Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son;

Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly. The Targum (ܬܪܓܡ) clearly directs itself to those of Ephraim who had broken away from Judah: “Forasmuch as this people refuseth the kingdom of the house of David, which guides them in quietness, like the waters of Shiloah, which flow softly (literally, *in quietness*), and delight themselves in Rezin and Remaliah's son. Rather than the kind or gentle rule of the Davidic kings, the gentle waters instead represent the House of the Lord and the Lord Himself. Faussett

⁶ The mutilated arms of those who tried to scatter the flocks of King Lamoni were likewise brought before him after being defeated by Ammon (Alma 17:26–39).

notes the displeasure in “*this people*” (הָעָם הַזֶּה)

rather than “*my people*” (עַמִּי). From John 9:7 we come to understand the meaning of Shiloah: “And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent⁷). He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.” In the New Testament, the Lord invites us again to partake of the living water, “If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water ... But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:10b, 14). Slow moving water will penetrate deeply into the soil; fast currents cause soil erosion and much damage. There is much irony in all this: a tree that is overwatered actually dies of *thirst*. The roots rot and are not capable of taking in water. Such were the waters represented by the Assyrian invasion. The soft running waters of Shiloah stand as a type of Messiah. Cheyne has, “The brook of Shiloah, therefore, which flowed past Zion and Moriah, became a type of the Temple and its almighty but gracious Lord.” Skinner, similarly observes, “The point of the metaphor is that the waters ... are a type ... of the silent unobtrusive presence and majesty of Jehovah, who ‘dwells in mount Zion’ (v. 18; cf. Psalm 46:4).”

Certainly, the people of Ephraim had rejected the dedicated House of the Lord found in Jerusalem. King Jeroboam, of Ephraim, greatly feared the righteous influence that the Temple could have on his Northern Tribes: “If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem,” Jeroboam reasoned, “then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord” (1 Kings 12:27a). So King Jeroboam made idols: “Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold” (1 Kings 12:28a), an altar, and called false priests. This he did in Bethel and Dan (1 Kings 12). All of this is another way of saying that Israel (as well as Judah) had refused *her stay and her staff*, even the Lord, in exchange for the vanity of the strength of man. ¶ *And rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son.* This clause is an accusation against Ephraim and her two golden calves which stand in contrast to the House of the Lord. At the time of Isaiah, Ephraim was rejoicing or leaning on the confederacy between King Pekah of Ephraim (referring to Pekah as “Remaliah's son” was the height of insult, see ISAIAH 7:4) and Rezin of Syria.

7 Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, [even] the king of

⁷ שְׁלַחְנִי. Gesenius has “to send” for שְׁלַח

Assyria and all his glory; and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks.

Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many. Not simply a river, but *the river* נַחֲלֵי, meaning the Euphrates, here symbolic of the Assyrian power. Henderson explains: “This noble river, so frequently referred to in Scripture, has its source in the mountains of Armenia, and running in a south and south-easterly direction, and, uniting with the Tigris below Babylon, flows into the Persian Gulf. As far as Bir it is impetuous in its course; after this it flows more or less gently through the plains of Mesopotamia; but like the Nile, has its annual inundations, in consequence of the melting of the snow in Armenia, during which it often covers great part of the adjacent country. To prevent, as much as possible, the injury committed by these inundations, and to divert the water so as profitably to irrigate the fields, numerous canals were dug, and embankments were raised, some of which were of considerable strength. These canals the prophet calls אֶפְקִים,⁸ which is used both of pipes or tubes, Job 40:18, and of the beds or channels of streams, Ezekiel 32:6, and by metonymy of brooks, and the valleys through which they flow, Psalms 42:2; Job 6:15.—נֶגֶד,⁹ a bank or embankment; Chaldee נִגְדָא, a wall... Nothing could more fitly represent the incursion of a large and powerful army, than the inundation of a river, which breaks through every barrier that is thrown in its way, and sweeps all before it.” And when the Lord is behind such a ‘river,’ well then: “As well might man stretch forth his puny arm to stop the Missouri river in its decreed course, or to turn it up stream” (D&C 121:33b). In the ancient writings of Cyrus (557–529 BC, pp. 206–208, in Pritchard),¹⁰ we see the same analogy of armies to that of a river, “His widespread troops—their number, like that of the water of a river, could not be established—strolled along, their weapons packed away.” ¶ *Even the king of Assyria and all his glory; and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks.* The influence of the king of Assyria is represented as overflowing beyond the territory his own nation. Barnes points out, “Eastern kings marched in the midst of vast splendour. They moved with all the magnificence of the court, and were attended usually with their princes and

nobles; with a splendid retinue; and with all the insignia of royalty.” The expression to *come up over all his channels* means the Euphrates would—like the Nile and so many rivers in ancient times before flood control measures were taken—go over its banks and spread great distances to each side.

8 And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach [even] to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.

✓ fulness of the breadth of thy land shall be the stretchings out of his wings

And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over. The invading river of the Assyrian army would reach all the way to Judah. “And he shall pass through the land of the house of Judah as an overflowing torrent” (Targum, ת). ¶ *He shall reach even to the neck.* The ת continues, “unto Jerusalem shall he come.” Indeed, “The prophet compares Jerusalem here to the head of the human body. As when the waters reach to the neck of a man, he is very near drowning, so here, the prophet intimates that the whole land would be deluged, and that it would be nearly utterly destroyed” (Rabbi D. Kimhi in Barnes). ¶ *And the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land.* Such “stretching out” of the “wings” seems to be an allusion to the great breadth and width of the attack by Assyria upon Judah—as the great width that waters spread to the sides of overflowing rivers. Kay observes that the gods of the Assyrians are represented as beasts with a “mystical head with outstretched wings.” Henderson has, “The prophet here drops the figure of an overflowing river, and employs that of the extended wings of a bird, which, in various languages, are applied to the flanks or side-bodies of an army, because of their stretching out from the centre, and covering the ground which they occupy.” ¶ *O Immanuel.* During the time of King Hezekiah, the armies of Assyria would surround Jerusalem with a tight hold upon her. If it were not for the Lord, *Immanuel* or *God with us*, even Jerusalem would have been taken (ISAIAH 37:36).

Giving utterance to the holy name אֱלֹהֵינוּ was a prayer of thanksgiving. If it were not for the Lord who suffered for us in Gethsemane and was lifted up on the cross with outstretched arms for our sake, we too would perish without any hope of redemption.

⁸ In the Masoretic text (א), his channels אֶפְקֵי.

⁹ In the Masoretic text (א), his banks נֶגְדֵי.

¹⁰ Pritchard, James B. (editor), *The Ancient Near East, Volume 1: Anthology of Texts and Pictures*. Princeton University Press, 6th Paperback printing, 1973, pp. 188–210.

vv. 9–15. The words “far countries” helps us understand how the fury of the Lord would now fall upon the nations that presently are attacking Judah. No unhallowed hand can come upon Zion. Christ shall be a

stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence unto those who reject Him, but a sanctuary to those who love Him.

9 ¶ Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear all ye of far countries; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces.

✓ or, yet

Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces. To associate means to come together to build, to trade, to defend, or to attack. The Hebrew here is the plural, *ye peoples* עַמִּים. These distant nations could associate and make mutual pacts, but such would be of no avail unless the hand of the Lord would allow it. At the moment it was Syria and Ephraim who had associated themselves against Judah, but one could also include Assyria and Babylon to the list of such nations. At the end, it matters little who it is that fights against Zion, for they shall not prosper. ¶ *And give ear all ye of far countries; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces.* The LXX (6) has, “Know, ye Gentiles, and be conquered; hearken ye, even to the extremity of the earth: be conquered, after ye strengthened yourselves; for even if ye should again strengthen yourselves, ye shall again be conquered.” The idea seems to be that no amount of strengthening for war on the part of Syria and Ephraim would yield their desired results, but rather, they themselves would be conquered. *Girding yourselves* in the Biblia Hebraica gives the same idea as *strengthening yourselves* in the LXX (6). The ancient peoples would wear long robes that would get in the way of fast or quick movement, unless they brought it up to the loin area and there tied or secured in a fashion that would leave the legs free to move. This is where the expression, “gird up your loins” comes from.

10 Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand; for God [is] with us.

Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought. In the words of the Berkeley edition, “Devise a plan and it shall be frustrated.” These words are directed to Syria and Ephraim, although they could be directed to anyone who tries to frustrate the plans of the Lord. “What power shall stay the heavens?” (D&C 121:33b). ¶ *Speak the word, and it shall not stand; for God is with us.* Henry paints the picture of a people who seem to be

pumping themselves to go out to war (see the principle of *group think* in psychology): “You prepare for action; you address yourselves to it with resolution; you gird on your swords; you gird up your loins. You animate and encourage yourselves and one another with all the considerations you can think of” But all of this is to no account, for with us is God, *Immanuel*. ¶ Those who act in righteousness need not be concerned when others take counsel against them, for the Lord is on their side. We find similar sentiments elsewhere in the scriptures: “Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not” (Numbers 14:9); “And, behold, God himself is with us for our captain, and his priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you. O children of Israel, fight ye not against the LORD God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper” (2 Chronicles 13:12); “The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah” (Psalm 46:7 and 46:11). And, “If God be for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31b). “Elder Henry D. Taylor once referred to the missionary slogan which the late Elder B. H. Roberts adopted when he served as mission president. The slogan was “Immanuel,” which of course means “God be with us.” President Roberts also used this slogan in his discourses, in his correspondence, in autographing books and photos, and on numerous other occasions, according to Elder Taylor’s report (see CR, Oct. 1975, p. 93)” (Nyman).

11 For the LORD spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying:

✓ in strength of hand

For the LORD spake thus to me with a strong hand. The Spirit of the Lord most often comes to us in a still small voice. But there are times when the Spirit is so strong, that it can be overpowering. It seems that this occasion was one of those times. ¶ Clarke suggests that “*with a strong hand*” the “influence of the prophetic Spirit” is felt. Ezekiel wrote, “And the hand of the LORD was there upon me; and he said unto me, Arise, go forth into the plain, and I will there talk with thee” (Ezekiel 3:22). There are times when the Spirit of the Lord, as we mentioned, is strongly felt. ¶ *And instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying:* The Lord warned Isaiah not to also fall victim to the panic and fear of those around him. I am saddened when those who have believed in the testimony of the Elders have not joined the Church out of fear—whether in relation to family pressure, tithing, or keeping the Sabbath day holy. We make more money on Sunday, they explain,

than in the rest of the week.¹¹ “For, behold, you should not have feared man more than God. Although men set at naught the counsels of God, and despise his words—Yet you should have been faithful; and he would have extended his arm and supported you against all the fiery darts of the adversary; and he would have been with you in time of trouble” (D&C 3:7–8). ¶ Regarding the idea of *not walking the way of this people*, I feel that I was likewise warned. During one of my trips to Chile, during my career with the University of California, I had a dream that for a long time I hesitated to write down.¹² This dream took place at a time when there was relatively speaking no dissention against the Brethren and teachings of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints among its members. I dreamt that some members of the Church were running towards false doctrine with much energy and there were many who fell in the pits thereof. They sank to their spiritual death. I remember moving along in the same direction as these people were moving and trying to engage their attention and asking, “What have the Brethren said about this? What has the Prophet said about this?” It turned out that the Prophet and the Brethren had *not* spoken in favor of this thing. At that time I wrote, “Whatever this dream may have meant or mean, it has come to my attention that this thing should be carved in our hearts, in our bones, in our every muscle and nerve, ‘Follow the living Prophet!’” Elder M. Russell Ballard wrote: “I have discovered in my ministry that those who have become lost [and] confused are typically those who

¹¹ In 1990, Linda & I started looking at new homes, although we loved our own, it was too small for our growing family. There was a recession and homes were not selling. When we met with our realtor we told him we did not want the house to be shown on the Sabbath Day. He countered explained that Sunday and Saturday were the big days to sell homes and that if we did not show the house on Sunday, that we may be greatly reducing our chances. But we left it in the hands of the Lord. Some months later we received a call from our agent who was trying to sell the house for us. He told us that someone who had already seen the house but lived out of town wanted to come and look at it one more time. On Sunday. While I stood firm on not showing the house on Sunday, I feel that not all in my household had gained a testimony of Sabbath day observance. There was some murmuring, although I was at the end sustained. We found out a few days later that the potential buyer bought a different home and paid full price. As a result, we lost the opportunity to buy the home Linda had so much wanted. My faith in God’s hand in the matter did not waver. The story may have ended there, but the postscript is interesting. We should not plan to see the consequences of all of our actions rewarded in this lifetime, but sometimes they simply are. Although other homes were not selling, eventually our home did, and although it was not as large as the first house it was beautiful and we got a substantial price break. As it turned out, had we bought the larger home, we would have lost it or become strapped economically. For over fifteen years, the economic situation faced by the University of California was such that we got few raises. That year we actually got a temporary reduction in pay, instead. We simply must not be moved to walk in the fear of the people, but rather, we need to always walk in the light of the Lord.

¹² I eventually did write it down in my journal on 10 January 2003.

have most often ... forgotten that when the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve speak with a united voice, it is the voice of the Lord for that time ... As I have known people who have not stayed in the boat and have not held on with both hands during times of trials and troubles or who have not stayed in the boat during times of relative calm, I have observed that many of them have lost their focus on the central truths of the gospel—the reasons why they joined the Church in the first place; the reasons they remained fully committed and active in living gospel standards and blessing others through dedicated, consecrated service; and the ways in which the Church has been in their lives ‘a place of spiritual nourishment and growth.’ ... Sometimes faithful Latter-day Saints and sincere investigators begin to focus on the ‘appendages’ instead of on the fundamental principles. That is, Satan tempts us to become distracted from the simple and clear message of the restored gospel. Those so distracted often give up partaking of the sacrament because they have become focused, even preoccupied, with less important practices or teachings. Others may focus on the questions and doubts they experience. Of course, having questions and experiencing doubts are not incongruent with dedicated discipleship. Recently, the Council of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles stated: ‘We understand that from time to time Church members will have questions about Church doctrine, history, or practice. Members are always free to ask such questions and earnestly seek greater understanding.’ ... And if any one of you have fallen out of the boat, we will seek you, find you, minister to you, and pull you safely back onto the Old Ship Zion, where God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ are at the helm and will guide us right.”

12 Say ye not, A confederacy, to all [them to] whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid.

Say ye not, A confederacy, to all to whom this people shall say, A confederacy. The ASV uses the word *conspiracy* and the Targum (ܥܡܝܢܐ), *rebellion* (ܡܪܝܕܐ). The prophet warns the people against running out in a panic, listening to those who feared the Syro-Ephraimite forces. Nor, should Judah join a confederacy with Assyria. Our confederacy ought to be with the Lord. ¶ *Neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid.* This is an invitation to leave the fear of this world to those of this world. Instead, we are to walk with our confidence squarely on the Lord, on the Holy One of Israel. We do this by staying close to the Spirit, by following the

Prophet, Apostles, and other General and local authorities.

13 Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself, and [let] him [be] your fear, and [let] him [be] your dread.

Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself. The Targum (T) has, “The Lord of hosts Him shall ye call holy.” ¶ And let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. These are among the most beautiful words in Holy Writ. The fear of the Lord is like no other fear. Any time the word fear is used in relation to the Lord, the word takes on an exquisite meaning: *trust and hope in the Lord*, or in other words, *let the Lord be your hope*.

14 And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

And he shall be for a sanctuary. Lowth prefers the Vulgate (V), “And He shall be unto you a sanctuary,”¹³ and thus clearly distinguishes between the consequences for the righteous in contrast to those who prefer the works of evil. Calvin insightfully suggests that when we fear man more than God, we value God as a dead idol. The Hebrew word for *a sanctuary* is קֹדֶשׁ based on the root שָׁבַע, *to be holy*. It can include the notion of a consecrated holy tent (Gesenius) or the temple, Holiness to the Lord. Delitzsch explains, “All who sanctified the Lord of lords He surrounded like temple walls; hid them in Himself, whilst death and tribulation reigned without, and comforted, fed, and blessed them in His own gracious fellowship.” We are frequently reminded today to stand in holy places: “But my disciples shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved” (D&C 45:32a); and “Behold, it is my will, that all they who call on my name, and worship me according to mine everlasting gospel, should gather together, and stand in holy places; And prepare for the revelation which is to come, when the veil of the covering of my temple, in my tabernacle, which hideth the earth, shall be taken off, and all flesh shall see me together” (D&C 101:22–23). ¶ *But for a stone of*

stumbling, and for a rock of offence. When the Christ child was taken to the Temple, he was blessed by Simeon who explained that Jesus was the *consolation of Israel* and furthermore stated, “Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel” (Luke 2:25–35). The JST reads: “Unto you therefore who believe, he is precious; but unto them who are disobedient, who stumble at the word, through disobedience, whereunto they were appointed, a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense. For the stone which the builders disallowed, is become the head of the corner. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (JST 1 Peter:7–9). While many Gentile commentators are quick to despise the Jews for stumbling against the Rock of Christ, Calvin suggests that the Christians of his own day, also stumbled against the same rock, “when we see the state of religion throughout the whole Christian world brought nearly to ruin. Many boast that they are Christians who are strongly alienated from God, and to whom Christ is a *stone of stumbling*.” Certainly it is true even today, when the Church of Jesus Christ is upon the earth, that much of Christendom has stumbled upon *The Rock*, and have been offended by the Living Christ. Although it may sound as a harsh saying, some who claim to be followers of Christ today have persecuted the restored Church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and have found thus offense in Christ. Yet from the beginning the Lord has made His intentions clear, that He would restore his ancient covenant people. In the *Title Page* of the Book of Mormon we see that the restored Gospel and Book of Mormon would reach out “to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that JESUS is the CHRIST.” ¶ *To both the houses of Israel.* That is, to the divided kingdom of Ephraim and Judah. Neither would hold fast unto the Lord, but turned after idols instead. ¶ *For a gin and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.* *Gin* is a more archaic word for *trap*. פֶּקַע is usually used in connection to a bird trap. מִוְקֵשׁ is a snare, a synonym for trap. From the general (the divided houses of Israel and Judah) we go to the specific (Jerusalem), as to those who would suffer the consequences for not leaning upon the Lord. Many in Judah felt that Jerusalem—with the Holy Temple on Mount Zion—was somehow exempt from punishment. Through Isaiah, the Lord is letting Judah know that even Jerusalem would not escape.

¹³ The Vulgate (V) reads: “et erit vobis in sanctificationem in lapidem autem offensionis et in petram scandali duabus domibus Israel in laqueum et in ruinam habitantibus Hierusalem.” The Douay translation has, “And he shall be a sanctification to you: but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to the two houses of Israel, for a snare and a ruin to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.”

15 And many among them shall stumble and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.

And many among them shall stumble and fall. In this line is encompassed much of the results of the teachings of Christ in the New Testament, for there were few who believed in Him. Not only did the people of Judah and Israel fall into this trap before Christ was born, so too during His mortal ministry, and even now. The Lord, He who created the heavens and the earth under the direction of the Father would yet be recognized and honored by few. In each dispensation the nature of this misunderstanding has changed, but nevertheless the misunderstandings about the Lord are just as pronounced today as at any time in the history of man. Image, the one and only true Church upon the phase of the whole planet, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, is attacked by some as ‘not a Christian church.’ Yet this is the Church that the Lord established Himself, as the promised restoration that has been written about from the beginning of time. Also see Matthew 23:37. ¶ *And be broken, and be snared, and be taken.* Ludlow has, “Using five verbs that develop a ‘downward’ pattern, Isaiah describes the results befalling those who reject the Lord (v. 15)—they stumble—they falter in their faith; they fall—they commit sins; they are snared—they are enticed by Satan’s temptations; they are captured—they are turned over to Satan’s buffetings.”

vv. 16–22. Those who would be Christ’s disciples give place to His words; hold on to the iron rod. Christ would, for a time, *hide his face from the house of Jacob*. Isaiah testifies that he will look to the Lord. Isaiah, as well as his children, are symbolic of the teachings he was supposed to share with men. Wicked men will seek to the forces of evil and the dark side, when instead they should seek God. Those who heed such wicked practices will only find darkness and lack of hope. They will starve for things spiritual and blame both their rulers and their God. The darkness will be so thick that it can be felt.

16 ¶ Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.

The Targum (ܬܪܓܡ) ¹⁴ here is helpful: “O prophet, keep the testimony, testify not the testimony among them,

¹⁴ Several commentators direct us to Daniel: “But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end:

because they do not obey; seal and hide the law, they are not willing to learn it.” To bind up ܐܒܪ, means to secure, bundle, or tie up something. Barnes suggests, “The meaning here is, to secure, to close up—perhaps by passing a cord or string around the volume, and making it secure, denoting that it was finished.” Henderson (leaning on Hitzig), explains: “The verb ܐܒܪ can only properly apply to the wrapping up of a ܐܢܦܪ, or volume... The words apply to the prophetic testimonies which had just been borne to the Messiah, and other prophetic matter then in existence, together with the law, in its more extended signification, as comprising the rest of the Jewish Scriptures. These might be unheeded, or misconstrued, as indeed they were, by the great body of the nation; but they would minister needful instruction and comfort to the disciples of Christ. For their benefit, they were carefully to be preserved.” ¶ The *law*, or rather, instruction, or doctrine, *Torah*, ܬܘܪܐ. While the term is often used to mean the Pentateuch or five books of Moses, it can mean all of the Hebrew Holy Scriptures, or Tanakh. ¹⁵ “In rabbinical Judaism, the scope of Torah is sometimes expanded to include all of the Scriptures or even the entirety of God’s revelation” (Holman). In Deuteronomy the Lord commanded that the scriptures should be bound to our hearts and hands and become part of us: “And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes” (Deuteronomy 6:6–8). These words were taken literally by those who bound the phylacteries as a form of worship. The destroying angel passed through the homes marked over with the blood of the Pascal lamb and did no harm to the inhabitants thereof. Through the acceptance of the Word we can likewise be spiritually protected—but by rejecting the same we are instead bundled for destruction and burning. ¶ A *disciple* of the Lord has the same meaning as that of a saint, that is, a follower of Christ. ¶ The expression *bind up the testimony, seal the law* has a very specific meaning in scripture, as alluded to in the Targum (ܬܪܓܡ). It is that of inviting others to turn and come unto Christ with urgency, for after such are done away with, God would provide His own ‘sermons’ through war and nature and other disasters, but not through the warning voice of

many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased” (Daniel 12:4, cf. 12:9, 8:26; Revelations 22:10).

¹⁵ The three main divisions of the Holy Scriptures are the *Law* ܬܘܪܐ, *Prophets* ܡܢܒܝܐ, and *Writings* ܟܬܘܒܝܡ.

man.¹⁶ The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “When you are endowed and prepared to preach the gospel to all nations, kindred, and tongues, in your own languages, you must faithfully warn all, and bind up the testimony, and seal up the law, and the destroying angel will follow close at your heels, and exercise his tremendous mission upon the children of disobedience; and destroy the workers of iniquity, while the Saints will be gathered out from among them, and stand in holy places ready to meet the Bridegroom when He comes”¹⁷ The Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith therefore taught, “Whenever I go in the mission field I try to impress this truth upon the missionaries. They are sent into the world for two definite purposes; to gather out the scattered people of the House of Israel who are willing to repent and receive the Gospel, and to leave all others without excuse . . . ‘Therefore, tarry ye, and labor diligently, that you may be perfected in your ministry to go forth among the Gentiles for the last time, as many as the mouth of the Lord shall name, to bind up the law and seal up the testimony, and to prepare the saints for the hour of judgment which is to come’ (D&C 88:84).”¹⁸ ¶ We could call this process the *Ezekiel principle*, that if a person is warned and repents, then both the individual who provided the warning voice and the person who repents are blessed. However, if a person is not warned, he who should have warned his brother is also condemned (Ezekiel 3:16–21). Elder McConkie suggests an essential task of a disciple: “As set forth in latter-day revelation, the ‘disciples,’ those who are the Lord’s servants, ‘go forth’ with power given them ‘to seal both on earth and in heaven, the unbelieving and rebellious; Yea, verily, to seal them up unto the day when the wrath of God shall be poured out upon the wicked without measure’ (D&C 1:8–9). Of these wicked and unbelieving ones the revealed word says: ‘Behold, and lo, there are none to deliver you; for ye obeyed not my voice when I called to you out of the heavens; ye believed not my servants, and when they were sent unto you ye received them not. Wherefore, they sealed up the testimony and bound up the law, and ye were delivered over unto darkness. These shall go away into outer darkness where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth’ (D&C 133:71–73).”¹⁹ Brigham Young explained: “All we have yet heard and

we have experienced is scarcely a preface to the sermon that is going to be preached. When the testimony of the Elders ceases to be given, and the Lord says to them, ‘Come home; I will now preach my own sermons to the nations of the earth,’ all you now know can scarcely be called a preface to the sermon that will be preached with fire and sword, tempests, earthquakes, hail, rain, thunders and lightnings, and fearful destruction. What matters the destruction of a few railway cars? You will hear of magnificent cities, now idolized by the people, sinking in the earth, entombing the inhabitants. The sea will heave itself beyond its bounds, engulfing mighty cities. Famine will spread over the nations and nation will rise up against nation, kingdom against kingdom and states against states, in our own country and in foreign lands; and they will destroy each other, caring not for the blood and lives of their neighbors, of their families, or for their own lives.”²⁰ Elder Orson Pratt spoke of these things as related to the fulfillment of the time of the Gentiles: “Who is able to declare when the times of the Gentiles will be fulfilled? . . . before the times of the Gentiles can possibly be fulfilled, a proclamation must come from heaven and be sounded in their ears—namely, that an angel must come from heaven and bring the everlasting Gospel, not for the Jews, the descendants of Israel, alone, but for every nation, kindred, tongue and people. Gentiles and Jews, all must hear it, for the prediction is that when the angel comes forth with that message from heaven, it is to be preached to all nations, kindreds, tongues and people. This, of course, includes Gentiles as well as Jews. We cannot, therefore, suppose that the times of the Gentiles will be fulfilled until after that event takes place. When the angel comes, when the servants of God are sent forth by Divine authority with a proclamation, and have fulfilled that prediction by declaring the everlasting Gospel to all the nations and kingdoms of the Gentiles, then their times will be fulfilled, and not before. What would be the use of sending the Gospel to the Gentiles if their times were fulfilled and there was no hope or chance for them to receive salvation? The very declaration—that an angel shall come forth with the Gospel in the latter days before the destruction of the wicked, and that that Gospel is to be preached to Gentiles as well as Jews, is proof and evidence to every reflecting mind that believes the Bible that the Gentiles will have an opportunity, until that message is delivered and the prediction concerning it fulfilled. When that is done the law is bound, the testimony is sealed, so far as they are concerned . . . The Jews will then come in remembrance before the Lord. That is, the set time for their deliverance and restoration will have come, the period predicted by the mouth of the ancient prophet in which the Gospel shall be proclaimed to them . . . Will

¹⁶ “And I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be to them a reprover: for they are a rebellious house.” (Ezekiel 3:26).

¹⁷ Smith, Joseph Jr. *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. Edited by B. H. Roberts. 2d ed., rev. Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1932–51, 2:309. Also, see TPJS, p. 92.

¹⁸ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Signs of the Times*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News Press, 1952. pp. 79–80. See also D&C 88:80–91.

¹⁹ McConkie, Bruce R. *The Messiah Series*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1978–82. *The Promised Messiah*, p. 174.

²⁰ Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses* 8:123, 15 July 15, 1860.

the Gentiles be entirely cut off? Oh no, there will be a great many, even when Israel are gathering, who will come along and say, ‘Let us be numbered with Israel, and be made partakers of the same blessings with them; let us enter into the same covenant and be gathered with them and with the people of God.’ Though the testimony is bound, and though the law is sealed up, yet there will be an opening for you to come in. But you will have to come of your own accord, there will be no message sent to you, no ministration of the servants of God expressly directed to you.”²¹

17 And I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.

And I will wait upon the LORD. Isaiah testifies that while he lives his eyes will look to the Lord and wait upon Him. What does this beautiful expression, to *wait upon the Lord* mean? The idiom appears in Psalms and Isaiah: “...but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth” (Psalm 37:9b, cf. 123:2); “But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint” (ISAIAH 40:31). To me, to wait upon the Lord means to act when moved upon by the Holy Ghost. To wait upon the Lord means to put our trust in Him who is mighty to save. While **חָכַה** means to wait for

something, **חָכַה לַיהוָה** is a beautiful expression about waiting for the Lord. There is nothing passive about the word *wait*, as it means to serve the Lord with all of our might, mind and strength. It was after the October 2011 General Conference, during Elder Robert D. Hales talk on Sunday morning, that I began to better understand the meaning of this phrase (see notes under ISAIAH 40:31). ¶ *That hideth his face from the house of Jacob.* In Deuteronomy the Lord repeatedly warned the children of Israel about the consequences of disobedience: “And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith” (Deuteronomy 32:20). But there is a glorious point here, a hope for the *restoration of Israel*, for the day would come when: “Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD” (Ezekiel 39:29). ¶ *And I will look for him.* This has the same meaning as that of waiting upon

the Lord. Micah’s exclamation is almost identical to that of Isaiah: “Therefore I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me” (Micah 7:7).

18 Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me [are] for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion.

Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel. Isaiah explains that his own name as well as those of his children have been given as words of prophecy of the signs and wonders that would come to pass. Yet, one may also see these comments as representing the Savior, who “Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against” (Luke 2:34b). Rather than say that it is the Lord who is speaking here—as a number of commentators do—I would rather think that Isaiah was a type and a shadow of the Savior. So similarly, in this place, Cheyne, “The conception is, that God selects certain men to be shadows or types of still greater men or things to come.” Elder McConkie wrote that this verse shows “that when God gives children to men on earth, he is simply sending to them his own spirit offspring.”²² Isaiah, or *Yeshayahu* (יֵשַׁעְיָהוּ), means *Salvation of Yahweh*. The work of Isaiah was to proclaim that salvation would come through Jehovah. It would not come through the arm of flesh nor through idols or false gods, but only through the Lord. Isaiah’s first son was named Shearjashub, *The remnant shall return*, in reference to the latter-day gathering of Israel. While few gentile commentators get this point, Kay insightfully says, “... the terms ‘remnant of Jacob,’ ‘remnant of Israel’ (10:21, 22), and remnant of His people’ (11:11), taken in combination with the words of Moses, Deuteronomy 30:2 [*Rain in Due Season*—GB], seemed to point to some greater restoration; including, it might well seem, ‘broken’ Ephraim (7:8; cp. 11:12). But further; the name said unqualifiedly ‘the rest:’—might not that include what Amos had spoken of ‘the rest of Edom,’ and, indeed, ‘all the nations’ (Amos 9:12²³; Psalm 22:27²⁴), even Assyria and Egypt (19:23–25), and ‘the uttermost part of the earth’ (24:16)? Nay;

²² McConkie, Bruce R. *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, Volume III, Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1973, p. 145.

²³ “That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this.” (Amos 9:12)

²⁴ “All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.” (Psalm 22:27)

²¹ Orson Pratt, March 26, 1871. *Journal of Discourses*. 26 vols. London: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1854–1886. Discourse by Elder Orson Pratt, Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, March 26, 1871. The restoration of the Jews and the rebuilding of Jerusalem—the latter-day Kingdom of god—gathering of Israel, pp. 59–70.

must it not go deeper yet? must it not include a redemption of those who had sunk into the grave (26:19; cp. Hosea 13:14²⁵; 14:7), and the ‘prisoners gathered in the pit’ (24:22)?” As LDS we know that the work of the Temples is a critical part of such redemption, and that through Israel all the nations of the world would be blessed. Isaiah’s second son was named **מָהֵר שָׁלַל הַשָּׁבַץ**, *Mahe-shalal-hash-baz*, or *To speed to the spoil, he hasteneth the prey*, in reference to the punishment that would come upon Syria and Ephraim, who sought to destroy Judah. Today these words may well stand for the punishment that would come upon those who lift up their hand against Israel. Isaiah and the prophets were often commanded to not only give their children special names, but also dress or act out with prophetic implications.²⁶ ¶ *From the LORD of hosts which dwelleth in mount Zion*. Mount Zion seems to be a reference to the House of the Lord, or His Holy Temple, wherein the Lord made His presence from time to time. In the last days so would also the Lord make His presence manifest unto many in His Holy Temples, and among *the pure in heart*. “And inasmuch as my people build a house unto me in the name of the Lord, and do not suffer any unclean thing to come into it, that it be not defiled, my glory shall rest upon it; Yea, and my presence shall be there, for I will come into it, and all the pure in heart that shall come into it shall see God” (D&C 97:15–16). Some scriptures seem to have a reference to a Millennial day presence of the Lord: “In that day, saith the LORD, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted; And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the LORD shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever” (Micah 4:6–7).

19 And when they shall say unto you: Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter--should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to hear from the dead?

And when they shall say unto you: Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and mutter. Some will not turn to the Lord and accept the message of the scriptures and the prophets, but will prefer to lean upon divination and the arts of the occult.

²⁵ “I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.” (Hosea 13:14)

²⁶ Some notable examples include ISAIAH 20:3–4; Ezekiel 4:3, 10–11, 16; Hosea 1:2–4.

From the beginning the Lord has been explicit in this matter: “Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God” (Leviticus 19:31); “And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people” (Leviticus 20:6, also see 1 Samuel 28:6). In modern day, people also ought to avoid giving the philosophies of men more importance than the words of Christ’s servants and the Scriptures. ¶ *Should not a people seek unto their God for the living to hear from the dead?* This is a beautiful question, *should not a people seek unto their God* an none else?

20 To the law and to the testimony; and if they speak not according to this word, [it is] because [there is] no light in them.

✓ no morning

To the law and to the testimony. This is a call to hold fast to the law and to the testimony, to the sure word of prophecy and to leave evil things behind. It is a call for zeal towards God. Barnes well suggests that: “This is a solemn call of the prophet to try everything by the revealed will of God.” We all have to make constant decisions as to whether we will live our lives with the constant companionship of the Spirit of the Lord, or yield to some other spirit. “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high [places]. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand” (Ephesians 6:11–13). Elder McConkie taught: “Two spirits are abroad in the earth—one is of God, the other of the devil. The spirit which is of God is one that leads to light, truth, freedom, progress, and every good thing; on the other hand, the spirit which is of Lucifer leads to darkness, error, bondage, retrogression, and every evil thing. One spirit is from above, the other from beneath; and that which is from beneath never allows more light or truth or freedom to exist than it can help.”²⁷ ¶ *And if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.* Anything short of this word, of the word of the Lord, is because it is spoken without the Spirit of the Lord. The light of the Gospel truth is absent in such a person’s life. Helaman asks: “Yea, how long will ye suffer yourselves to be led by foolish and blind guides? Yea, how long will ye choose darkness

²⁷ McConkie, Bruce R. *Mormon Doctrine*. 2d ed. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1966, p. 270.

rather than light?” (Helaman 13:29b). There is another allusion here made clear by the ASV translation of the word *light*, “If they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning (שָׁחַר, or *dawn*, see margin ||, Gesenius, HALOT, BDB, and others) for them” (ASV). Such would not partake of the morning of the first resurrection. According to Clarke, “R. D. Kimhi says this was the form of an oath: ‘By the law and by the testimony such and such things are so.’ Now if they had sworn this falsely, it is because there is not *light*, no *illumination*, שָׁחַר, no scruple of conscience, in them.” Those who reject the light of Christ will have to pass through darkness, through the black of the night (contrast with D&C 50:22–25).

21 And they shall pass through it hardly bestead and hungry; and it shall come to pass that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God, and look upward.

And they shall pass through it hardly bestead and hungry. Or, “And they shall pass through it, sore distressed and hungry” (ASV). The word hungry may well mean more than physical hunger, but a hunger for the companionship and words of the Spirit. ¶ *And it shall come to pass that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God,*²⁸ *and look upward.* Men will blame God and king for their misfortunes. Job’s wife suggested a way for Job to escape his misery: “Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die” (Job 2:9).

22 And they shall look unto the earth and behold trouble, and darkness, dimness of anguish, and [they shall be] driven to darkness.

And they shall look unto the earth and behold trouble, and darkness, dimness of anguish. Dimness is sometimes translated as *gloom*. Everywhere they shall look, they will see the horrors of darkness and anguish. Kay says, “This darkness was owing to the ‘hiding away of God’s face’ from the sinful people.” ¶ *And shall be driven to darkness.* Or, “and into thick darkness they shall be driven away” (ASV, cf. Kay). Lowth says, “palpable Egyptian darkness” as in “And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt” (Exodus 10:21). This is the type of darkness seen before Christ came to the American continent, and ministered to some of His *other sheep* (3 Nephi 8:20–23).

23 ¶ NEVERTHELESS, the dimness [shall] not [be] such as [was] in her vexation, when at the* first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali, and afterwards did more grievously afflict [her by] the way of the Red Sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations. ✓

✓ or, populous

* KJV and JST retain “the,” Book of Mormon does not.

NOTE: Verse 23 in the Hebrew Scriptures (מִן) constitutes verse 9:1 in the KJV.

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²⁸ See ISAIAH 9:4, for a note on “their king and their God” vs. “his king and his God.”

Isaiah 9

כִּי־יֵלֶד יֶלֶד־לָנוּ בֶן נֹתָן־לָנוּ
וַתִּהְיֶה הַמְשָׁרָה עַל־שָׂכְמוֹ וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ
פֶּלֶא יוֹעֵץ אֵל גִּבּוֹר אָבִי עַד שָׁר־שָׁלוֹם :

This chapter opens with the glorious Light that would shine upon Israel, where only darkness had existed before. The birth of the Messiah is put forth, as well as some of the glorious names that would describe Him. Because of the pride of the people, the Lord would stretch forth His hand with specific and terrible punishments. These thoughts are interrupted three quarters of the way through and continued in ISAIAH 10. Alexander notes: “The division of chapters is in this part of the book peculiarly unfortunate; the first part of the ninth ... containing the conclusion of the eighth, and the first part of the tenth ... the conclusion of the ninth.”

vv. 1–8. These verses are foremost Messianic in nature, although many have found application to the times when they were given.

1 ¶ NEVERTHELESS, the dimness [shall] not [be] such as [was] in her vexation, when at *the** first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali, and afterwards did more grievously afflict [her by] the way of the Red Sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations. ✓

✓ or, populous

* KJV and JST retain “the,” Book of Mormon does not.

NOTE: Verse 9:1 is included as 8:23 in the Hebrew scriptures (אח).

The ASV presents a beautiful and clear rendition of this verse: “But there shall be no gloom to her that was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali; but in the latter time hath he made it glorious, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations” (ASV). The ASV uses *gloom* rather than the KJV *dimness* for מוֹעֵף. The idea can also be one of a *profound darkness* (Gesenius, HALOT). הֵקֵל can mean lightly esteemed, or *despised* (Gesenius, HALOT), or “brought into contempt” (ASV), for the KJV “lightly afflicted.” Whitehouse explains, “The general sense of the passage as it stands in the Hebrew text is fairly clear. In the former troubled days, preceding the downfall of Samaria, Tiglath-Pileser III had deprived the kingdom of Ephraim of its northern provinces, Zebulun and Naphtali. The ruin which Tiglath-Pileser had begun

Sargon completed in 722.” ¶ *Galilee of the nations*,¹ גָּלִיל הַגּוֹיִם. Galilee (גָּלִיל) also means *district*, so this region (גָּלִיל הַגּוֹיִם) could also be properly called district of *the gentiles*. We also read: “In the days of Pekah king of Israel came Tiglathpileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abelbethmaachah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria” (2 Kings 15:29). The idea, then, is that in *the former* הָרִאשׁוֹן, derived from ראש, or *first* (times, days or epoch), Assyria, one of the gentile nations, would humiliate this area and take her away captive. These would be certainly some of the darkest days of Israel. But all of this in contrast to a day to come (הָאֲחֵרִי) or *the latter* in contrast to *former* (Gesenius), something wonderful would happen in this same land of Galilee. In the context of the day when it was written, this Isaianic verse seems to be saying, that the dimness and vexation that would befall the land of Israel (Ephraim) by the hand of Assyria *would not be everlasting*. The time would come, where the very land occupied by the Northern Tribes, and more specifically, the tribes of Zebulun² and Naphtali,³ would become

¹ The words גּוֹיִם, *goyim*, and ἔθνος, *ethnos*, can mean either gentiles, gentile nations, or nations, depending on their context. For instance, in Luke 2:32, it is my opinion that the verse should read “A light to lighten the *nations*, and the glory of thy people Israel.” By putting the word Gentiles in this verse, it implies that the Jews are left out. I do not believe that is the intent here. My interpretations are affected by my pro-Semitic stance.

² Zebulun was Israel’s tenth son, Leah’s 6th. “And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob the sixth son. And Leah said, God hath endued me with a good dowry; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have born him six sons: and she called his name Zebulun” (Genesis 30:19–20).

³ Naphtali was Israel’s sixth son, Bihah’s 2nd. Bilhah was Rachel’s maid. “And Bilhah Rachel’s maid conceived again, and bare Jacob a

Holy, for the Savior of Mankind would live and walk there during His Galilean ministry. All that gloominess in ISAIAH 8:21–22 is about to explode forth with a Great Light. Henderson tells us that the Rabbinic tradition states, “[in] the book of Zohar, part i. folio 119, Amst. יתגלי מלכא משיחא בארעה דגליל *Messiah the King shall be revealed in the land of Galilee.*” ¶ The New Testament confirms these thoughts: “Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up” (Matthew 4:12–16). ¶ *By the way of the Red Sea.* A number of critics have ridiculed the expression *Red Sea* (contained in both the Book of Mormon and the Inspired Version) and used it as a proof that the Book of Mormon is not true. They argue that the Red Sea is not exactly related in any way to Galilee. Yet we find a defense for the Prophet Joseph Smith and for the Book of Mormon in the ancient Targum (ܬ) which alludes to the miracles, by the power of God, that took place as Israel left Egypt behind (see ISAIAH 9:1–4—or 8:23–9:3—in the ܬ). Recall that there were two miraculous partings, the one that took place at the *Red Sea* (Exodus 14) and the one that took place at the *Jordan* (Joshua 3–4). While the word *red* does not appear in the Targum (ܬ) itself, the allusion to the Red Sea is clear. Stenning’s translation is: “because they remembered not the mighty act *which was done* at the sea, the miracles of Jordan.” Chilton has, “because they did not remember the *prodigy* of the sea, the wonders of Jordan.” Pauli renders it as, “because they did not remember the power of the *Red Sea*, neither the wonders of the Jordan.” The Targum (ܬ), then, chides the children of Israel *for not remembering the mighty [Red] sea nor the miracle of the Jordan*:
 4“ܕܠܐ ܐܝܕܟܪܝ ܓܒܘܪܬ ܝܡܐ ܢܝܫܝ ܝܪܕܢܐ” In this place, Henderson well says that when we have ܕܝܡ, it could refer to the Mediterranean, the Red Sea or even the Dead Sea. Even though Henderson thinks of the Sea of Tiberias (or Cinnereth) best fits the ellipsis, he

second son. And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed: and she called his name Naphtali” (Genesis 30:7–8).

⁴ The Aramaic comes from the *The Targums from the files of the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project*, Targum Jonathan to the Prophets, ISAIAH 8:23, LOGOS. For different pointing, see Sperber, Alexander. *The Bible in Aramaic based on Old Manuscripts and Printed Texts*, Brill, 2004, p. 531; and Stenning, p. 31.

mentions that the Red Sea is mentioned in ISAIAH 10:26. We have already said that ISAIAH 10 is intimately connected with this chapter. In ISAIAH 10:24 we see, again, an allusion to Egypt, and more specifically to the deliverance from Egypt in the Red Sea: “and *as his rod was upon the sea*, so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt” (ISAIAH 10:26b). The Rabbis also ascribed this verse to the Red Sea, as we find in the Talmud tradition (Seder Nezikin, Sanhedrin 94b): “What is meant by, When aforetime the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali did lighten [its burden], but in later times it was made heavy by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilea of the nations? — It is not as the early generations, who rejected the yoke of the Torah; but as for the latter generations who strengthened the yoke of the Torah upon themselves and are therefore worthy of having a miracle wrought for them, like those who passed over the [Red] Sea and the Jordan” (Talmud, Soncino).

2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

This verse forms a parallel structure: People that walked in darkness / Light / Land of the shadow of death / Light. Yet, as we have mentioned before, Isaiah would sometimes tuck in diverse thoughts in what many may have thought was simply parallel repetition. While the Light is the same in both cases, the two areas of darkness are different. ¶ *The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.* To walk in darkness means to walk in apostasy and captivity (LDS footnote 2a). Isaiah has kept in this glorious thing, and now cannot contain it any longer. The Light of the world, even Christ, the very Messiah would burst upon the scene of mankind. From Matthew 4:12–16, it is clear that these Isaianic verses are a contrast between the horrors of war and removal by Assyria (a Gentile nation) and the Galilean ministry of the Christ. John wrote: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not” (John 1:1–5). Similar contrasts existed in the Savior’s ministry in the American continent after days of thick darkness—so also in the Spirit World.⁵ Anytime a person decides to walk in the

⁵ “While this vast multitude waited and conversed, rejoicing in the hour of their deliverance from the chains of death, the Son of God

way of the Lord, such transformation occurs—between darkness and light. They day will come, indeed, when: “The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the LORD shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended” (ISAIAH 60:19–20). ¶ *They that dwell in the land of the shadow of death. Upon them hath the light shined.* As we already saw in Matthew 4:12–16, these verses are particularly an allusion to the Savior’s Galilean ministry. Simeon had waited for the *consolation of Israel*, that is, the coming of the Holy Messiah. When the child Jesus was brought to the temple, and Simeon held the Savior, he gave thanks to God and said: “Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the nations, and the glory of thy people Israel” (Luke 2:29–32, KJV, ἔθνος, *nations* substituted for *Gentiles*).⁶ The Targum (ܬܪܓܡ), interestingly, continues to make allusion to the darkness felt by Israel as she lived and escaped out of Egypt. This light we have been speaking off, is not only the Savior, but *His restored Gospel*. Just as when the Savior walked upon the earth in person but many did not recognize Him as such, so will it be when the Gospel is restored among the gentile nations: “And when the times of the Gentiles is come in, a light shall break forth among them that sit in darkness, and it shall be the fulness of my gospel; But they receive it not; for they perceive not the light, and they turn their hearts from me because of the precepts of men. And in that generation shall the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (D&C 45:28–30).

3 Thou hast multiplied the nation, [and] ~~not~~ increased the joy—and they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, [and] as [men] rejoice when they divide the spoil.

✓ or, to him

Thou hast multiplied the nation, and increased the joy. The Prophet Joseph Smith, by inspiration, corrected the verse to remove the negative. While the KJV reads לא, *not*,

appeared, declaring liberty to the captives who had been faithful” (D&C 138:18).

⁶ YLT, LITV, MKJV, and not surprisingly the HNV, use the word *nations* for ἔθνος in this verse.

not, most Hebraists including Gesenius, Lowth,⁷ Delitzsch, Nägelsbach, Alexander, and others agree with the Prophet Joseph Smith in rendering it לו, *to him*. We have said that the original Hebrew text (מ) did not contain the many points and symbols, *puncta extraordinaria*, that it has since acquired. These were added by the Massoretes, as an aid in pronunciation and preservation of the text. Among the notes, there is what is known as the קרי and פתיב, *Qeri* and *Kethiv*, respectively. These stand for *that which is read* (קרי) vs. *that which is written* (פתיב). The Masoretes, we have said, wanted to avoid any further corruption of the text. So rather than making an orthographical correction by deleting the incorrectly spelled word, and substituting what they considered correct, they instead preserved the extant orthography or word, and suggested the changes in margin or critical apparatus. So it is that the Massora explains that this is “one of 17 instances where לא, written thus, has the meaning of לו” [Mm 1795]⁸ ¶ This verse seems to have reference to ISAIAH 54:1, “Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD” and ISAIAH 26:15, “Thou hast increased the nation, O LORD, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth.” While the Lord had permitted Israel to be scattered, Isaiah could see the day when she would be gathered in much increased in population. I would suggest that this *increased nation* would include such peoples as the Lamanites in the American continent and isles of the sea, as well as the Lost Tribes. The majority of Church members are literal descendants of Jacob⁹ rather than adopted. The first to join the Church in this dispensation of the fullness of times were generally from Ephraim, but as the Church expands into every corner of the earth, there are those

⁷ Eleven manuscripts (two ancient) read לו, according to the Masoretic correction” (Lowth)

⁸ Kelly, P. H.; Mynatt, D. S. & Crawford, T. G. *The Masorah of Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia: Introduction and Annotated Glossary*. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1998, p. 119. For more on this subject especially see pages 1–11. Also see *The Masoretic Notes: Contained in the Edition of the Hebrew Scriptures* published by The British and Foreign Bible Society, translated and explained by Alfred S. Geden. 1905; as well as Christian D. Gingsburg, *The Massorah translated into English with a Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, Vol. IV. 1905.

⁹ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3:246.

from other tribes that are coming into the fold.¹⁰ So it is that a remnant would return. ¶ *And they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest.* That is, the joy of a plentiful harvest, often celebrated by end of season festivities. Henry suggests that those things that are hard bring more joy than those things that are easy: “When those who sowed in tears, and have with long patience waited for the precious fruits of the earth, reap in joy.” Barnes explains, “The phrase ‘before thee’ refers to the fact that the first fruits of the harvest among the Hebrews were presented with thanksgiving before God in the temple; Deuteronomy 12:7¹¹; 14:22–26¹² (also see Delitzsch). In ISAIAH 18 we see how Judah would be brought back to her Lord in the last days, even to the temple, to mount Zion. Harvest festivals and celebrations are an important part of agrarian societies. ¶ *And as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.* This is an allusion to the joy of the victor after a battle. Christ will be the victor.

4 For thou hast broken ✓ the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor. ~~as in the day of Midian.~~

✓ or, When thou brakest

For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor. With Ludlow, I see in this verse a Messianic utterance. In ISAIAH 10:27 we have a parallel scripture: “And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.” Or rather, as the Targum (ܬܪܓܡ) in ISAIAH 10:27, “*from before the Messiah*”¹³ (מִן קִדְּם מְשִׁיחָא) or the Anointed One. This verse seems to speak of the sufferings of Christ, who would take upon the burdens of the world on His shoulder, and literally, on the way to Golgotha, he would bear a staff on His shoulders. Messiah has, through His suffering and resurrection, broken all bonds. I had expected at least one translator

¹⁰ See for instance, Faust, James E. “Priesthood Blessings,” Sunday Morning Session, *October 1995 General Conference* (November 1995 *Ensign*, p. 62).

¹¹ “And there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee” (Deuteronomy 12:7).

¹² “And thou shalt eat before the LORD thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn [i.e., grain, such as wheat, oats, etc.—in old British English corn is not maize, something I learned from Rabbi Shaye J.D. Cohen], of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always” (Deuteronomy 14:23, also see verses 22, 24–26).

¹³ CAL.

to render ISAIAH 9:4 with capital letters: “For Thou hast broken the yoke of His burden, and the staff of His shoulder, the rod of His oppressor.” If “His burden” סְבִילוֹ is taken as representative of the Savior, who, then, is “His oppressor,” הַגֹּשֶׁשׁ בּוֹ? ¶ *The rod of his oppressor.* In the pre-existence and in mortality Satan attempted against Christ. As Elder James E. Talmage points out, this did not only happen in the wilderness, but at different points in the Savior’s life. In the last supper, speaking of His apostles, the Savior said, “Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations” (Luke 22:28).¹⁴ But the idea here is that Christ would break the bands of death: “O death, where is thy sting?” (1 Corinthians 15:55a), and would crush Satan: “And I will put enmity between thee [Satan] and the woman [Eve], and between thy seed [Satan] and his followers] and her seed [Christ, born of Mary]; it [rather, He, Christ] shall bruise thy head [or crush Satan], and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Genesis 3:15).¹⁵ So also the Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to the Pentateuch, which has an explicit allusion to Christ, or “in the days of King Messiah”: בְּיוֹמֵי מַלְכָּא מְשִׁיחָא. Christ shall have power to overcome all things, even to “the destroying of Satan and his works at the end of the world” (D&C 19:3b). Many commentators have thought of this Isaianic verse as man being freed from bondage through Christ’s triumph. Certainly, this does not contradict what we have said. The burden would be lifted off the shoulders of each individual who will turn and walk in the way of the Lord. This was done through the infinite atonement as the burden was placed on the Savior. ¶ ~~As in the day of Midian.~~ The Book of Mormon does not contain the clause, “as in the day of Midian.” Nyman suggests: “This could be an intentional omission by Nephi, as it did not apply to his people.” In

¹⁴ Talmage explains: “It is not to be supposed that Christ’s victorious emergence from the dark clouds of the three specified temptations exempted Him from further assaults by Satan ... Luke closes his account of the temptations following the forty-day fast as follows: ‘And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.’ This victory over the devil ... [was] great but not final successes in the struggle between Jesus, the embodied God, and Satan, the fallen angel of light. That Christ was subject to temptation during the period of His association with the apostles He expressly affirmed ... Shortly before His betrayal, when admonishing the Twelve to humility, He said: ‘Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations.’” Talmage, James E. *Jesus the Christ: A Study of the Messiah and His Mission According to Holy Scriptures Both Ancient and Modern*, pp.125, 127.

¹⁵ “Gen iii. 15. *Schöttgen* conjectures that the Talmudic designation of ‘heels of the Messiah’ (Sot. 49 b, line 2 from top) in reference to the near Advent of the Messiah in the description of the troubles of those days (comp. St. Matthew 10: 35, 36) may have been chosen partly with a view to this passage.” Edersheim, Alfred. *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*. Appendix IX. List Of Old Testament Passages Messianically Applied In Ancient Rabbinic Writings (Vol. i. Book II. ch. v.)

Midian the Lord saved Israel with only a few men “lest Israel vaunt themselves against me [the Lord], saying, Mine own hand hath saved me” (Judges 7:2); in His expiatory sacrifice, the Savior accomplished salvation by treading the wine press *alone*.

5 For every battle of the warrior [is] ✓ with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but [this] shall be with burning [and] fuel ✓ of fire.

✓ or, When the whole battle of the warrior was, &c.

✓ ✓ meat

This verse may be translated along these lines: “For every sandal / shoe / military boot that makes the earth tremble / quake / shake, and garment / clothing soaked in blood, shall come to be as combustible fuel for fire.” The noise of the soldiers advancing shakes the earth and resounds in the ear. Many modern Hebraists believe that rather than *warrior*, שַׁנְיָה means shoe, boot, or sandal, based on the root, שָׁנָה. Rabbi Kimhi (in Kay) renders it “For every boot of trampling warrior.” Lowth translates as “The greaves¹⁶ of the armed warrior” and explains: “This word, occurring only in one place, is of very doubtful signification. ... it seems as if something was rather meant which was capable of becoming fuel for the fire, together with the garments mentioned in the same sentence. In Syriac, the word, as a noun, signifies a *shoe* or a *sandal*, as a learned friend suggested to me some years ago: see Luke 15:22; Acts 12:8. I take it therefore to mean that part of the armour which covered the legs and feet, and I would render the two words [that is, שַׁנְיָה וְשָׂרָה] in Latin by *caliga caligati*. The burning of heaps of armour, gathered from the field of battle, as an offering made to the god supposed to be the giver of victory, was a custom that prevailed among some heathen nations; and the Romans used it as an emblem of peace: which perfectly well suits with the design of the Prophet in this place. A medal, struck by Vespasian on finishing his wars both at home and abroad, represents the goddess Peace, holding an olive branch in one hand, and with a lighted torch in the other setting fire to a heap of armour.” ¶ A large number of commentators are agreed that this verse represents the putting away of war in the millennium, to give place to peace, through Him whom peace comes. Lowth has compared this verse with one in Psalms that fits a similar context (in Psalms it is the chariot that is burnt to signify the end of war, while here it is the boots and the clothing of the soldier): “He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in

the fire” (Psalm 46:8, also see Psalm 46:7–11). Henderson suggests that “this verse describes the sure indications of a state of lasting peace, in language borrowed from an ancient custom of burning implements of war that had been taken from the enemy.” While man’s typical battles entail both terrifying noise and bloodshed, at the end-of-days the wicked will be burnt. Delitzsch sees the verse as building to the glorious King mentioned in verse ISAIAH 9:6: “Upon the two sentences with כִּי [i.e., *for*] the prophet now builds a third. The reason for the triumph is the deliverance effected; and the reason for the deliverance, the destruction of the foe; and the reason for all the joy, all the freedom, all the peace, is the new great King.”

6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given. This beautiful verse is beloved of all Christendom and made immortal by Handel’s Messiah. It testifies of Messiah, who would be born of woman, yet be Son of God. “By means of the words יָלַד, ‘child,’ and יָלַד, ‘is born,’ [Isaiah] has called attention to the Messiah’s humanity, but by the phrase אֵל נִבְרָר we are brought face to face with Messiah’s deity. This interpretation is strengthened by the word פֶּלֶא in the first name. He is a *Wonder*, and in the light of this strong designation, we may well expect that in the second name also the prophet is attributing deity to the Messiah” (Young). Nyman suggests: “The angel who spoke to the shepherds on the night of Christ’s birth paraphrased ISAIAH 9:6 (see Luke 2:10–11)¹⁷ (Nyman). ¶ *And the government shall be upon his shoulder.* Although a rightful heir of the Davidic monarchy, Christ would not be a ruler in meridian of time, when He came upon the earth as the Lamb, but will be such when He comes as the Lion, and reigns personally upon the earth during the Millennium. Contrasting the government upon His shoulder and the staff of His shoulder (in ISAIAH 9:4), Calvin says, “I agree with those who think that there is an indirect contrast between *the government* which the Redeemer bore on his shoulders and the *staff of the shoulder*

¹⁶ “Armor for the leg below the knee” (Webster).

¹⁷ “And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:10–11).

which was just now mentioned; for it agrees well, and is not liable to any objections.” ¶ *And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God,*¹⁸ *The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.* To those who deny the divinity of Christ, we point to this scripture, which clearly states that the Christ child is the *Mighty God*, or *אֱלֹהִים גִּבּוֹר*. LDS understand, also, that Christ is also our *Everlasting Father*, *אָבִי עֶד*, in several types of contexts. Jesus Christ is: “the Father as creator... ‘Father’ of Those Who Abide in His Gospel ... [and] ‘Father’ by Divine Investiture of Authority.”¹⁹ The Savior is also our Brother and Son of God, Elohim. Some moderns have made ‘wonderful’ an adjective pertaining to the title ‘Counselor,’ and thus render it, ‘Wonderful Counselor.’ Such joining of these words, explains Henderson, “on the specious ground, that all the other titles are in pairs; but whatever uniformity in point of construction might thus be introduced into the passage, it is completely at variance with Hebrew construction. To admit of this rendering, the form must be *פֶּלֶא יוֹעֵץ*, and not *פֶּלֶא עֶזֶר*.” So also Delitzsch and Alexander, regarding the distinctiveness of the two titles. Regarding the title *שֵׁר-שָׁלוֹם*, *Prince of Peace*, Cheyne says, “[is] in striking contrast to the false ideal represented by Assyria.” The Targum (C) reads: “The

prophet saith to the house of David, For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and He has taken the law upon Himself to keep it. His name is called from eternity, Wonderful, The Mighty God, who liveth to eternity, The Messiah, whose peace shall be great upon us in His days.” Note again how Messiah and God are interchangeable titles here. ¶ Henderson makes an important contribution here: “For thought they are not [the words describing Messiah] expressly or verbally quoted, it is evident the angel Gabriel thus applies them in his annunciation to Mary, Luke 1:32, 33). *First*, her child was to be ‘the Son of the Highest,’ in reference to the part of the prophecy, ‘To us a Son is given.’ *Secondly*, he was to be ‘great,’ which the assemblage of exalted and distinguished names in the prediction sufficiently indicates. *Thirdly*, he was to have given to him ‘the throne of his father David,’ which corresponds to ‘his government upon the throne of David’ in the prophecy; and his ‘reigning over the house of Jacob,’ to his being ‘over the kingdom of David’ in the following clause. *Fourthly*, the words, ‘Of his kingdom there shall be no end,’ are almost a literal quotation of the words, ‘Of the increase of his government—there shall be no end.” ¶ Despite the preferred translation of *שֵׁר-שָׁלוֹם*, as *Prince of Peace*, we read of the following dilemma in the translation of this passage by the *Jewish Publication Society*, “... but they had trouble with the translation of *שֵׁר-שָׁלוֹם*.’ Leiser²⁰ employed the phrase ‘prince of peace,’ using the lower case to avoid (presumably) misinterpretation. Samuel Schulman of the JPS translation committee urged his colleagues to follow the same practice, since ‘it calls attention to the fact, that we wish to avoid any possible Christological interpretation of the phrase.’ Max L. Margolis and Cyrus Adler, by contrast, insisted that using the lower case would imply that the ‘prince of peace’ was a human being, ‘exactly the thing we wished to avoid.’ Strongly worded letters flew back and forth. The final translation, clearly influenced more by the desire to instruct Christians and defend Jews than by considerations of scholarship, banished ‘prince of peace’ altogether: ‘For a child is born unto us, / A son is given us; / And the government is upon his shoulder; / And his name is called / ^aPele-joez-el-gibbor-Abi-ad-sar-shalom. That is, Wonderful in counsel is God the Mighty, the everlasting father, the Ruler of peace.”²¹

¹⁸ There is an interesting exegetical note here by Nägelsbach, regarding the use of the word *אֱלֹהִים* or *God* and its implications within the doctrine of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: “The question arises: can this name *אֱלֹהִים* ‘God’ be applied to a creature, and in what sense? Ps. 82:1, 6, comp. John 10:34 sq., are cited, where princes are called *אֱלֹהִים* ‘gods.’ When the Jews would have stoned Jesus ‘for blasphemy and because, being a man, he made himself God,’ Jesus replied by referring to the Psalm: ‘Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?’ Evidently He would say that it is not under all circumstances blasphemy to predicate divinity of a man, because otherwise the Psalm could not possibly have spoken so of men. He [Christ] therefore does not deny that he had called Himself *God*, but He challenged the right of the Jews to charge Him on that account with blasphemy, because it was possible He may have called Himself *God* in that sense that was allowable from their standpoint. It appears therefore that the notion *אֱלֹהִים* certainly can be used in various senses, and in some circumstances may be said of a creature, and without blasphemy. But there is a difference between *אֱלֹהִים* and *אֱלֹהִים*. For the former is never used in the wide sense in which we see the latter used.” Nägelsbach goes on to argue that *אֱלֹהִים* only takes place where *God* is intended, rather than god. Regardless of the merit of such an argument about the distinction between *אֱלֹהִים* and *אֱלֹהִים*, this discussion is of interest. In the LDS footnotes in the KJV, we find regarding Psalm 82:6, footnote a, after the word *child* in this context, “Topic Guide Man, A Spirit Child of Heavenly Father; Man, Potential to Become Like Heavenly Father; Sons and Daughters of God; Spirit Creation.”

¹⁹ Mosiah 15:1–7, Ether 3:12, and “The Father and the Son: A Doctrinal Exposition by the First Presidency and the Twelve,” in James E. Talmage, *The Articles of Faith*, 12th ed. [1924], pp. 465–73). Also see April 2002 *Ensign*.

²⁰ Isaac Leiser (1806–1868) was one of the earliest Jewish translators of the Holy Scriptures into English, and one of my very favorite translators. I began to appreciate Leiser’s work long before I realized it was a Jewish translation. I first came across it through *e-Sword*. Later, I purchased my own hard copy. I love literal translations and Leiser’s is quite literal. What is much sadder to me, are translations produced for Christian audiences which obscure the Christ.

²¹ Frerichs, Ernest S. (editor). *The Bible and Bibles in America*. Scholars Press, Atlanta, 1988, p. 100. Of particular interest in this

7 Of the increase of [his] government and peace [there shall be] is no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Of the increase of his government and peace there is no end. These words refer to Christ, and His theocratic government. Some of the allusions are to the first coming of Christ and others to the second. Elder Holland writes: “One of the beautiful reminders in this magnificent passage, even with its splendor and royalty and sense of triumph, is the gentle declaration that through all of his power and majesty, Christ is still ‘the Son’...humble, obedient, submissive, willing to yield to the demands of mortality, doing all this that he might ultimately order the government of temporal beings (the flesh) after the higher laws of divine transcendence (the spirit). We are reminded here that he is, gloriously, the Son of God, a child of heaven. The fact that the government would eventually be upon his shoulders affirms what all the world will one day acknowledge—that he is Lord of lords and King of kings and will one day rule over the earth and his Church in person, with all the majesty and sacred vestments belonging to a holy sovereign and a high priest. All can take comfort from the fact that because the government—and the burdens thereof—will be upon his shoulders, they will be lifted in great measure from our own. This is yet another reference in Isaiah to the Atonement, the bearing away of our sins (or at very least in this reference, our temporal burdens) on the shoulders of Christ.”²² For Christ, says Calvin, “shall reign ... *over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end* (Luke 1:33). We see that the mightiest governments of this world, as if they had been built on a *slippery* foundation (Psalm 73:18), are unexpectedly overturned and suddenly fall. How fickle and changeable all the kingdoms under heaven are, we learn from history and from daily examples.” Regarding שָׁלוֹם, Alexander explains: “*Peace*, though included in שָׁלוֹם, is not a

full equivalent. The Hebrew word denotes not only *peace* as opposed to war, intestine strife, or turbulence, but welfare and prosperity in general as opposed to want and sorrow. The reign here predicted was to be not only peaceful but in every respect prosperous. And this prosperity, like the reign of which is predicted, is to have no limit, either temporal or local. It is to be both universal and eternal.” ¶ *Upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom.* Christ or Messiah would be born of the house of David, descendant of Judah. “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be” (Genesis 49:10). Furthermore we read, “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS” (Jeremiah 23:5–6). David is also another name given to King Messiah: “For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them. Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid. For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet I will not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished” (Jeremiah 30:8–11); “And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd” (Ezekiel 34:23–24, and see also Ezekiel 37:24–25); “Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days” (Hosea 3:5). Of the *Second David* Elder McConkie wrote: “How beauteous the holy word is! How better could the ancient prophets have taught the glory and power of Christ’s millennial reign than to equate it with the image David had in the eyes of the people? And David’s greater Son shall soon come as the Second David to rule and reign over Israel and the world forever.”²³ ¶ *To order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even for ever.* The kingdom of the Messiah will be *eternal*,

book to LDS readers, it mentions the good regard held by the Prophet Joseph Smith for his Hebrew tutor, Joshua Seixas: “Joshua Seixas, son of the famous Shearith Israel minister and also the author of a Hebrew grammar (1833, 1834), taught Hebrew at various colleges in Ohio. His best known student was Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet, who held Seixas in high regard.” (p. 91). Also of interest is all of Chapter 7, entitled, “The Sacred Literature of the Latter-day Saints,” by Kent P. Jackson (pp. 163–191).

²² Jeffrey R. Holland, *Christ and the New Covenant: The Messianic Message of the Book of Mormon*, p.80.

²³ Bruce R. McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man*, p.610.

עוֹלָם. The words *judgment* (**מִשְׁפָּט**) and *justice* (**צֶדֶקָה**) are frequent ones in the Old Testament, and are characteristic of what is expected of His disciples. Yet they are best exemplified by the Lord Himself. Justice implies acting in *rectitude*, while judgment has to do with *fairness*. ¶ *The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this*. This great work would be carried out by God, not man. Regarding zeal, Barnes explains: “The word used here denotes ‘ardor,’ intense desire in accomplishing an object.”

vv. 8–21 and these thoughts continue through ISAIAH 10:4. These verses, says Lowth, when “healed of the dislocation which it suffers by the absurd division of the chapters, makes a distinct prophecy, and a just poem, remarkable for the regularity of its disposition, and the elegance of its plan.” While on the surface, it appears that these verses, beginning with verse 8, are directed solely at Ephraim, they also seem to encompass the ungodly in Judah and Jerusalem. Israel would be punished for her iniquities. Chapter 8, which is also part of this larger thought, contains the idea of the darkness and burning that would exist, and here in Chapter 9, we return to these same thoughts, and in the middle of the chiasmic pattern, is the good news about coming Messiah in the meridian of times.

8 ¶ The Lord sent a his word into unto Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel.

With this play on words, the Lord (Lowth knows of thirty Hebrew manuscripts that have LORD, or Yahweh, rather than Adonai, Lord), seems to now address Ephraim. According to Alexander, “The word which God had uttered against Israel had reached them as a message from him, as a revelation, so that there could be no doubt as to its authority and genuineness.” Nyman notes, “The Book of Mormon renders it ‘his word’ rather than ‘a word’ in the KJV. This retention broadens the meaning to include the gospel rather than just a single prophecy” (Nyman).

9 And all the people shall know, [even] Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria, that say in the pride and stoutness of heart:

And all the people shall know, even Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria. Samaria was the capital of Ephraim. The Targum (**ܬ**) reads: “The people, all of them have become great; Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria, that say in the greatness and stoutness of heart.” ¶ *That say in the pride and stoutness of heart:*

The words beginning with ISAIAH 9:10, spoken by the inhabitants of Samaria and Ephraim (both of whom had combined against Judah) are those of great conceit and arrogance.

10 The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones; the sycamores are cut down, but we will change [them into] cedars.

This verse seems to refer to the pride of the people of Ephraim, and particularly those in Samaria, in terms of the construction of their edifices. “Tear our buildings down,” they bragged, “and we will build them again of even stronger materials.”²⁴ Alexander explains, “The oriental bricks are unburnt, so that most of their brick structures are as little durable as mud walls. The sycamore is durable, but too light and spongy to be used in solid building.” *Hewn* refers to that which is “cut with blows of a heavy cutting instrument ... to give form or shape to with or as if with heavy cutting blows” (Webster). These, perhaps, were quarried stones (see writings of Esarhaddon, in notes to ISAIAH 10:34). The exegetes are not in agreement as to which tree is intended here by **שִׁקְמָה**, translated as *sycamores*. It seemed to have been a common tree of little value, in contrast to the rare, yet lofty, cedar **אַרְזֵי**. Rawlinson points out such a contrast in 2 Chronicles 1:15: “And the king made silver and gold at Jerusalem as plenteous as stones, and cedar trees made he as the sycamore trees that are in the vale for abundance.” We find a similar scripture *about the futility of re-building, unless one builds upon the Rock of Jesus Christ*, in Malachi 1:4a, “Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down.” The pride and arrogance of the people is made clearly manifest.

11 Therefore the LORD shall set up the adversaries of Rezin against him, and join[✓] his enemies together;

✓ mingle

²⁴ Just coincidentally, I have been working on this chapter of Isaiah for the last couple of months, and it was yesterday, 11 September 2001, that the horrible events surrounding the attack on the World Trade Center twin towers, the Pentagon, and so on took place. Today is the 12th of September, and as I was getting ready to come to work, a member of Congress stood up to make a declaration, which I heard on television. He quoted this verse of Isaiah with no further explanation. I do not know if he quoted in ignorance, for left alone, it is a self-accusation of the pride and arrogance of a nation that did not fear God.

12 The Syrians before and the Philistines behind; and they shall devour Israel with open mouth. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand [is] stretched out still.

✓ whole

Therefore the LORD shall set up the adversaries of Rezin against him, and join his enemies together. Rezin was the King of Syria (introduced in ISAIAH 7:1). The Lord would bring enemies against Ephraim because she had arrogantly boasted. The Northern Kingdom prided in that her war-torn structures would be rebuilt with finer manmade edifices. Among these enemies would be both Syria (i.e., Aram, who at present was her ally) and the Philistines (even though the scriptures are otherwise silent on this matter). These two verses in Isaiah are difficult indeed. I will share three of the leading options suggested by the exegetes, although none of them give a truly satisfactory explanation: (1) that the adversary of Rezin was Assyria (Asshur is not explicitly among the nations mentioned in ISAIAH 9:12, although some feel it is implied); (2) that one ought to read שָׂרִי (princes) for צָרִי (enemies), based on Hebrew manuscripts found by Houbigant;²⁵ and (3) that “devour Israel” implies all of Israel, not Ephraim alone but Judah also. This third view is espoused by Delitzsch “... for the northern kingdom never suffered anything from the Philistines; whereas an invasion of Judah by the Philistines was really one of the judgments belonging to the time of Ahaz (2 Chronicles 28:16–19). Consequently by *Israel* here we are to understand all Israel, the two halves of which would become a rich prize to the enemy. Ephraim would be swallowed up by Aram,—namely, by those who had been subjected by Asshur, and were now tributary to it,—and Judah would be swallowed up by the Philistines.” ¶ *The Syrians before and the Philistines behind.* The expression (אַרְם מִקֶּדֶם) *Aram before* is sometimes translated as “*Aram* from the East”; while for מִפְּלִשְׁתִּים מֵאַחֲרֵי and *Phelishtim behind* is translated as “and the *Philistines* from the West.” Rawlinson explains, “The Semitic races regarded the world as looking to the rising sun, and used for the east the preposition signifying ‘in front,’ for the west that

²⁵ “For צָרִי, *enemies*, Houbigant by conjecture reads שָׂרִי, *princes*; which is confirmed by twenty-one MSS (two ancient), and nine more have צ upon a rasure, and therefore had probably at first שָׂרִי.” —Lowth. This second alternative simply means that Syria, who had been an ally to Ephraim, would turn against Ephraim. And not Syria alone, but also the Philistines.

signifying ‘behind.’” The Vulgate (V) thus has: “Syriam ab Oriente, et Philistiim ab Occidente,” and the LXX (G), “The Syrians from the east, and, the Philistines from the west.” ¶ *And they shall devour Israel with open mouth.* With these words Isaiah paints a picture of the horror and completeness of the attack. ¶ *For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.* In connection with the Lord, the words *hand* (יָד) and his *arm* (זְרוֹעַ) are reflexive of the power of God: “I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments” (Exodus 6:6b); “Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, ... by a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm (וּבְיָד חֲזָקָה וּבְזְרוֹעַ נְטוּיָה), ... according to all that the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the LORD he is God; there is none else beside him” (Deuteronomy 4:34–35). The idea of a hand that is stretched out is frequent in Isaiah, and the expression “stretched out still” appears four times in ISAIAH 9–10. This expression means that the Lord is not asleep or gone away on a trip, but that His hand or power is very much alive and active. In ISAIAH 9 and 10, it is equivalent to the repeated expression in *Rain in Due Season*, Leviticus 26, “and will punish you yet seven times for your sins.” The number *seven* in Hebrew has a special significance, and among its meanings is the implication of perfection. Seven or שֶׁבַע often stands for the word *perfect*. So the Lord would punish Israel with a *perfect* punishment. In the latter days the Lord would explain that likewise, *Endless Punishment* meant *God’s Punishment*: “For, behold, the mystery of godliness, how great is it! For, behold, I am endless, and the punishment which is given from my hand is endless punishment, for Endless is my name” (D&C 13:10a).

13 For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the LORD of hosts.

וְהָעָם לֹא־שָׁב. Regarding ו, often translated as *and* (e.g., Targum, T and Vulgate, V), rather than the Hebrew כִּי, that is, *for*. Calvin explains, “The copulative ו is rendered by some interpreters *for*, as if the Prophet were assigning a reason why the Lord does not cease to employ his scourges in the continual infliction of chastisements; that is, because *the people* are so hardened and obstinate that they will not repent.” The fact is here mentioned, that the people *turneth not* (לֹא־שָׁב), that is, refuse to repent. One of the first signs of repentance might be that of seeking after the Lord.

14 Therefore ~~will~~ the LORD ~~will~~ cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush in one day.

15 The ancient ~~and honourable~~, he [is] the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he [is] the tail.

Therefore will the LORD cut off from Israel head and tail. Isaiah interprets verse 14 for us by explaining that: “The ancient, he is the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail.” The prophets referred to here are either the *false prophets*—those who had not been ordained and commissioned by the Lord—or the *fallen prophets*. In the whole of the Bible narrative there were few men of God who fell away. Most likely, Isaiah was speaking of the false prophet.²⁶ This verse, then, can be better understood if we fill in the missing ellipsis, “the *false prophet* that teacheth lies.” As LDS we often equate the word *prophet* with the leader of the Lord’s Church upon the earth, the *Prophet, Seer, and Revelator*. While some prophets in former times also led the Church (Moses, Joshua, and Nephi being notable examples), many prophets had no administrative obligations. Furthermore, there often were several prophets serving the Lord upon the earth at one time. In olden times there was also what was called the “school of the prophets,”²⁷ not totally unlike the school of the prophets instituted by the Lord during Brother Joseph’s time. In D&C 88:127 we read that the school of the prophets was established so Church leaders and officers could be instructed in the ways of the Lord. ¶ *The ancient*. These seem to be the elders who preferred error over light. Such as when the elders came to Samuel and asked to have a king like unto other nations (1 Samuel 8:4–5). In another instance, the elders acted in all prudence, such as when they advised Solomon’s son, Rehoboam, to act in kindness toward the people (1 Kings 12:6–7). So, this class of men included those who advised the kings or rulers. In the

²⁶ In Ezekiel 13:3 we read: “Thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!” In Jeremiah the Lord also speaks of false prophets that He did not send: “Then the Lord said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart” (Jeremiah 14:14). Also see Jeremiah 23:14.

²⁷ ISBE has, “Since the days of Samuel we hear of schools of prophets, or ‘sons of prophets.’ These associations probably originated in this way, that an experienced prophet attracted to himself bands of youths, who sought to receive a measure of his spirit. These disciples of the prophets, together with their families, lived in colonies around the master.”

time of Isaiah and Jeremiah, most of these elders were past feeling in terms of spiritual matters. ¶ *Head and tail / Branch and rush*. Isaiah seems to avail himself of both expressions—head and tail—to ridicule the leaders of the people, and most especially the pretended prophets, for whom he reserved the ‘honor’ of being the tail. Alexander explains, “The false prophets are called the *tail* ... because the false prophets were morally the basest of the people, and because they were the servile adherents and supporters of the wicked rulers.” In contrast to the high branches, rushes grow in swamps or marshes. This description is probably reserved for the common people, who normally are more humble and tend to follow the Lord, to indicate that even they had despised and turned away from the Holy One. The rush stands in contrast to the branch, or the higher class. All had done wickedly before the Lord. ¶ *In one day*. The word *day* יום can have different significations, such as a 24 hour period of time or a season. In one day means quickly, at one time, and refers to the elders and false priests as well as society and the common people, all of which would be affected at the same time. All would be punished. Note the textual deletion in the Book of Mormon of the expression: “and honourable.”

16 For the leaders of this people ~~cause~~ [them] to err; and [they that are] led of ~~them~~ [are] destroyed.

✓ or, they that call them blessed ✓ ✓ or, called blessed of
✓ ✓ ✓ swallowed

The people deserve to be led by those who should have pointed the way by their good example, but instead, have led their followers astray by their own iniquity. So it is that Alma laments the bad example set by his son Corianton: “Behold, O my son, how great iniquity ye brought upon the Zoramites; for when they saw your conduct they would not believe in my words. And now the Spirit of the Lord doth say unto me: Command thy children to do good, lest they lead away the hearts of many people to destruction; therefore I command you, my son, in the fear of God, that ye refrain from your iniquities; That ye turn to the Lord with all your mind, might, and strength; that ye lead away the hearts of no more to do wickedly; but rather return unto them, and acknowledge your faults and that wrong which ye have done.” (Alma 39:11–13).

17 Therefore the Lord shall have no joy in their young men, neither shall have mercy on their fatherless and widows; for every one of them [is] ~~an~~ a hypocrite and an evildoer, and every mouth speaketh

folly[✓]. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand [is] stretched out still.

✓ or, villany

In a General Conference one of the Brethren was lamenting that he had been driving behind some young women who behaved in the most indelicate way, and where lacking in the virtues of femininity and decency.²⁸ As these young women had made themselves gross, so it would be that young men, the fatherless, and the widows, often mentioned as groups for whose wellbeing the Lord is especially concerned, would become evil in the sight of God, for they would speak and do vulgarly. In Deuteronomy 28:54, 56, *Rain in Due Season*, the Lord speaks of both the tender and delicate men and women who would act in the grossest manner. Note the marginal || note on the word folly. Rawlinson explains: “The word translated here (and generally) ‘folly’²⁹ is rendered ‘villany’ in ISAIAH 32:6 and Jeremiah 29:23. Its proper meaning seems to be ‘lewdness’ or ‘profligacy.’”

18 For wickedness burneth as the fire; it shall devour the briers and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forests, and they shall mount up [like] the lifting up of smoke.

For wickedness burneth as the fire; it shall devour the briers and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forests. Fire would consume the wicked as fire devours dry briers, thorns and even forests. See for instance, the parable of the wheat and the tares (Matthew 13:30). This, in contrast to the purifying effect of fire on the righteous: “Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” (ISAIAH 33:14b). ¶ *And they shall mount up like the lifting up of smoke.* This expression shows the awfulness of the consuming fire rising to the skies together with terrible smoke. This in contrast to the untold joy of those who turn to the Lord: “But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint” (ISAIAH 40:31).

²⁸ Elder Richard G. Scott, *The Sanctity of Womanhood*, General Conference, April 2000.

²⁹ The Hebrew, נְבִילָה, Green prefers to translate as “foolishness.”

From the root נָבַל, senseless, foolish, disgraceful, ungodly, wicked, and impious—opposite of noble and distinguished (BDB, AHCL).

19 Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts is the land darkened, and the people shall be as the fuel[✓] of the fire; no man shall spare his brother.

✓ or, meat

Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts is the land darkened, and the people shall be as the fuel of the fire. It can be said that there are clouds of spiritual darkness, “The people that walked in darkness &c.” (ISAIAH 9:2a). But also, fire can reach such proportions that the land can be darkened by clouds of thick smoke. Smoke from burning all things in its path, including men. Kay quotes a description of an event that seems a type of things to come: “After the great forest fires of 1871 in Wisconsin and Michigan, ‘so deep was the darkness caused by immense volume of smoke that the sun was totally obscured for a distance of 200 miles. This midnight darkness continued for a week’ (‘The Guardian,’ 1 Nov. 1871).” ¶ It is not possible to read that “people shall be as the fuel of the fire” without thinking of the untold atrocities of the Holocaust (or Shoah, שואה), where millions of Jews were systematically slaughtered and burned. ¶ *No man shall spare his brother.* While there are many reasons why wicked men will die in the last days, perhaps none of them is more horrible than the carnage produced when man lifts his hand against man.

20 And he shall snatch[✓] on the right hand and be hungry; and he shall eat on the left hand and they shall not be satisfied; they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm:

✓ or, cut

Here is a strong allusion to the punishments promised in *Rain in Due Season* if Israel would not repent and lean upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel. “And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee: So that the man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children which he shall leave: So that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat: because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates. The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot

upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter, And toward her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and toward her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates” (Deuteronomy 28:53–57). Likewise, we find, “And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat every one the flesh of his friend in the siege and straitness, wherewith their enemies, and they that seek their lives, shall straiten them” (Jeremiah 19:9). The Talmud tradition (Seder Mo’ed, Shabbath 33a) does well in suggesting: “Read not, the flesh of his own arm [זרעו], but, the flesh of his own seed [זרעו]” (Talmud, Soncino). Lowth (in support of Secker) prefers to translate *flesh of his own arm* as the *flesh of his neighbour*. I understand the flesh of his *own arm* as that of members of his family, clan or tribe. “The Chaldee manifestly reads רעו, not זרעו; for he renders it by קריביו, *his neighbour*. And Jeremiah has the very same expression: ואיש בשר רעהו אכלו, ‘And every one shall eat the flesh of his neighbour’ (Jeremiah 19:9).³⁰ Lowth explains that such a context fits perfectly well with the next verse, where Manasseh and Ephraim would fight against each other, and then together against Judah. The expression קריביו can also be translated as *relative*, besides *neighbor*. The Targum (ܬ) substitutes *substance (property, goods or possessions)* for *flesh*, נכסי קריביו יבזין, both here in Isaiah and in Jeremiah 19:9, “they shall plunder everyone the goods of his neighbour.” The context in both scriptures is one of extreme famine. The Syriac (ܣ) renders it, “... they shall eat every man the flesh of his own kinsmen.” The LXX (ܬ) reads, “... and a man shall by no means be satisfied with eating the flesh of his own arm.” Alexander suggests, “Judah and Joseph were the most important branches of the stock of Israel, as well before as after the disruption; and secondly, because the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh were more nearly related to each other than to any of the rest, and therefore their hostility afforded the most striking illustration of the mutual rancour which the Prophet has described as prevalent.” Delitzsch says, “This interminable self-immolation, and the regicide associated with the jealousy of the different tribes, shook the northern kingdom again and again to its utter destruction. And the readiness with which the

unbrotherly feelings of the northern tribes towards one another could turn into combined hostility towards Judah, was evident enough from the Syro-Ephraimitish war, the consequences of which had not passed away at the time when these prophecies were uttered. This hostility on the part of the brother kingdoms would still further increase. And the end of the judgments of wrath had not come yet.” Nägelsbach comments, “It may be said that the Israelites did themselves more harm than all foreign foes could ever have done. Thus dissension was the destruction of Israel.” All of this reminds us of the atrocious wars among the unbrotherly nations of the Nephites and Lamanites upon the American continent.

21 Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh; [and] they together [shall be] against Judah. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand [is] stretched out still.

There shall be hatred among brothers, between Manasseh and Ephraim (both in Northern Israel), as well as the two against their brother Judah³¹ (continued contention between the Northern Kingdom and Judah). Such contention in itself could give rise to sieges and great hunger among the people (Isaiah 9:20). “Manasseh and Ephraim were the two sons of Joseph (Genesis 46:20), and their names are used as expressive of tender union friendship: compare Genesis 48:20. The tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh were near each other, and they always were allied together. The expression here denotes that they who had hitherto been joined in tender alliance, would be rent into contending factions, thirsting for each other’s blood” (Barnes). Gladly, in the latter days, with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, these disputes and hatred between the tribes would end among those who would join The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: “And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all” (Ezekiel 37:22).

The first four verses of chapter 10 are a direct continuation of these verses, beginning with verse Isaiah 9:8.

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³⁰ “And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat every one the flesh of his friend in the siege and straitness, wherewith their enemies, and they that seek their lives, shall straiten them” (Jeremiah 19:9).

³¹ Although literally Judah was uncle to Ephraim and Manasseh, through the blessing of Jacob, they were made essentially brothers.

Isaiah 10

The Lord is unhappy with Israel's behavior, more specifically, with the way she has treated the poor. The role that Assyria would play in humbling Judah is detailed. Because Assyria would boast of having done this of her own accord and power she would be humbled herself. This is a type of the last days, when Jerusalem shall be attacked by the gentile nations of the earth but the Lord shall be her salvation.

vv. 1–4 constitute the fourth warning in a row to Israel, each of which ends with “but his hand is stretched out still.” These verses belong with those of ISAIAH 9, when “The Lord sent a word into Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel” (ISAIAH 9:8). This woe, or complaint against Israel, comes because of the way she treated her poor.

1 ¶ **WOE** unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness[✓] [which] they have prescribed;

✓ or, to the writers that write grievousness

WOE unto them that decree unrighteous decrees. The Lord is not pleased with those who are unjust or unrighteous, especially with those who pass unrighteous rulings. Woe. In ISAIAH 18 we note that **הוֹי**—*Hoy!*—can be a salutation, while here it is more of a sigh, *Ah!* a calling attention to the wicked. The Hebrew word for judge is **שֹׁפֵט**. “In the early patriarchal times the heads of families and the elders of the tribes were the judges” (ISBE). All people who rule—whether they be the kings of Judah or Ephraim, or those who passed judgment at the gates of Jerusalem, parents and supervisors—may well be said to also be judges. Every individual may profitably ask this question: Am I involved in righteous judgment? Giving *righteous judgment* is one of the most praiseworthy traits. Through Jeremiah, the Lord Himself gives us the example we are to emulate: “Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD” (Jeremiah 9:23–24). ¶ *And that write grievousness which they have prescribed.* Barnes explains, “It does not refer to the mere scribes, or recorders of the judicial opinions, but to the judges themselves, who pronounced the sentence, and caused it to be recorded.” Calvin

explains that the Lord: “attacks generally, and without distinction, princes and magistrates, who oppressed the people by unjust and tyrannical decrees, in such a manner that they approached to absolute robbery; and therefore he includes every class of magistrates and governors.”

2 To turn aside **away** the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and [that] they may rob the fatherless!

The scriptures frequently warn us against taking advantage of the poor, the widow, the orphan, and the foreign immigrant¹—all those who have the least recourse to defend themselves. “To turn away the needy from judgment” takes place when those in authority either refuse to hear the plight of the needy or favor the wealthy *without regard to the merits* of the case. The Lord’s standard of *righteous* (**צְדִיקָה**)

judgment (**מִשְׁפָּט**) is expressed in Leviticus 19:15, and

¹ In *Deseret News* we read: “Amid the controversy swirling around President Trump’s executive order banning refugees from seven Muslim countries, the LDS Church issued a statement late Saturday night urging solutions that relieve refugee suffering. ‘The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is concerned about the temporal and spiritual welfare of all of God’s children across the earth,’ the statement said, ‘with special concern for those who are fleeing physical violence, war and religious persecution. The church urges all people and governments to cooperate fully in seeking the best solutions to meet human needs and relieve suffering.’” ... This is the second time the LDS Church has responded to a call by Trump to block immigration. Church leaders issued a strong statement in December 2015 soon after Trump, on the campaign trail, called for a ban on Muslim immigration to the United States. Like Saturday’s statement, the December 2015 statement did not name Trump or refer specifically to the controversy, but it said that while the faith is neutral in regard to party politics and election campaigns, ‘it is not neutral in relation to religious freedom.’ It drew on two statements by church founder Joseph Smith to reaffirm its longstanding position of support for religious pluralism. In 1841, Smith was the mayor of the largely Mormon city of Nauvoo, Illinois, when it passed a religious freedom ordinance that protected the rights of all faiths. In 1843, Smith said he was willing to die to defend the religious freedom rights of people of any denomination” 28 January 2017.

protects both the poor and the rich, “Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor” (Leviticus 19:15). ¶ Among the various other definitions of נָטָה (root of לְהַטּוֹת), apart from *turn aside*, is *to turn away* (Gesenius), as it is translated in the Book of Mormon. ¶ *Prey ... rob, יָבִיד, ... שָׁלַל*. Kay astutely observes that some of the same Hebrew roots in the name *Maher-shalal-hash-baz*, מְהֵרָה שָׁלַל הָשַׁבַּז (ISAIAH 8:1, *To speed to the spoil, he hasteneth the prey*), are found here and in ISAIAH 10:6, and adds: “Yes;—that was why Asshur was let loose upon them to plunder and to spoil. Asshur was but the rod in the hand of Retributive Justice; meting out the law.”

3 And what will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation [which] shall come from far? to whom will ye flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory?

And what will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from far? To whom will ye flee for help? The inherent question seems to be, “Since you have not turned to the Lord when you leaned upon man, to whom do you plan to turn to in your day of trouble?” Regarding the *day of visitation*, Alexander notes: “Cocceius understands by the phrase, here and elsewhere, even in Psalm 8:5, the time when God should be incarnate, and literally visit his people as a man. According to the usage of the Old Testament, the *day of visitation* is a time when God manifests his presence specially, whether in mercy or in wrath, but most frequently the latter.” For Israel, that day of affliction and visitation would come from afar, from Assyria² itself. ¶ *And where will ye leave your glory?* In Exodus the word *glory* כְּבוֹד was frequently used in reference to theophany, or the visitation of the Lord’s presence, as in אֶת־כְּבוֹד יְהוָה, the *glory of the Lord* (Exodus 16:7). Yet here we see the contrast between the Lord’s glory and the honor of man. The latter is

² “Assyria, a Greek name formed from Asshur (אַשּׁוּר; Ἀσσοῦρ, Assoúr): The primitive capital of the country ... which was built on the western bank of the Tigris” (ISBE). Furthermore, Asshur was “originally a colony from Babylonia, and was ruled by viceroys from that kingdom. It was a mountainous region laying to the north of Babylonia, extending along the Tigris as far as to the high mountain range of Armenia, the Gordiaean or Carduchian mountains. It was founded in B.C. 1700 under Bel-kap-kapu, and became an independent and a conquering power, and shook off the yoke of its Babylonian masters” (*Easton’s Bible Dictionary*).

fleeting. Israel was about to be humiliated and dishonored.

4 Without me they shall bow down under the prisoners, and they shall fall under the slain. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand [is] stretched out still.

Without me they shall bow down under the prisoners, and they shall fall under the slain. Certainly, without the Lord, Israel would be humbled. The Syriac (ܣ) has, “Without me you shall bow down under the prisoners, and you shall fall under the slain.” The idea, in either case, is that some would be taken prisoners; others would taste death. ¶ *For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.* This is the fourth and final reminder, in these verses, that the Lord has given a stern warning that better be heeded—each one an allusion to *Rain in Due Season*.

vv. 5–19. With ISAIAH 10:5 a new prophecy begins. The Lord turns Isaiah’s attention from that of Israel to that of Asshur. In these verses the Lord makes it clear that if Assyria punishes Israel, it is because the Lord has permitted her to do so. Therefore, Assyria should not boast nor overstep her boundaries. She could have accomplished nothing on her own. About Assyria, the Lord would say, “Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest” (ISAIAH 37:29).

5 ¶ O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is ~~mine~~ their indignation.

✓ or, Woe to the Assyrian ✓ ✓ Asshur
✓ ✓ ✓ though

Once again Isaiah begins with הוֹי, here intended to be a sigh, *Ah!* or a *woe*. Delitzsch says, “The הוֹי (woe) pronounced upon Israel becomes a הוֹי upon Asshur.” The Lord calls Assyria “the rod of mine anger,” and in the Book of Mormon “the staff in their hand is their indignation,” speaking of the staff in Assyrian hands. The LXX (6) preserves a reading that is closer to that of the Book of Mormon: “Woe to the Assyrians; the rod of my wrath, and anger are in their hands.” The Inspired Version preserves the Masoretic (מ) rendering. Monte S. Nyman observes: “In Mormon 4:5 we read, ‘But, behold, the judgments of God will overtake the wicked; and it is by the wicked that the wicked are punished.’”

6 I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down[✓] like the mire of the streets.

✓ lay them a treading

I will send him against an hypocritical nation. Who is meant by “him”? It seems to be Assyria, as represented by Sennacherib, the King of Asshur: “... the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory” (ISAIAH 8:7). Israel of that day is the hypocritical nation who had rejected the Lord and had rather be governed by earthly kings rather than their King and their God (1 Samuel 10:19). ¶ *And against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.* Or, as most translators render it, with capitalized letters to represent the Lord who is doing the sending, “And against the people of My wrath &c.” Once again we see the words spoil (שָׁלַל) and prey (בָּזָז) as a reminder of מִהַר שָׁלַל חֶשֶׁל בָּזָז. Such repetition³ gives emphasis to each, and could be translated as to *utterly spoil and plunder* or, as Green has it, “to plunder plunder and spoil spoil.” Seeing the Hebrew (מִהַר) gives us an idea of the forcefulness of the original. Assyria and King Sennacherib were sent to spoil (plunder) Israel; and to prey upon her (perhaps includes the idea of taking Israel captive); and to tread them down like the mire of the streets (to trample the people down like dirt or mud in the streets). In those days there were probably few streets paved with stones, and most dirt roadways were easily turned to mud with a little rain.

7 Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but [it is] in his heart it is to destroy and cut off nations not a few.

Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so. This transitional verse seems to be saying that Sennacherib is not content with doing what he was permitted to accomplish, but rather, he wanted to do much more. “But he does not so intend, nor does he so plan in his heart” (Berkeley). Frances Siewert uses a translation approach where she attempts to give the meaning of a word in its various colors: “However, this

³ In Hebrew, *repetition* of the same word is used to give it emphasis, as we saw in ISAIAH 6:3, with the word *holy* or קָדֹשׁ.

is not his intention [nor is the Assyrian aware that he is doing this at My bidding], neither does his mind so think *and* plan” (AMP). ¶ *But in his heart it is to destroy and cut off nations not a few.* It was the intention of Sennacherib, the king of Asshur, to not only castigate Israel, but other nations such as Egypt, Babylonia, Media and others. Although these things were in his wicked heart, the Lord “is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12b).

8 For he saith: [Are] not my princes altogether kings?

Sennacherib, the king of Assyria is quoted here through ISAIAH 10:11, and then again in ISAIAH 10:13–14. The Targum (ܬ) reads: “For he saith, Are not all my rulers altogether as kings considered before me?” The LXX (Θ) has, “And if they should say to him, Thou alone art ruler.” King Asshur boasts that his provincial rulers are as kings, and that he is thus a *king of kings*.⁴ Gladly, we have a number of just such boastful inscriptions preserved⁵ from various monarchs of the time.

9 [Is] not Calno as Carchemish? [is] not Hamath as Arpad? [is] not Samaria as Damascus?

Henderson explains: “The boast of the Assyrian monarch is, that none of these cities, however strongly fortified, had been able to resist his arms; they had all equally fallen before him.” Rawlinson, speaking of the

⁴ Similar titles of supremacy can be found in various societies, such as Shahinshah, ‘the Shah of Shahs’ in Persia (Henderson).

⁵ “I scattered, I stormed and conquered their town ... I carried away as booty ..., his horses, broken to the yoke. I slew with the sword During this battle I personally captured ... I conquered the great cities ... I overthrew the ... (so that they became) like ruin-hills (left by) the flood. I received tribute from the kings of ... I marched straightaway, unopposed ... through the wide seashore. I fashioned a stela with an image of myself as overlord in order to make my name/fame lasting forever ... I ascended the mountains of the Amanus, I cut there cedar and pine timber ... I killed 2,900 of [their] battle-experienced soldiers; 14,600 I brought away as prisoners of war ... I crossed the Tigris and approached the towns of ... They became afraid of the terror emanating from my position of overlord, as well as the splendor of my fierce weapons, and killed [their own—GB] master with their own weapons. I entered the towns ... and brought my gods/images into his palaces ... I opened (his) treasury, inspected what he had hidden; I carried away as booty his possessions, bringing (them) to my town Asshur ... I departed from the banks of the Euphrates and approached Aleppo (*Hal-man*). They (i.e., the inhabitants of Aleppo) were afraid to fight and seized my feet (in submission). I received silver and gold as their tribute and offered sacrifices before the Adad of Aleppo ... [And so many were killed in a battle that—GB] with their corpses I spanned the Orontes before there was a bridge.” (Shalmaneser III, 858-824 BC, pp. 189-190, in Pritchard). *The Ancient Near East, Volume 1: Anthology of Texts and Pictures*. Princeton University Press, 6th Paperback printing, 1973, pp. see also pp. 188-210.

punishment to come upon Asshur, says, “The menace is not levelled against any one particular king, as Sargon, or Sennacherib; but against the monarchy itself, which from first to last was actuated by the same spirit, and breathed the same tone, of pride, selfishness, and cruelty.” ¶ According to Alexander, Carchemish “was a fortified town on an island on the Euphrates ..., *Calno* was the *Ctesiphon* of the Greeks, on the east bank of the Tigris opposite Selucia ..., *Hamath* was a city of Syria, on the [river] Orontes ..., *Arpad*, another town of Syria, near Hamath.” Commentators offer varying opinions on which peoples were meant and the geographical locations of these places but we get the idea that the Assyrians felt that no city or nation could stand up to them but would rather fall without resistance.

10 As my hand hath founded the kingdoms of the idols, and whose graven images did excel them of Jerusalem and of Samaria;

As my hand hath founded the kingdoms of the idols. For the expression **נִסְּאָה** in the Biblia Hebraica, the Book of Mormon and the Inspired Version have, ‘hath founded’ rather than the usual translation, ‘hath found.’ Gesenius gives several possible definitions for the root, **נָסָא**. Interestingly, Gesenius explains that especially when **נִסְּאָה** is used with **יָד**, *hand*, the meaning often is that of *acquiring* something, which fits well with the Book of Mormon definition, *hath founded* (established): Gesenius has, “‘My hand has acquired (something),’ i.q. I have obtained, got for myself, Leviticus 25:28; Job 31:25.” Of these, Job 31:25b is of special interest to us, “because mine hand had gotten.” Other words include *gain*, *discover*, *secure* (BDB), all of which represent the idea of *founding*. The King of Asshur was such a narcissist, that he probably considered the previous inhabitants of these places hardly civilized peoples, and thus he now considered himself, much like some of the conquerors of old, the founder of these civilizations. Sennacherib thinks that he has defeated other nations much greater, in his mind, than either Jerusalem (capital of Judah), or Samaria (capital of Ephraim); nations where *the idols* **הָאֱלֹהִים**, or as Cheyne would say, the *no gods* (see ISAIAH 2:8) were impotent beside those of Asshur. But the Lord is about to show Asshur the worthlessness of all idols. ¶ *And whose graven images did excel them of Jerusalem and of Samaria.* A *graven image* is often defined as one that is carved out of wood or hewn out of rock. Several Hebraists suggest that the idea that the idols from the already conquered lands *excelled* those of Jerusalem and Samaria is contained in one of the meanings of **נָסָא**, where the **נ** *nun* is dropped

and the **מ** *mem* is incorporated into the word. Gesenius explains how **נָסָא** is sometimes used as a comparison of both *number* and *power*. So it is that the letter **נ** appears before the name of each of these cities in: **מִירוּשָׁלַם וּמִשָּׁמָרֹן**. A more literal translation would yield, “excel them of **Jerusalem** and excel them of **Samaria**.” Alexander says, “... the great majority of writers, not excepting the most learned of the Rabbins, David Kimhi, ... takes **נָסָא** as a particle of comparison.”

11 Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and to her idols?

Rabbi David Kimhi suggests that this verse was pronounced at a later time than ISAIAH 10:10 (in Gill). ISAIAH 10:10 seems to have Sennacherib looking ahead to the conquering of both Jerusalem and Samaria. In ISAIAH 10:11 the conquest of Samaria and removal of the 10 tribes of Israel seems to already have taken place. It is also possible that Isaiah is shown the future bragging of Sennacherib (see ISAIAH 36). Yet another possibility is that Sennacherib is building up his arguments slowly, first separating the children of Israel from the rest of the subjugated nations, and then adding Samaria to the list of the conquered. While it is true that Judah was greatly guilty of idolatry (Jeremiah 2:28, see also 11:10–13; 19:4, 13), these blasphemous words imply that the Holy One of Israel is *just one more idol* standing in the way of the King of Asshur.

12 Wherefore it shall come to pass, [that], when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon mount Zion and upon Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks.

- ✓ visit upon
- ✓ greatness of the heart

Wherefore it shall come to pass, that, when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon mount Zion and upon Jerusalem. The boasting of the Assyrian king is interrupted by a chastening word from the Lord. While Asshur would be permitted to greatly punish Judah and siege Jerusalem, Sennacherib would not accomplish his plans but would be punished herself. It would be Babylon who would subjugate Judah and Jerusalem. Rome and other powers would subsequently trample Jerusalem anew. Another meaning for *performed* for the Hebrew **יָכַזַּע** is *finished* (HALOT). A similar use

for כַּיָּצֵר is made in Zechariah: “The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you” (Zechariah 4:9). The word often means to *cut off*, or *sever*, or bring to an end, “a metaphor taken from a weaver who cuts off the finished web from the thrum” (Gesenius). This clause in Isaiah, then, seems to say that as soon as the Lord will have accomplished what he wanted in terms of punishing His people, the chastisement would then fall upon Asshur. ¶ *I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks.* Likewise in Jeremiah 6:19a we have, “Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts.” The Lord had permitted Assyria this moment of glory, but now would punish her for her prideful arrogance.⁶ Pride and ingratitude seem to go together.⁷ Here pride has been manifested in both the heart and in the lofty looks of the monarch.

13 For he saith: By the strength of my hand, ~~I have done [it]~~, and by my wisdom I have done these things; for I am prudent; and I have removed the bounds borders of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant [man]; ✓

✓ or, many people

For he saith: By the strength of my hand, and by my wisdom I have done these things. The Assyrian king sings his own praises, and gives merit to his own wisdom and strength. In the history of Israel many nations have been put in a position to bring the children of Jacob in line, but when they have done so cruelly and overstepped their bounds, they have been punished in turn. ¶ *For I am prudent; and I have moved the borders of the people, and have robbed their treasures.* Moffatt has it, “I shifted the boundaries of nations” The King of Asshur brags of being a prudent or wise man, who was able to enlarge the borders of Asshur and in the process steal and plunder the treasures of the conquered peoples. Some suggest that this may have reference to the Assyrian practice of moving conquered people from their own territories to other lands (Henry, based on White), in an effort to further prevent the uprising of conquered nations. Alexander explains it, rather, as that of “destroying the distinctions between nations by incorporation in a single empire.” An interesting citation, regarding the moving of borders by Vul-

Nirari I, King of Asshur, about 1320 B.C., which is mentioned by a number of exegetes who follow Dr. Weir includes the fact that the king was a “noble prince appointed by heaven [and] established by the gods ... [and thus was a] remover of boundaries and landmarks.”⁸ Alexander follows Lowth in emphasizing the plurality of *peoples* as found in the Biblia Hebraica, עַמִּים. ¶ *And I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man.* The Biblia Hebraica has, rather, *like a valiant*, פֶּאֶבִּיר, permitting one to fill in the ellipsis with the word *man*. אַבִּיר means brave, mighty, valiant, powerful. Some (Delitzsch, Moffatt) would fill the ellipsis with the word *bull*, and while indeed the scriptures do have instances where bulls or equines are meant, Gesenius points out that the word *bull*, such as *bulls of Bashan*, is sometimes used as a euphemism for royalty. The allusion to a mixture between a mighty *bull* (hook in the nose) and a *stallion* (bridle in the lips) is used by the Lord as he humiliates Asshur: “Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.”

14 And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs [that are] left, have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped.

And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs that are left, have I gathered all the earth. The Assyrian king bragged that the plundering was as easy as gathering eggs that are left in a nest. The Targum (ܬ) reads, “And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs that are left, I have gathered all the inhabitants of the earth.” ¶ *And there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped.* The Targum (ܬ) continues, “And there was none that moved from thence and flew thither, that opened his mouth and spoke a word.” There were not even the birds or chickens to defend these nests, the analogy continues, because they had flown away by the fear of his approach. This is the end of the discourse of the Assyrian king. The next verse begins a stinging rebuke by the Lord.

⁶ For another example, in New Testament times, see Acts 12:20-23.

⁷ D&C 59:21.

⁸ Smith, George. *Assyrian Discoveries: An Account of Explorations and Discoveries on the Site of Nineveh during 1873 and 1874*, Scribner, Armstrong & Co.: New York, 1875, pp. 243-244.

15 Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? [or] shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake [itself] against them that lift it up, ✓ [or] as if the staff should lift up [itself as if it were] no wood! ✓ ✓

- ✓ or, a rod should shake them that lift it up
- ✓ ✓ or, that which is not wood

Using four examples to make his point, the Lord shows that the Assyrian king is no more able to boast of his deeds as the axe, the saw, the rod, and the staff, all of which are tools handled and applied by another person. Without an external force acting upon these, they are useless. The Assyrian king, who so much boasts of his conquering activities, is likewise no more than a tool in the hands of God. The expression *no wood* **לֹא עֵץ** here signifies that these inanimate objects, most of which had a wooden handle through which a person would move them, were pretending to be beings that acted for themselves rather than simply wood. Lowth explains: “The Hebrews have a peculiar way of joining the negative particle **לֹא** to a noun, to signify in a strong manner a total negation of the thing expressed by the noun,” Lowth gives several examples: “How hast thou given help, **לֹא כֹחַ**, to the *no-strength*? And saved the arm, **לֹא עֵז**, of the *no-power*? How hast thou given counsel, **לֹא חֲכָמָה**, to the *no-wisdom*?” that is, the man totally deprived of strength, power, and wisdom: Job 26:2,3.” Other examples given by Lowth include Amos 6:13, *in no-thing* **לֹא דָבָר**; Hosea 11:9, *and no-man* **לֹא אִישׁ**. Some have well suggested that the allusion goes past the idea of man, **אִישׁ**, to that of **אֱלֹהִים**, God: “If Isaiah, as the context shows, by not-wood means men, it is on the supposition that the reader of himself will recognize the true contrast (not-wood but much greater) and the (even phonetic) allusion to **לֹא-עֵץ**” (Nägelsbach); “... and so in the present instance by him who is *not wood*, is meant God, who is of a nature altogether different” (Henderson). ¶ In all of this, let there be no confusion that the false doctrine of *predestination* is at play. Barnes correctly explains: “In all these passages, however, there is not the slightest intimation that the Assyrian was not *free*. There is no fate; no compulsion. He regarded himself as a free moral agent; he did what he pleased; he never supposed that he was urged on by any power that violated his own liberty. If he did what he pleased he was free.” In other words, the principle of *moral agency* was always in

effect. It should also be understood we are not tempted by the Lord to act in negative ways, but that rather, the Lord knows us so well that He perceives the very intent and desires of our hearts (Alma 41). And of course, while Satan cannot read our mind, he has a fair idea about our desires. Gladly, the Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “The devil has no power over us only as we permit him. The moment we revolt at anything which comes from God, the devil takes power”⁹

16 Therefore shall the Lord, the LORD of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire.

Therefore shall the Lord, the LORD of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness. The expression *therefore*, **לָכֵן**, is used to tie together what has been said, to the punishment that would fall on the Assyrians. Here the fat ones represent the Assyrians who have boasted of great strength. Sometime after the Assyrian triumph over Ephraim, her power began to dwindle, while Babylonia gained strength. Some have suggested that this is the same *consumption* (*Rain in Due Season*) mentioned in Leviticus 26:16 and Deuteronomy 28:22, but there the word used is **שִׁחָפָת**, while here it is **רֵיוֹן**. ¶ *And under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire.* Some translators take the burning and associate it with the wasting disease, and thus render the second half of this verse: “And beneath his glory kindle a fever burning like a fire” (NJB). While the term *glory* in this verse seems to refer to the king of Asshur or his people, a related term in ISAIAH 10:17, “the light of Israel” speaks of the glory of God, which does the burning. The transition is particularly poetical in the Spanish version: “Por tanto el Señor Jehova de los ejércitos enviará flaqueza sobre sus gordos; y debajo de su gloria encenderá encendimiento, como encendimiento de fuego. Y la luz de Israel será por fuego, y su Santo por llama que abrase y consuma en un día sus cardos y sus espinas” (SB1906). The expression **יִקְדַּח יִקְדַּח בִּיקְדֹחַ אֵשׁ** is translated as *kindle a burning like the burning of a fire* (KJV). Note the paronomasia, or play on words, in the Hebrew text (**מִן**). Delitzsch writes: “In accordance with Isaiah’s masterly art of painting in tones, the whole passage is so expressed, that we can hear the crackling, and spluttering, and hissing of the fire, as it seizes upon everything within its reach.” We read in the LDS introduction to this verse: “Destruction of Assyria is a type of destruction of the wicked at the second coming.”

⁹ Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 181.

17 And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: and it shall burn and shall devour his thorns and his briers in one day;

And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame. This is a parallel statement with the same meaning. The *Light of Israel* and the *Holy One* represent Christ. Henderson writes: “אֵשׁ-יִשְׂרָאֵל, Jehovah is called the *Light of Israel*, because he was the author of their prosperity and happiness; so that the phrase contains a double metaphor.” Alexander adds: “There seems to be an antithesis between light and fire. He who was a light to Israel was a fire to Assyria.” This light will either purify¹⁰ or burn. ¶ *And shall burn and shall devour his thorns and his briers in one day.* The idea of *in one day*, בְּיוֹם אֶחָד, does not mean it took place literally within a 24 hour period, but rather, at one time, all of a sudden, quickly. The thorns and briers represent, here, the Assyrians and very likely the Babylonians who persecute the Lord’s people. In a broader sense, they represent all who do wickedly, and who shall burn at His coming.

18 And shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both soul and body; ✓ and they shall be as when a standard-bearer fainteth.

✓ from the soul, and even to the flesh

And shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both soul¹¹ and body. The allusion in ISAIAH 10:18–19 is to the Assyrian armies. The wicked will lose what they value—the forest,¹² the fruitful field, and man himself—destroyed by fire. Regarding the destruction of the forest, the thought is continued in the most striking manner in ISAIAH 10:19. The Targum (Ⲯ) reads, “And it shall consume the glory of the multitude of his army, and their souls with their bodies, and he shall be broken, and be a fugitive.” The fulfillment may well be both the literal one spelled out in the Hebrew text (ⲙ), as well as to the allusion of the

armies mentioned in the Targum (Ⲯ). In Isaiah we often read how the mighty men are compared to those in the plant kingdom. It is unclear as whether the thorns and briers stand for the soldiers in the field; and the fruitful field and forest the mighty royalty. Or perhaps it is a general figure for all the inhabitants, humble and proud. Barnes writes, “Perhaps in all this, there may be allusion to the proud boast of Sennacherib (2 Kings 19:23), that he would ‘go up the sides of Lebanon, and cut down the cedars thereof, and the choice fir-trees thereof, and enter into the forest of Carmel.’”

ⲙִנְפֶשׁ וְעַד-בָּשָׂר, *soul and body*. Regarding the Hebrew word for *soul*, נֶפֶשׁ, it is a hard one to translate into English as it has so many meanings. One of them has to do with breathing (HALOT) or giving life. This signification is in some ways similar to that of רוּחַ, often translated as *breathe*, *spirit*, and *wind*. So we might translate this expression here, perhaps, as *spirit and body*, both of which together compose the soul. At any rate, the expression is meant to convey the *totality* of the matter. ¶ *And they shall be as when a standard-bearer fainteth.* A *standard*, in this case, can be representative of a flag or *ensign*. Such symbols give courage, and act as a reminder, to those who fight for a cause. So it was with Moroni’s *Title of Liberty*. Now, if someone is holding up a flag or an ensign, a standard-bearer, and that person begins to faint, then people will not have the courage, for it is as if they are left without a leader, without a cause.¹³ In this verse of Isaiah, the Lord is talking about a standard bearer who is fainting. The representatives of the Assyrian power would buckle visibly. In contrast, our Standard is the Savior, יְהוָה נֹסִי, “And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it *Jehovahnissi*” (Exodus 17:15). *Jehovahnissi* means, “The LORD is our Ensign.” Indeed, Christ is our *Standard of Truth*. “The Standard of Truth has been erected; no unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be

¹⁰ “Now this is the commandment: Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name, *that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost*, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day” (3 Nephi 27:20, emphasis added).

¹¹ In this place C. Edward Nægelsbach says, “Have not the beast and the plant a soul too?”

¹² “Isaiah (10:19, 33, 34) likens the Assyrian host under Sennacherib (q.v.) to the trees of some huge forest, to be suddenly cut down by an unseen stroke” (Easton’s Bible Dictionary).

¹³ A few more thoughts here, about the recent event that shook the world about three weeks ago, September 11, 2001. Terrorists high jacked planes and flew them into the Twin Towers, and the Pentagon, and would have flown one into the Capitol Building or the White House, had it not been for some very brave men and women in that plane who brought the plane down rather than allow the terrorists to carry out their perfidious act. I have felt that had the terrorists brought down either of those two *ensigns* that represent *liberty* and *constitutional government*, they would had brought down the standard bearer [of freedom] in an even more compelling way, because of the symbolism involved.

accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done.”¹⁴

19 And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be few, [✓] that a child may write them.

✓ number

So few shall be the trees in the forest, that a child will be able to number them. Certainly, Isaiah, is a master in painting mental pictures. We know that little children are seldom able to count to a very high number. Some suggest that the trees represent the armies (Henry) or the nobles that will be left. Barnes writes, “And compared to the whole army, the remnant might bear a striking resemblance to the few decaying trees of a once magnificent forest of cedars.” I can picture in my mind a portion of Yosemite National Park after one of the big fires leaving the sides of the mountains bare except for an occasional scorched tree still standing here and there. In ISAIAH 10:33–34 we return to the subject of the decimation of the Assyrians through the figure of a forest.

vv. 20–23. We are permitted to glimpse into the latter-day glory, when the children of Jacob will no longer lean upon man, but only upon God.

20 ¶ And it shall come to pass in that day, [that] the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them, but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob. The writings now turn away from the punishment to be inflicted upon Assyria, to the glorious gathering of the remnant of Israel. After the Assyrians and Babylonians would be finished scattering Israel, only a remnant would remain. Exegetes often distinguish between a *historical* remnant (those who are left after a devastation) and an *eschatological* remnant (portions of the historical remnant who at the last day come unto the Lord).¹⁵ The words, *in that day* also clue us to the multiple fulfillment of this prophecy, and allude to the eschatological remnant of Israel as well. *Those who are escaped of the house of Jacob* is a

parallel meaning for *the remnant of Israel*. ¶ *Shall no more again stay upon him that smote them, but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.* Wildberger notes (in ISAIAH 30:12): “It is interesting to see which verbs Isaiah uses when describing the dangerous self-deception: **בטח** [see discussion in ISAIAH 30:15] (trust) and **נשען על** (rely upon).

Concerning **נשען** (see ISAIAH 1–12, p. 437); here it might be used as a parallel term for **האמין** (‘trust’). But Isaiah uses it only when he wants to speak about false trust (see ISAIAH 31:1).” The time would come that men would truly turn to the Lord (eschatological remnant) and lean upon Him. This prophecy was not fulfilled in the time of Isaiah. During the times of Jeremiah the leaning on supposedly strong nations became an even greater problem and was among the uppermost complaints on the part of Jeremiah. The periods where the people leaned on the Lord in Old Testament times as well as New Testament ones were very temporary. Rather, this is a prophecy about the remnant of Israel in the last days. Then the time would come when Israel would finally understand the importance of leaning upon the Lord in truth. We need to lean upon the Lord in confidence.¹⁶ To lean upon the Lord *in truth* (**באמת**)

¹⁶ During the first week of March 2001, the weather forecasters began to predict the “most terrible winter storm that the eastern part of the US had felt for half a century.” The storm was predicted for *exactly* the two days that I would be traveling to and returning from Pennsylvania, as I was to fly there on the 6th of March, give my short talk on the 7th, and fly back after my talk on the 7th. The day before the storm was to hit, numerous airlines announced the cancellation of flights to the affected area. This was an important trip for me, as we had paid for the airplane ticket out of our own pocket, and would be reimbursed later. Furthermore, with two of our children at BYU, and a third who would soon be accepted, our economic situation was tight. As Linda and I heard the weather reports, talk about closing down airports (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania was specifically mentioned as a trouble spot), we were quite concerned. Certainly I was scared of getting stranded in some airport along the way. I was about to write the organizer an E-mail and strongly urge her to postpone the seminar. Instead, the Spirit constrained me and reminded me that I had not inquired of the Lord. All I wrote the organizer instead was something to the effect that I would see her in a few days. The Spirit reassured me that all would be well with my trip and that I need not worry. While I had a couple of hours of delay, it was my last leg on the first day, and it was due to a mechanical malfunction that had to be cleared up, not bad weather. In fact, the weather problems were hardly seen. While there was some strong turbulence in one of the flights towards PA, there was no added snow there, as the day was truly beautiful. I crossed the Susquehanna river on the way to the hotel. During this particular trip the Lord greatly blessed me. My wife and children prayed diligently for me during this trip. My talk went particularly well and I was able to give out pass along cards where people could call a toll free phone number and have either a Church video or the Book of Mormon sent or delivered to four individuals, including the driver of the airport shuttle from the Hotel, with whom I had a wonderful gospel conversation. In no way do I want to suggest that we ought to ignore the warnings of forecasters, but rather, that above all things we need to listen to the whisperings of the Spirit and lean upon the Lord.

¹⁴ *History of the Church*, 4:540.

¹⁵ G Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, Heinz-Josef Fabry. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. Volume XI, 2000, pp. 562-564.

means to do so in a sincere manner, where man's works are consistent with his belief in God. So we see the opposite in "Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men" (ISAIAH 29:13).

21 The remnant shall return, **yea**, [even] the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God.

This is one of the most beautiful promises found in the Old Testament, **שְׂאֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל**. That is, a **remnant** shall **return**, or re-turn to God. This remnant of Israel spoken of in ISAIAH 1:9; 7:3 (*Shearjashub*, or more correctly, *Shear-Yashuv*, was the name given to Isaiah's oldest son, **שְׂאֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל**); and here in 10:21–22. The children of Jacob would turn or return (**יָשׁוּב**) towards the Lord. The Targum (**ܬ**) has: "... and have turned away from sin, the remnant of the house of Jacob, shall return to worship before the mighty God." While many commentators are specific about such a return to God, Alexander properly states, "The return here spoken of is one that was to take place at various times and in various circumstances" and more particularly to include "... the general conversion of Israel to God [Christ], which is yet to be expected." Alexander does well in so stating, because so many who call themselves Christian feel that the house of Israel has already played whatever role they are to play, and that the gentiles have inherited the kingdom of God. Such have forgotten the glorious promises to Israel (Hosea 1:10b). This process of gathering and return has already commenced with Ephraim, the tribe, and shall not stop until all of the tribes are gathered back in, including Judah, at the time of the Second Coming. We also read this glorious promise to be fulfilled in the latter-days, "Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days." (Hosea 3:5). The words **mighty God** remind us of the name of that Child that would be born unto Israel and the world in Bethlehem, **אֵל נִבְּרָר** (ISAIAH 9:6). In The Book of Mormon we read: "And it came to pass that I, Nephi, spake much unto them concerning these things; yea, I spake unto them concerning the restoration of the Jews in the latter days. And I did rehearse unto them the words of Isaiah, who spake concerning the restoration of the Jews, or of the house of Israel; and after they were restored they should no more be confounded, neither should they be scattered again" (1 Nephi 15:19–20a).

22 For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, [yet] a remnant of them shall return; the consumption decreed shall overflow with **righteousness**.

✓ in, or, among

✓ or, in

For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return. The word **remnant**, **שְׂאֵר**, or *residue*, means "a few," especially in contrast to the "sand of the sea." Though a small group, they would **turn again** or **return**, **יָשׁוּב**, unto the Lord. ¶ *The consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness.* Barnes explains, "Shall overflow, **שִׁטַּף**. This word is usually applied to an inundation, when a stream rises above its banks and overflows the adjacent land; ISAIAH 30:28; 66:12; Psalm 78:20. Here it means evidently, that the threatened judgment would spread like an overflowing river through the land, and would accomplish the devastation which God had determined." The words *justice* and *righteousness* are used often to translate the Hebrew **צְדִיקָה** (HALOT, Gesenius). Indeed, the Lord's judgment is righteous, and as such both words fit in well together. It is certainly easier to understand this verse when we include the notion of *destruction* as a consequence of *justice*.¹⁷ NJB well has: "A destruction has been decreed which will make justice overflow." Bagot (in Lowth), translates **כְּלִיֹּן** as *accomplishment* besides the typical use of the word as *destruction, annihilation* (Gesenius, HALOT). Lowth quotes Bagot, "The accomplishment determined overflows with justice; for it is accomplished, and that which is determined the Lord God of Hosts doeth in the midst of the land." Lowth suggests that this has reference to "the predictions of Moses; the blessing and the curse which he laid before the people" (allusion to *Rain in Due Season*). Lowth himself translates it as: "The consummation decided, overfloweth with strict justice; For a full and decisive decree Shall JEHOVAH the Lord of Hosts accomplish in the midst of the land." Speaking of **כְּלִיֹּן** and its root **כלה** (see v. 23) Calvin suggests, "**כלה** means to *finish*, and it means also to *consume*." The latter is more appropriate. He calls this diminution

¹⁷ The Syriac (**ܫ**) has, "Their number decreased, cut off, but flooded with righteousness." The Targum (**ܬ**) paraphrase is no less intriguing: "The remnant that have not sinned, and they that have turned away from sin, for them shall be done mighty acts, which shall be mightily displayed and carried out in righteousness." Both of these, however, speak of man's righteousness, rather than the Lord's.

of the people a *consumption*, and one that is *completed*; for he employs exaggerated language, the import of which is, that they were not far from utter extermination, there being very few that were saved.” Alexander and Kay feel that this consumption points back to *Rain in Due Season*, Deuteronomy 28:65, “And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind” (see also Leviticus 26:16 and Deuteronomy 28:22, and notes on ISAIAH 10:16 above). So the question is, who would be punished? In ISAIAH 10:12 it is made clear that Judah and mount Zion would be punished first, before her Assyrian foes would be punished. It seems that ISAIAH 10:22–23 refer to the punishment that would befall Judah.

23 For the Lord GOD of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of all the land.

The ASV reads: “For a full end, and that determined, will the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, make in the midst of all the earth.” Kay suggests, “The dependence of this verse on the preceding is more obvious in the Hebrew; since the words rendered ‘the consumption decreed,’ in ISAIAH 10:22, have a close verbal relation to those represented by ‘a final work and a decisive.’ This expression occurs again in ISAIAH 28:22; ‘For a final (sentence) and a decisive have I heard (proceeding) from the Lord, the Lord of Hosts.’ It is found once more in Daniel 9:27 (compare Daniel 9:26; 11:36); where it seem to apply to the doom of excision, which lighted first on the ten tribes, to persistently impenitent Judah.” ¶ The Targum (T), LXX (G), and Syriac (S), like the JST (or Inspired Version) and Book of Mormon all drop the expression “the midst of” בְּקֶרֶב.¹⁸ Henderson explains that the expression בְּקֶרֶב כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל “in the midst of all Israel” is found in Deuteronomy 11:6, while “in the midst of all the land,” בְּקֶרֶב כָּל־הָאָרֶץ, does not appear anywhere else in the Hebrew Holy Scriptures (M). The more common form, Henderson explains,¹⁹ is בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ, “in all the land,” as is found in the Book of Mormon. ¶ The Lord, then, would

bring judgment upon the land. Most interpretations focus on the decisive force of the judgment. We read, “For thus saith the Lord, I will cut my work short in righteousness, for the days come that I will send forth judgment unto victory” (D&C 52:11). Note that both the words *judgment* and *righteousness* are used here. There is an allusion to the fact that the Lord, in mercy, would shorten the days of chaos for the sake of His friends. “And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened” (Matthew 24:22).

vv. 24–33. The Lord will now punish Assyria for her boastful pride. She would come all the way to Jerusalem and think she would conquer, but instead only a remnant of the Assyrian warriors would be left. The Holy One of Israel is still Judah’s protector. Man ought not to fear Asshur, Egypt, or any forces that threaten to disturb his peace. A detailed move by the Assyrian forces as they move from city to city, toward Jerusalem, is given.

24 ¶ Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD of hosts, O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian; he shall smite thee with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt.

✓ or, but he shall lift up his staff for

25 For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction.

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD of hosts, O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian. We have another *therefore*, לָכֵן, to indicate a change in topic, back to the punishment that would fall upon Assyria. Beginning with Isaiah 10:12 the Lord had made it clear that there would be a punishment that would befall Assyria *after* Judah had been punished. This לָכֵן, *therefore*, seems to indicate that now that this has been accomplished, the Lord’s mighty arm would turn towards Asshur. The children of Israel had been invited to put their faith in the Lord and not worry about nor fear the Assyrian boasting. It is an expression of tenderness, when the Lord calls Israel, *my people*. These are words of comfort for those who dwell in Zion. Alexander recognized these extended meanings of the word Zion, close to our own views as LDS, “According to Ibn Ezra and Kimhi, Zion is here put simply for Jerusalem, and the address is here to the population of that city, whether permanent or temporary, during

¹⁸ “For a completion, and an end, the Lord, the God of hosts is making with all the wicked in the midst of the earth” (Targum, T); “He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because the Lord will make a short work in all the world” (LXX, G); “Because the Lord God of hosts shall bring destruction and make decrees throughout all the earth” (Syriac, S).

¹⁹ Another possibility, Henderson points out, is “in the midst of the land,” בְּקֶרֶב כָּל־הָאָרֶץ which appears in 7 verses, only in the books of Isaiah and Ezekiel.

Sennacherib's invasion. But as Zion was the seat of the true religion, and the people of God are often said to inhabit Zion, not in a local but a spiritual sense, most interpreters understand the object of address to be Israel in general, while some restrict it to the pious and believing Jews, the remnant of Israel, who were now to be consoled and reassured amidst the judgments which were coming on the nation." ¶ *He shall smite thee with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt.* The sense here is that as Egypt had been permitted, for a season, to punish Israel, the Lord had placed a limit to this punishment. ¶ *For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction.* Soon, after Judah had been sufficiently punished by Assyria, the wrath of the Lord would turn toward her punisher. There seems to be an ellipsis here such that "and mine anger in their destruction," might be understood to mean, "and mine anger *would now be made manifest* in their [i.e., the Assyrian] destruction." Lowth explains: "Senacherib, soon after his return from his Egyptian expedition, which, I imagine, took him up three years, invested²⁰ Jerusalem. He is represented by the Prophet as lifting up his rod in his march from Egypt, and threatening the people of God, as Pharaoh and the Egyptians had done when they pursued them to the Red Sea. But God in his turn will lift up his rod over the sea, as he did at that time, in the way, or after the manner, of Egypt: and as Senacherib has imitated the Egyptians in his threats, and came full of rage against them from the same quarter; so God will act over again the same part that he had taken formerly in Egypt, and overthrow their enemies in as signal a manner." This scripture could also have an eschatological fulfillment, in which the "little while" could represent the scattering and subsequent gathering of Israel before the second coming of our Lord and Savior. At any rate, during this mortal period we must endure the vicissitudes of this live "for a little while" but then, if we have been faithful; joy unspeakable.

26 And the LORD of hosts shall stir up a scourge for him according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb; and [as] his rod [was] upon the sea so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt.

And the LORD of hosts shall stir up a scourge for him according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb. We read about Midian and the rock of Oreb as the story of Gilead unfolds (Judges 7:1–25, see also Judges 8:3). Just like the people of Midian and their princes or those in high power had suffered, so would

the Assyrians and their leaders likewise suffer for their persecution of Israel. Henry has, "And as, *at the rock of Oreb*, one of the princes of Midian, after the battle, was slain, so shall Sennacherib be in the temple of his god Nisroch, after the defeat of his forces, when he thinks the bitterness of death is past." Henderson explains, "As Oreb, one of the two kings of Midian, after escaping the slaughter of his troops, was taken and slain at a rock of the same name, so Sennacherib should escape from the calamity which destroyed his army, but he also should afterwards be killed." Nägelsbach points out the paronomasia between the expression *shall stir up* (עִוֵּר) and *Oreb* (עֹרֵב). ¶ *And as his rod was upon the sea so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt.* This reverses the order in a sort of historical chiasmus. In former times the rod was first lifted up by the King of Egypt (or Pharaoh) "after the manner of Egypt" against the children of Israel, and then the rod was lifted "upon the sea" by Moses—through the gift of the Lord—to part the Red Sea and make way for the escape of Israel (Exodus 14:21–31). When Israel was at the border of the Red Sea, it seemed as if she was doomed. It was the Egyptians who ended up drowning, however. The Lord had saved Israel with openly visible miraculous events. This and many other signs and wonders were given to the children of Israel *to the intent they might believe*. When Assyria would go over her banks she would come up to the neck of Judah, at the time of Sennacherib's invasion. Now, "his rod was upon the sea" in that the Lord spared Jerusalem—and saved her from the siege imposed by Sennacherib—in a likewise miraculous manner (ISAIAH 37:36). After that, the rod "was lifted up after the manner of Egypt" upon the King of Asshur. In Egypt, Pharaoh's first born son died from the plague because of his arrogance; here Sennacherib's sons Adrammelech and Sharezer are said to have killed their own father.

27 And it shall come to pass in that day [that] his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.

✓ remove

As in ISAIAH 9:4, the Targum (ܬ) once again makes mention of the *Messiah*, מְשִׁיחָא.²¹ This verse is essentially repeated from before, and speaks of the miraculous salvation brought about by our Lord and

²⁰ Enveloped, surrounded, sieged (see *Webster, Oxford*).

²¹ "And it shall come to pass at that time, that his dominion shall be removed from thee, and his yoke from upon thy neck, and the nations shall be destroyed from before the Anointed One (or, *Messiah*)."

Savior through His atoning sacrifice (for a fuller exposition, see notes on ISAIAH 9:4).

28 He is come to Aiath, he is passed to Migron; at Michmash he hath laid up his carriages.

He is come to Aiath. By counting the seconds between lightning and the thunder, one can determine if the storm is moving closer or farther away. Here, beginning with Aiath, we see the progression of the invading Assyrian armies coming, for the most part, closer to Jerusalem with each subsequent attack. Kay explains, “The prophet, in vision, beholds the invader moving towards Jerusalem. He sees him not following the ordinary route, the great north road; but striking across country in a line that is traversed by more than one deep ravine; hoping by a forced march to surprise Jerusalem” Aiath (Khirbet²² Haiyan), is located about 18 kilometers north of Jerusalem, and a little south of Bethel (OBA, also compare some of these cities with Moody, for slightly different measurements—although Moody is much less complete and most of these cities are missing). There are different views of where these locations were found. Consult Delitzsch, Henderson, Alexander, or Nägelsbach (who in turn recommends the well know work by Robinson and Smith, *Bible Researches in Palestine*, Volume II). ¶ *He is passed to Migron.* Migron (Tell²³ Miriam) is a little south east from Aiath, about 12 kilometers north of Jerusalem (OBA). ¶ *At Michmash he hath laid up his carriages.* Michmash (Mukhmas) was found about a kilometer north east of Migron, or about 13 kilometers north of Jerusalem (OBA). Calvin makes an interesting observation about *laying up his baggage*: “It is the custom of warriors not to lead forward any army without providing the means of support, which they *lay up* in a safe and convenient place, that the army may be supplied out of it with all that is needful. Under the word *baggage* or *arms*, he includes not only *darts* and *swords*, but all the supplies and provisions of war. The meaning of the word כֶּלִי²⁴ is extensive, and includes every kind of implements, and thus resembles the word (*vasa*) which denotes *vessels* in the Latin language.” Henry looks at this verse from quite a different perspective, and suggests that “*At Michmash he has laid up his carriages*, as if he had no further occasion for his heavy artillery, so easy was every place he came to reduced; or the store-cities of Judah, which were fortified for that purpose, had now

become his magazines²⁵.” Nägelsbach also suspects that the baggage was left here in order to move at a faster pace. This might have been a necessary step in order to cross the defiant ravine at Michmash.

29 They are gone over the passage; they have taken up their lodging at Geba; Ramah is afraid; Gibeah of Saul is fled.

They are gone over the passage. The Targum (T) reads, “They waded, they passed through the Jordan.” There are only a few places where the Jordan can be crossed, however, and thus Calvin says, “I do not know if it could be *crossed* by a *ford* in that quarter.” Lowth proposes: “The strait here mentioned is that of Michmas, a very narrow passage between two sharp hills or rocks (see 1 Samuel 14:4, 5), where a great army might have been opposed with advantage by a very inferior force. The author of the book of Judith might perhaps mean this pass, at least among others: ‘Charging them to keep the passages of the hill country; for by them there was an entrance into Judea, and it was easy to stop them that would come up; because the passage was strait, for two men at the most’ (Judith 4:7). The enemies having passed the straight without opposition, shews that all thoughts of making a stand in the open country were given up, and that their only resource was in the strength of the city.” Nägelsbach describes the passage as “A deep, rough ravine, forty-eight minutes wide, immediately below Michmash. As it runs from East to West, they must cross it obliquely to approach Jerusalem. The ravine is difficult to traverse.” ¶ *They have taken up their lodging at Geba.* Geba (Jeba) is a little over a kilometer south of Migron, or about 10 kilometers north of Jerusalem (OBA). They must have stopped there for the night. ¶ *Ramah is afraid.* Ramah (er-Ram, not to be confused with cities of the same name: *Rentis* also known as Ramathaim-zophim nor *Ramieh* in Galilee) is about 4 miles East of Geba (OBA). “When such dread has seized their hearts,” notes Calvin, “they will freely surrender at the first attack of the enemy, so that the conquerors will be allowed to ravage at their pleasure.” And so it is, that in times of war, when panic sets in, often defenders of cities flee with all their might.²⁶ Alexander has, “It may imply either that Ramah was not in the direct line of the march, but within sight and

²² Khirbet means *ruin* (OBA).

²³ Tell means a mound covering an ancient site (OBA).

²⁴ כֶּלִי

²⁵ *Magazine*, магазин, was the word used in Russia for store when I visited in the early 1990s. Webster defines as “a place where goods or supplies are stored: warehouse; a room in which powder and other explosives are kept in a fort or ship.”

²⁶ In the recent weeks in the current war in Afghanistan against the Taliban, the Northern Alliance reported that cities formerly occupied by their enemies were falling like dominoes, with the Taliban fleeing and abandoning their strongholds (20 November 2001).

hearing of it, or on the contrary, that it was the next place to be reached, and was trembling in apprehension of it.” ¶ *Gibeah of Saul is fled*. Gibeah (Tell el-Ful) is a little over 5 kilometers north of Jerusalem (OBA). Alexander continues, “A still stronger metaphor is used [with Gibeah than what was used with Ramah]. There is here a rapid but marked climax. While Ramah trembles, Gibeah flees.”

30 Lift up[✓] thy voice, O daughter of Gallim; cause it to be heard unto Laish, O poor Anathoth.

✓ Cry shrill with

Lift up thy voice, O daughter of Gallim. Gallim (Khirbet Ka’kul) is about a kilometer southeast of Gibeah, and about 7 kilometers north of Jerusalem (OBA). Jerusalem was called *daughter of Zion* (ISAIAH 1:8) and so other cities or nations at times called *daughter*, such as *O daughter of Tarshish* (ISAIAH 23:10); *daughter of Zidon* (ISAIAH 23:12); *O virgin daughter of Babylon* and *O daughter of the Chaldeans* (ISAIAH 47:1); and *daughter of Egypt* (Jeremiah 46:11) to name a few. Barnes suggests that *daughter* in such cases is “a term often applied to a beautiful city or town.” ¶ *Cause it to be heard unto Laish, O poor Anathoth*. Anathoth (Ras el-Kharrubeh) is about the same distance to Jerusalem than Gallim, but situated about 2 kilometers south east of Gallim (OBA).

31 Madmenah is removed; the inhabitants of Gebim gather themselves to flee.

Madmenah is removed. Here the pattern seems to change, if OBA is correct about placing its location about 55 kilometers of Jerusalem, in a southeastern direction (OBA,). I think it likely that *removed* is another word for *flee* as so many of the inhabitants of the other cities and towns had done. Calvin suggests that *remove* is hyperbole for “that city to have been shaken to such a degree, as if it had been *removed* to another place.” Nägelsbach says that Madmenah means dung-heaps (see also Gesenius and HALOT). ¶ *The inhabitants of Gebim gather themselves to flee*. It is unknown where this town was located (OBA).

32 As yet shall he remain at Nob that day; he shall shake his hand [against] the mount of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.

Now we are getting very close to Jerusalem indeed. Nob (“city of priests, successor to Shiloh”) was about 2

kilometers northeast of Jerusalem (OBA). Kay explains that Nob was located at the “northern extremity of the Olivet line of hills.” According to the Talmud and Jerome, Nob and Jerusalem were within sight of each other (Alexander). It seems that the invading armies stopped at Nob for part of the day before proceeding toward Jerusalem. Henderson and others explain that the gesture of shaking the hand, in this verse, has reference to doing so in a threatening way. *Daughter of Zion*, בַּת־צִיּוֹן (see ISAIAH 1:8). Kay explains that the Kethiv (כְּתִיב, *that which is written*²⁷) is: “The mountain of the house in Zion, the hill-fort of Jerusalem” while the Qeri (קֶרִי, *that which is read*) is “mountain of the daughter of Zion.” Furthermore, Kay suggests that the Kethiv “is supported by the occurrence of *the mountain of the house* in Micah 3:12 (Jeremiah 26:18); and by the Targum, ‘*the mountain of the house of the sanctuary which is in Zion*.’ (Cp. ISAIAH 2:2, 3, ‘*The mountain of the house of the Lord*.’)”

33 Behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, shall lop the bough with terror; and the high ones of stature [shall be] hewn down; and the haughty shall be humbled.

Behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, shall lop the bough with terror. Kay points out that in Ezekiel 31:5–14 we have the word bough, or branch, in essentially the same manner, as to represent Asshur. So it is that there we read: “exalted above all the trees,” “his boughs were multiplied,” “All the fowls of heaven made their nests in his boughs,” “under his branches did all the beasts of the field bring forth their young,” “under his shadow dwelt all great nations,” and so on, even to the point that all other trees were insignificant in comparison and *envied him*. ¶ *And the high ones of stature shall be hewn down; and the haughty shall be humbled*. Inasmuch as Asshur had greatly lifted himself up in pride, the Lord would bring him down.

34 And he shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one.[✓]

✓ or, mightily

And he shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron. Or, an axe would be taken to the bottoms of the trunks. These verses return to those in Isaiah 10:18–19, the defeat of Asshur. ¶ *And Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one*. לְבָנוֹן, Laban, means *to be white* (AHCL),

²⁷ For more on the Masorah Parva, see ISAIAH 9:3.

and **Lebanon**, **לְבָנוֹן**, is the name of the mountain. Henderson explains, “This celebrated mountain, in Hebrew **לְבָנוֹן** *the White Mountain*, Arab ... *the Snow Mountain*, from the perpetual snows which cover its summits, consists of two parallel ridges, stretching in a northerly direction between Phoenicia and Damascus, and intersected by ... the Bekaa, or valley, otherwise known by the name of Coelosyria. The most easterly goes by the name of Anti-Libanus, and is upwards of 9,000 feet high. The Arabs say of it, that it carries winter on its head, spring on its shoulders, harvest in its bosom, while summer sleeps at its feet. Its terraces are covered with gardens and cultivated fields, and present the most enchanting prospects to the eye of the traveller.” The great forests of Lebanon were highly esteemed, and it seems from this verse, would perish; unless the allusion was only to the mighty of Asshur. Perhaps both are intended. ¶ In Ezekiel we read this beautiful verse: “Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell. And all the trees of the field shall know that I the LORD have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the LORD have spoken and have done it” (Ezekiel 17:22–24, note the Messianic implications). Just as in the times of Isaiah Jerusalem almost fell to her enemies, so will it be in the

last days. Jerusalem will be surrounded and will have even begun to fall, when the Holy One of Israel will again defend her. “For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light” (Zechariah 14:2–7). It is then that Judah will recognize her Savior, “And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends” (Zechariah 13:6).

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Isaiah 11

Angel Moroni appeared to the young Prophet Joseph Smith on 21 September 1823. Moroni, among other things, “commenced quoting the prophecies of the Old Testament,” among which “he quoted the eleventh chapter of Isaiah, saying that it was about to be fulfilled” (JS-H 1:40). What a feeling of excitement runs through my body as I think of these things. In a chapter such as this one, where there is so much written on the text of Isaiah from the Brethren, and from other scriptures, there is less of a need to explore every possible translation and interpretation than in those chapters of Isaiah where little interpretative information is found. Nevertheless, some value may be obtained from a limited exploration. Where there has been much said by the Brethren, I have included additional comments mostly under the subheadings VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES, although in some instances it has been incorporated into the exegetical comments. “With respect to the application of this prophecy to the Messiah,” says Henderson, interpreters seem to be almost unanimous. Barnes says, “It was a general principle with the Hebrew prophets, and particularly with Isaiah, when any event tending to console the people, or to excite the nation’s gratitude, occurred, to cast the eye forward to that great future deliverance which they anticipated under the Messiah.” ISAIAH 11, then, deals with Messiah as a righteous judge, of the millennial day, and of the glorious gathering of Israel.

vv. 1–5. Speaking of these verses John Taylor said, “The first of this was fulfilled when our Saviour came on this earth before; the second will be when he comes again, ‘he will smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips will he slay the wicked.’”¹ In D&C 113 we have a revelation given by the Lord to the Prophet Joseph Smith on these verses. We learn several important facts from it: (1) something about the *rod*; (2) that the *stem of Jesse* mentioned in ISAIAH 11:1 is Christ; (3) that the focus of ISAIAH 11:2–5 is on the *stem of Jesse*, or on Christ; and (4) that the *root of Jesse* mentioned in ISAIAH 11:10 seems to have very similar characteristics as the *rod* mentioned in ISAIAH 11:1.

1 ¶ AND there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

AND there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse. Jesse is the father of King David. *The Stem of Jesse* is another way of saying, “He who sprang forth through the line of David,” or *Christ the Lord*. David was a descendant of Judah. Judah was promised in his patriarchal blessing, that the Messiah would come forth out of his lineage: “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be” (Genesis 49:10). Thus it is that the New Testament begins with the words “The book of the

generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham” (Matthew 1:1). ¶ *The rod* that shall proceed out of Christ (i.e., *out of the stem of Jesse*), we are informed, is “a servant in the hands of Christ, who is partly a descendant of Jesse as well as of Ephraim, or of the house of Joseph, on whom there is laid much power” (D&C 113:4b). This servant receives his power through Christ. In ISAIAH 11:11 we learn a little more about this servant, where he is called the *root of Jesse*. So who is this *rod* or *root of Jesse*? President Brigham Young said: “Joseph Smith was a rod in the hands of the Lord to scourge the Elders of Israel; he was the mouthpiece of the Almighty, and was always ready to rebuke them when requisite.”² Monte S. Nyman has, “There can be no question that this is describing the Prophet Joseph Smith. By revelation he was told that he held the right to the priesthood (see D&C 86:8–9). That the keys of the kingdom had been given to him is a matter of record; that his labors were to stand as an ‘ensign’ to which the nations of the earth will gather is also a matter of scriptural promise (D&C 29:4, 7–8; 35:25; 38:33; 39:11; 45:9, 28).”³ ¶ *And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.* The expression “his roots” refers to *David*. *Christ is the Branch* that would grow out of David. *The Stem of Jesse and the Branch both refer to the Messiah*. Jeremiah speaks of this Branch: “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a *righteous Branch*, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall

² *Journal of Discourses*. London: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot. Volume 8, September 30, 1860, p. 190.

³ Monte S. Nyman, ed., *Isaiah and the Prophets: Inspired Voices from the Old Testament*, 1984 Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, p. 18.

¹ Taylor, John. *The Government of God*. Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1852.

dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land” (Jeremiah 23:5–8, emphasis added); “In those days, and at that time, will I cause the **Branch of righteousness** to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness” (Jeremiah 33:15–16, emphasis added).⁴ **VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES:** The Targum (Ⲯ) reads, “And a King shall come forth from the sons of Jesse, and from his children’s children the Messiah (ⲙⲣⲓⲁⲗⲁ) shall be anointed (*or*, exalted).” Hengstenberg quotes Luther on this passage: “This is a short summary of the whole of theology and of the works of God, that Christ did not come till the trunk had died, and was altogether in a hopeless condition; that hence, when all hope is gone, we are to believe that it is the time of salvation, and that God is then nearest when He seems to be farthest off.” Calvin makes the contrast between the growing shoot that rises out of what is left of the tree even stronger: “I have ... preferred translating **נֶזֶע** *a dry stock*, rather than a *root*, though it makes little difference as to the meaning, but the former expresses more fully what the Prophet meant, namely, that *though the stock be dry, the branch which shall spring from it shall be more excellent than all the forests*. Hence we infer that this prediction applies solely to the **person of Christ**; for till he came no such *branch* arose. *** We see therefore that to the ... Jews, consolation was held out in the Messiah alone, and that their hope was held in suspense till he appeared. At the time of his appearance, there would have been no hope that the kingdom would be erected and restored, if this promise had not been added; for the family of David appeared to be completely extinct.

2 And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and

⁴ **Messiah** is called by the name of **Branch** in numerous scriptures, in Jeremiah, Zechariah, Ezekiel, and Isaiah (e.g., “For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him” ISAIAH 53:2).

might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;

Isaiah 11:2–5 describe the **Messiah**. The Targum tradition (Ⲯ) (Seder Nezikin, Sanhedrin 93b) has ISAIAH 11:2 refer to the **Messiah**. Through the principle of Divine Investiture, Christ speaks on behalf of the Father. ¶ *And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.* All these are the attributes of **King Messiah**. **VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES:** The LXX (Ⲭ) renders it: “And the Spirit of God shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and godliness shall fill him; the spirit of the fear of God.” The Syriac (Ⲫ) has, “And he shall be at peace, and the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the reverence of the LORD.” Calvin sees the manifestations of the *gifts of the Spirit*. Barnes says, “If it be asked how one, who was Divine in his own nature, could be thus endowed by the aid of the Spirit, the answer is, that he was also to be a man descended from the honoured line of David, and that *as* a man he might be furnished for his work by the agency of the Holy Ghost.” Furthermore, Barnes says that *shall rest on him*, means, “It shall not merely *come* upon him, but shall attend him permanently.” It is as if one were to say that the Spirit of the Holy Ghost was His constant companion. Rawlinson says that regarding the Messiah, and the Spirit of the Lord, “These influences were not in him transient or occasional, as in too many men...” Barnes continues, “That he *was* thus under the influence of the Holy Spirit, is abundantly taught in the New Testament. Thus in Matthew 3:16, the Holy Spirit is represented as descending on him at his baptism. In John 3:34, it is said, ‘For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: *for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him*’ (compare Colossians 1:19,⁵ emphasis added).” The JST revolving around John 3:34, reads, “For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth him not the Spirit by measure, *for he dwelleth in him, even the fullness*.” The next verse reads: “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand” (John 3:35), or as is found in Moffatt: “The Father loves the Son and has given him control over everything.” We also read, “For since He Whom God has sent speaks the words of God [proclaims God’s own message], God does not give Him His Spirit sparingly *or* by measure,

⁵ “For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell” (Colossians 1:19). Our LDS footnote says, regarding this verse, “Jesus Christ, relationships with the Father.”

but boundless is the gift God makes of His Spirit!
[Deuteronomy 18:18⁶.] The Father loves the Son and has given (entrusted, committed) everything into His hand. [Daniel 7:14⁷.] (AMP).

3 And shall make him of quick understanding[✓] in the fear of the LORD; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears.

✓ scent or, smell⁸

And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD. We show fear of the Lord when we honor our Father in Heaven. Christ always honored His Father. It was the constant preoccupation of our Savior to do those things that would please His Father. There is something infinitely tender in the words of the Savior: “The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise” (John 5:19). Truly, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom” (Psalm 111:10a). Many commentators make note of the marginal || reading *and he* [will] *smell*, *וְהִיחֵם*. Barnes, leaning on Gesenius, explains that this word is derived from *וְהִיחֵם*, “used only in Hiphil, to smell; and is kindred with *וְהִיחֵם*, wind, breath, for fragrant substances breathe out an odour” and thus by extension it means to “to take delight in smelling.”⁹ Kay contributes the following grammatical note: “The rendering of the A.V. may be fairly justified by the analogy of the verb *וְהִיחֵם*; which has generally a simple transitive meaning, ‘to understand;’ yet sometimes signifies to ‘cause to understand’ (Job 6:24), or, ‘to give understanding’ (Job 32:8). Similarly, *וְהִיחֵם* though it commonly means ‘to smell,’ may signify, ‘to give him quick scent.’” In other

⁶ “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him” (Deuteronomy 18:18).

⁷ “And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (Daniel 7:14).

⁸ “He shall sense the truth” or “His sensing (shall be)” (Tanakh). The complete verse “He shall sense the truth by his reverence for the LORD: He shall not judge by what his eyes behold, Nor decide by what his ears perceive” (Tanakh).

⁹ To LDS this is also important in its anthropomorphic implications. The idea of smelling is one very often in the Old Testament one of acceptance of the sacrifices of men, or their *sweet odours*. God, in contrast to the dumb idols, can smell, and see, hear and eat. “And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men’s hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell” (Deuteronomy 4:28, *Rain in Due Season*).

words, to quickly size up a situation. Or perhaps even better, quick to perceive and obey. LITV reads, “And He is made to breathe in the fear of Jehovah.” ASV gives this beautiful meaning: “And his delight shall be in the fear of Jehovah.” ¶ *And he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears.* One of my favorite scriptures is: “But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7). President Brigham Young taught that we need to cultivate a spirit of meekness in terms of others and be slow to judge, and rather “Bear with them.”¹⁰

4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove[✓] with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

✓ or, argue

But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. President Joseph Fielding Smith taught, “When that time shall come, the ‘earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.’ Wickedness shall be destroyed, for with righteousness shall Jehovah ‘judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.’ In that day there shall be no ‘divided Christianity.’”¹¹ All who will not repent and receive the gospel shall soon be removed, and they who shall remain shall learn to worship the true and living God in spirit and in truth. The Church of Jesus Christ shall have sway over all the earth, for Christ shall be the King and

¹⁰ “Judge not, that ye be not judged. Let no man judge his fellow being, unless he knows he has the mind of Christ within him. ... Do not judge such persons [who have transgressed], for you do not know the design of the Lord concerning them; therefore, do not say they are not Saints. What shall we do with them? Bear with them. ... A person who would say another is not a Latter-day Saint, for some trifling affair in human life, proves that he does not possess the Spirit of God. Think of this, brethren and sisters; write it down, that you may refresh your memories with it; carry it with you, and look at it often. If I judge my brethren and sisters, unless I judge them by the revelations of Jesus Christ, I have not the spirit of Christ; if I had, I should judge no man.” Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*. 26 vols. London: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1854–1886. Volume 1, December 5, 1853, p. 339.

¹¹ This must be later on in the Millennium, as there will be a time where different religions will exist, as taught by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Deliverer. Peace shall prevail both among men and among beasts. Satan shall be bound and his dominion, which he has held by usurpation and fraud since the beginning of the earth's temporal existence, shall come to an end. The rightful King shall reign and his saints shall possess the kingdom according to the vision of Daniel. Jerusalem shall become a righteous city when Israel is gathered and redeemed. Zion also shall be cleansed of all iniquity, and in that day, when Christ shall rule, the word of the Lord to Isaiah shall be fulfilled, 'for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.'" ¹² ¶ *And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.* President John Taylor taught, "when he comes again, 'he will smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips will he slay the wicked.' The spirit of the Lord will be withdrawn from the nations, and after rejecting the truth, they will be left in darkness to grope their way, and being full of the spirit of wickedness, they will rage and war against each other, and finally, after dreadful struggles, plagues, pestilence, famine, etc., instigated by the powers of darkness, there will be a great gathering of the nations against Jerusalem, for they will be infuriated against its inhabitants, and mighty hosts will assemble, so that they will be like a cloud to cover the land, and the Lord will appear himself to the deliverance of his people, and the destruction of the wicked."¹³ **VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES:** The Targum (Ⲯ) reads, "But with righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with faithfulness the needy of the earth; and He shall smite the sinners of the earth with the word of His mouth,¹⁴ and with the speech of his lips He shall slay the wicked."¹⁵ The LXX (Ⲭ) renders it, "But he shall judge the cause of the lowly, and shall reprove the lowly of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the word of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he destroy the ungodly one." Alma was involved in a mission to bring back the apostate Zoramites: "their hearts were lifted up unto great boasting, in their pride" (Alma 31:25). Yet Alma found a poor people about them who were ready to hear the word, for "their

afflictions had truly humbled them and that they were in a preparation to hear the word" (Alma 32:6). Calvin suggests, "When the Prophet says, *by the breath of his lips*, this must not be limited to the person of Christ; for it refers to the word which is preached by his ministers." Calvin then refers to Luke 10:16, "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me."¹⁶ In 2 Thessalonians we find a similar verse, in reference to the defeat of Satan and those who would oppose our Savior: "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." Alexander suggests this refers to the defeat of the Anti-Christ (see term defined in LDS Bible Dictionary). Hengstenberg suggests that the expression "rod of His mouth" is equivalent to "And out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword."

5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

A *girdle* is a sash or cloth that is worn about the body. Barnes explains: "The *girdle of his loins* refers to the cincture, or band, with which the ancients girded themselves. A part of their dress consisted of an outward, loose, flowing robe. This robe it was necessary to gird up, or to confine close to the body in active labour, or in running; and the meaning of the figure here used is, probably, that the virtues of righteousness and justice would *adhere* to him as closely and inseparably as the garment does to the body to which it was bound." The *loins* correspond to the lower back, "between the hipbones and the ribs" (Webster).¹⁷ The *reins* here also correspond to the *lower back*, that is, to the region of the back corresponding to the location of the kidneys. The term is derived from the *renal system*. The Messiah, then, would be covered by righteousness and faithfulness.

vv. 6–9. These verses focus on the peacefulness of the millennium, with the earth returning to its paradisiacal glory. Regarding the Millennium and these verses in Isaiah, President Joseph Fielding Smith wrote: "A change shall come over every living creature, and all enmity shall depart and only love and peace remain."¹⁸

¹² Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Doctrines of Salvation*. Compiled by Bruce R. McConkie. 3 vols. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1954–56, Volume 1, p. 169.

¹³ Taylor, John. *The Government of God*. Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1852. Ch. 11.

¹⁴ Memra, or מֵימְרָא (here, *meimar*).

¹⁵ "The Chaldee Paraphrast," says Barnes of his Targum (Ⲯ) translation, "translates it, 'And by the word of his lips he shall slay the impious Armillus.'" Barnes, leaning on Castell, adds, "By *Armillus*, the Jews mean the last great enemy of their nation, who would come after Gog and Magog and wage furious wars, and who would slay the Messiah ben Ephraim, whom the Jews expect, but who would be himself slain the rod of the Messiah ben David, or the son of David."

¹⁶ We agree with Calvin but warn that the words of Paul must be added to these: "And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron" (Hebrews 5:4).

¹⁷ The term is sometimes used, elsewhere, as a euphemism for the procreative organs.

¹⁸ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Way to Perfection: Short Discourses on Gospel Themes*. 9th ed. Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of

6 The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

The Targum (ܬ) makes it clear that this will take place during the Messianic age, when Messiah shall reign: “In the days of the Messiah of Israel peace shall be multiplied in the land. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall dwell with the kid; and the calf, and the lion, and the fatling together; and a little sucking child shall be leading them.” From the animal kingdom, the wolf and the leopard are chosen as types of violent behavior in animals. In his 2001 address to CES Institute and Seminary teachers, Elder Eyring suggested that there is much that we can do now—without waiting for the Millennium—to begin to change our human natures. ¶ From the TPJS we find: “*Kindness to Animals Required of Man*. The following incidents occurred while Zion’s Camp was on the march from Kirtland to Missouri. In pitching my tent we found three massasaugas or prairie rattlesnakes, which the brethren were about to kill, but I said, ‘Let them alone—don’t hurt them! How will the serpent ever lose its venom, while the servants of God possess the same disposition, and continue to make war upon it? Men must become harmless before the brute creation, and when men lose their vicious dispositions and cease to destroy the animal race, the lion and the lamb can dwell together, and the sucking child can play with the serpent in safety.’ The brethren took the serpents carefully on sticks and carried them across the creek. I exhorted the brethren not to kill a serpent, bird, or an animal of any kind during our journey unless it became necessary in order to preserve ourselves from hunger (26 May 1834).”

7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

The nature of the beasts will revert to that which existed before the fall. The Targum (ܬ) has, “And the cow and the bear shall feed together, their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.” The LXX (ϸ) has, “And the ox and bear shall feed together; and their young shall be together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.” It is rendered in the Syriac (ܣ) as: “And the cow and the bear shall feed together;

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1951. p. 310. On other conditions related to the Millennium, read pp. 310–314.

and their young ones shall grow up together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.”

8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’ den.

And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp. If there is presently enmity between beasts, such hostility exists between man and beast. Not only will there be peace within the animal kingdom, but also man and beast will live in perfect harmony. Henderson says: “שָׁעָע, the [root is שָׁעָע], to stoke, to rub gently with the hand; then as here, generally, to caress, play with the hand, find delight in playing.” Regarding שָׁחָ, or snake, Henderson has, “... an asp, or a kind of serpent, whose poison kills almost instantaneously.” ¶ *And the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’ den.* Regarding the adder, viper, or cockatrice, Henderson tells us, “צִפְּפוּרִי, Vulgate *regulus*, the basilisk; according to Michaelis, the Cerast or horned serpent—a small viper, little more than a foot in length; so called from the feelers which are protruded from its head, while it lies hid in the sand. It is exceedingly venomous. Compare ISAIAH 59:5; Jeremiah 8:17; Proverbs 23:32; and ISAIAH 14:29, where the cognate צִפְּפוּ occurs. In most of these passages, נָחָשׁ¹⁹ is used along with it.” Cheyne, leaning on Tristram opines, “Why go to Africa for the basilisk? One of the most beautiful but venomous of the vipers of Palestine is the large yellow one, called *Daboia xanthina*.”

9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain. President John Taylor said: “Thus, having cleansed the earth, and glorified it with the knowledge of God, as the waters cover the sea, and having poured out his Spirit upon all flesh, both man and beast becoming perfectly harmless, as they were in the beginning, and feeding on vegetable food only, while nothing is left to hurt or destroy in all the vast creation, the prophets then proceed to give us many glorious descriptions of the enjoyments of its inhabitants.²⁰ ¶ *For the earth shall be*

¹⁹ A snake or serpent, נָחָשׁ.

²⁰ President John Taylor quoted Parley P. Pratt, from *Voice of Warning*, stating that it cannot be described better (see pp. 110–122).

full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. (See also Habakkuk 2:14.) President Joseph Fielding Smith taught that Isaiah's words would soon be fulfilled, and that the earth would be transformed again, "Soon [the earth] is to be changed and brought back very largely to the condition in which it was found before man transgressed in the Garden of Eden and brought upon himself and the earth the temporal change. In this changed condition, which is shortly to take place, the earth will endure for one thousand years as a terrestrial sphere in purity and sanctification. The Savior will come to reign and take his rightful place. All kingdoms and governments will come to an end, and be superseded by Christ's government. There will be no more war, but peace and righteousness, for the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters do the sea."²¹ On another occasion President Joseph Fielding Smith said, "Joseph Smith holds the keys of this great dispensation which must endure until all things are finished. This Gospel is decreed to 'roll forth' until it shall eventually fill the earth. When Christ comes the wicked shall be destroyed, and righteousness will follow until it will cover the earth as the waters do the sea (ISAIAH 11:9). In that day the kingdom in heaven will come down and will be joined to the kingdom of God on earth, and they will be united in one kingdom."²² In Jeremiah we read: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and *will be their God*, and they *shall be my people*. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: *for they shall all know me*, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jeremiah 31:31–34, emphasis added). Nyman wrote, "Joseph Smith also gave a different rendering of the last part of verse 9—"the earth will be filled with sacred knowledge, as the waters cover the great deep" (TPJS, p. 93)—and indicated that this prophecy would be fulfilled after Israel is gathered."

VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES: The Targum (T)

Quoted in Taylor, John. *The Government of God*. Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1852. Ch. 12.

²¹ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Restoration of All Things*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1973, p. 292.

²² Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Church History and Modern Revelation*. Salt Lake City, Utah: The Council of The Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, p. 16.

reads, "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the fear of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." The LXX (G) has, "And they shall not hurt, nor shall they at all be able to destroy anyone on my holy mountain: for the whole *world* is filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as much water covers the seas." Cheyne explains, "... it is by no means certain that 'mountain' in the passages mentioned means the Holy Land.—The next clause shows that the harmlessness of the animals on the holy mountain is only a symbol of 'paradise regained' throughout the whole world." Barnes says, regarding the expression *waters cover the sea*, "The vast waters of the ocean cover its depths, find their way into all the caverns, flow into all the recesses on the shore—and thus shall the knowledge of Jehovah spread like deep, flowing waters, until the earth shall be pervaded and covered with it."

vv. 10–16. Isaiah now he turns to the gathering of Israel and to the punishment of those who oppress His people. Regarding this great event, Zechariah says: "And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am the LORD their God, and will hear them. And they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine: yea, their children shall see it, and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the LORD. I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them: and they shall increase as they have increased. And I will sow them among the people: and they shall remember me in far countries; and they shall live with their children, *and turn again* [וְשָׁבוּ]" (Zechariah 10:6–9).

10 ¶ And in that day there shall be *a root of Jesse*, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek; and his rest shall be glorious.

And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek. "What is the *root of Jesse*²³ spoken of in

²³ *The root of Jesse* is not to be confused with *the ROOT OF DAVID* in the book of Revelation. "And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, *the Root of David*, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and, lo,

the 10th verse of the 11th chapter? Behold, thus saith the Lord, it is a descendant of Jesse, as well as of Joseph,²⁴ unto whom rightly belongs the priesthood, and the keys of the kingdom, for an ensign, and for the gathering of my people in the last days” (D&C 11:5–6). ¶ Victor Ludlow quotes HC 6:363–64: “The Savior said ... the keys of knowledge, power and revelations should be revealed to a witness who should hold the testimony to the world ... The testimony is that the Lord in the last days would commit the keys of the priesthood to a witness over all people ... a special messenger—ordained and prepared for that purpose in the last days.” This special messenger that will help the world turn its gaze to the Savior is the [Prophet Joseph Smith](#). ¶ The Prophet would play an integral part in the Lord’s restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ upon the earth, and thus we read: “[The Angel Moron] quoted the eleventh chapter of Isaiah, saying that it was about to be fulfilled” (JS-History 1:40b). ¶ *And his rest shall be glorious*. Before his martyrdom, the [Prophet Joseph Smith](#) began to send the *ensign of the Gospel* of Jesus Christ to the nations. “[Joseph Smith, the Prophet and Seer of the Lord](#), has done more, save Jesus only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it. In the short space of twenty years, *he has brought forth the Book of Mormon*, which he translated by the gift and power of God, and has been the means of publishing it on two continents; *has sent the fulness of the everlasting gospel, which it contained, to the four quarters of the earth* ... and left a fame and name that cannot be slain. He lived great, and he died great in the eyes of God and his people; and like most of the Lord’s anointed in ancient times, has sealed his mission and his works with his own blood; and so has his brother Hyrum. In life they were not divided, and in death they were not separated! ... The testators are now dead, and their testament is in force ... and

in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain ...” (Revelation 5:1–6a).

²⁴ So, if [Brother Joseph](#) is a descendant of Ephraim how can he be a descendant of Ephraim and Judah? Hyrum L. Andrus wrote, “Brigham Young apparently understood the rights and promises of the divine patriarchal order; he believed that the [Prophet \[Joseph Smith\]](#) was a legal heir to its presidency in the last days. He spoke of Joseph Smith as ‘a pure Ephraimite,’ not that he had only the blood of Ephraim in his veins, but that ‘his descent from Joseph that was sold into Egypt was direct, and the blood was pure in him.’ ‘That is why the Lord chose him,’ President Young explained. ‘The decrees of the Almighty will be exalted—that blood which was in him was pure and he had the sole right and lawful power [to receive and exercise the keys of the priesthood in the flesh], as he was the legal heir to the blood that has been on the earth and has come down through a pure lineage.’ Because President Young understood that the line of Joseph Smith’s descent had been revealed, he affirmed: ‘I know who has the right to the Keys—the Prophet has!’ The latter-day Seer had ‘the blood and the Priesthood’ to extend the divine order to others. ‘The keys will rest upon the Prophet,’ President Young emphasized, ‘and there is no power on earth or in hell to take it from him.’” (*Doctrines of the Kingdom*, p.538.)

henceforward their names will be classed among the martyrs of religion; and the reader in every nation will be reminded that the Book of Mormon, and this book of Doctrine and Covenants of the church, cost the best blood of the nineteenth century to bring them forth for the salvation of a ruined world; and that if the fire can scathe a green tree for the glory of God, how easy it will burn up the dry trees to purify the vineyard of corruption. *They lived for glory; they died for glory; and glory is their eternal reward*. From age to age shall their names go down to posterity as gems for the sanctified ... and their *innocent blood* on the banner of liberty, and on the *magna charta* of the United States, is *an ambassador for the religion of Jesus Christ, that will touch the hearts of honest men among all nations* ...” (D&C 135:3–7). So Elder John Taylor was inspired by what he wrote in regard to our dear Brother and Prophet Joseph Smith in speaking both about *the ensign and ambassador of truth* as well as his *glorious rest*, that is, life eternal and exaltation. Through the Prophet of the restoration we received revelation, the Book of Mormon and other Scripture, Priesthood keys and authority, and the ordinances of salvation. ¶ Each disciple of Christ may so be lifted up, as the Savior taught: “... for the works which ye have seen me do that shall ye also do; for that which ye have seen me do even that shall ye do; Therefore, if ye do these things blessed are ye, for ye shall be lifted up at the last day” (3 Nephi 27:21b–22). **VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES:** The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And there shall be at that time a son of the son of Jesse, who shall stand for an ensign of the people; kings shall obey Him, and the place of His dwelling shall be in glory.” The LXX (Ⓛ) renders it: “And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall arise to rule over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust, and his rest shall be glorious.”

11 And it shall come to pass in that day [\[that\]](#) the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

The expression [וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם](#), “*and it shall come to pass in that day*” is an eschatological one. If the Lord would put forth His hand the *second* time to gather Israel, when was the first time? Exegetes tend to disagree here between the Egyptian captivity and the Babylonian. In scripture, the miraculous rescue from Egypt is preeminent. Only the final gathering would overshadow

the importance of the Egyptian one. “Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.” (Jeremiah 16:14–15). Besides, the Babylonian diaspora had yet to take place at the time of Isaiah, and the Lord is unlikely to have used it as an example of how the Lord’s hand had rescued Israel. It was the delivery out of Egypt, which was a type and a shadow of both a literal gathering in the last days, as well as of a spiritual delivery, as promised in *Rain in Due Season*, Deuteronomy 30:1–10. ¶ Speaking of the Lord setting “his hand again the second time to recover the remnants of his people” the Prophet Joseph Smith has made it clear that “the time has at last arrived” for the fulfillment of this Isaianic scripture (TPJS, p. 14–15). And so it has been. Missionaries have gone forth to almost every corner of the globe and every year take the good news of the Gospel to other remote areas. The descendants of Jacob, beginning with Ephraim and Manasseh have begun to come into the Church by the millions. The day will soon be when descendants from all twelve tribes, including Judah, will join in great numbers from every corner of the earth. The story of the bringing forth of the children of Israel into the Church through the Lamanite line is truly beautiful. While space could not hold this fascinating and uplifting account, I would like to include a few words on the subject. Elder Orson Pratt explained that in the early Church history little had happened to help bring the Lamanites into the fold and the early members were almost discouraged. And then suddenly, this all began to change. They came from hundreds of miles away desiring baptism. “They say that men came to them in their dreams, and spoke to them in their own language, and told them that away yonder was a people who had authority from God to baptize them; but that they must repent of their sins, cease their evil habits and lay aside the traditions of their fathers, for they were false ...”²⁵ I am a witness that these things are true, that the Lamanite nations are joining the Church and that many have had such dreams. An even greater movement occurred in 1946 when Elder Spencer W. Kimball was called to work among the Lamanites by President George Albert Smith, in fulfillment to his patriarchal blessing.²⁶ And the word is to go out not to the Lamanite only, but also the Jew, as explained in

these beautiful words by President Joseph Fielding Smith: “The time is now at hand spoken by ancient prophets when the Lord shall feel after them. The words of Isaiah are now being fulfilled: [ISAIAH 11:10–12 are quoted here.] Since the British mandate has been established in Palestine, the Jews are returning. The curse has been taken off the land and before many years have passed away they will again be worthy to enter into covenant with the Lord.”²⁷ **VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES:** The LXX (6) renders the beginning of this verse, “And it shall be in that day, *that* the Lord shall again shew his hand, to be zealous for the remnant that is left of the people” The word translated as *recover* in the KJV is given a very powerful meaning by Alexander, with an allusion to the expiatory sacrifice of our Savior: “קָנִיתִי... does not mean merely to possess (Vulgate), but to acquire (Luther), especially by purchase, and so *to redeem* from bondage and oppression (Vitranga).”

12 And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

✓ wings

Here the *ensign* stands for the restored Gospel. The expression “for the nations” or “to the nations” is the proper translation, here of לְגוֹיִם. This shows that all are invited, and none excluded from coming unto Christ. ISAIAH 11:10 should also have been translated *nations*, rather than *Gentiles*. Elder Parley P. Pratt said, “Here you behold an ensign to be reared for the nations; not only for the dispersed of Judah, but the outcast of Israel. The Jews are called dispersed, because they are scattered among the nations; but the ten tribes are called outcasts, because they are cast out from the knowledge of the nations into a land by themselves. Now, the reader will bear in mind that the ten tribes have not dwelt in the land of Canaan since they were led captive by Shalmanezzer, king of Assyria.”²⁸ Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote, “That ensign, the fullness of the everlasting gospel, has now been raised; and that

²⁵ Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*. 26 vols. London: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1854–1886. Volume 24, April 11, 1875, p. 19.

²⁶ Elder Spencer W. Kimball (then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve), April 13, 1965. “Lamanite Prophecies Fulfilled,” An address given to the Brigham Young University Student body, pp. 4–16.

²⁷ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Way to Perfection: Short Discourses on Gospel Themes*. “Assembling the Outcasts of Israel” 9th ed. Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1951. p. 134–135.

²⁸ Pratt, Parley P. *A Voice of Warning and Instruction to All People Or, an Introduction to the Faith and Doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* By Elder Parley P. Pratt. New Edition. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1957. Included is the preface to the First American Edition (1837) and the Second European Edition (December 4, 1846). P.35

trumpet, the gospel trumpet, is now sounding its clarion call.”²⁹ An commemorative Ensign was raised in what is called *Ensign Peak* in Utah, “Two days after the Mormon Pioneers entered this valley, Brigham Young and party climbed to that point, and with the aid of field glasses, made a careful survey of the mountains, canyons and streams. In addition to Brigham Young, the party included Heber C. Kimball, Wilford Woodruff, George A. Smith, Ezra Taft Benson, Willard Richards, Albert Carrington and William Clayton. ‘It was suggested that this would be a fitting place to “set up an ensign for the nations” where the Lord “shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth,” as foretold in ISAIAH 11:12. It was then named Ensign Peak, and in later years a standard was erected on its summit.”³⁰

13 The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.

The envy also of Ephraim shall depart. / Ephraim shall not envy Judah. After the civil war that divided the nation of Israel into Ephraim (the northern ten tribes) and Judah (the southern two tribes), there was much enmity between the both. Judah had the true temple cult, and Ephraim, in a spirit of envy, constructed two false temples to compete with Judah. “Elder [LeGrand] Richards then suggests that ‘we of Ephraim should lead out in establishing this friendly relationship, for we are to take the everlasting gospel to the Jewish people, including the Book of Mormon, which was preserved for “the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations’ (see title page to the Book of Mormon). He continues by saying that it will be through our doing this and their being restored to the church and fold of God that they ‘shall be sanctified in holiness before the Lord to dwell in his presence day and night forever and ever.”³¹ Also see Ezekiel 37:22, 24, about the unity between Judah and Ephraim under one King, even Christ. ¶ *And the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off / And Judah shall not vex Ephraim.* Sperry likewise explains, “The gathered remnants of Israel will not harass and vex each other as they did in ancient times

²⁹ McConkie, Bruce R. *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1985. p. 536.

³⁰ “Marker Memorializes ‘Ensign To Nations,’” *LDS Church News*, Deseret News. 29 July 1989. Salt Lake City: Deseret News Publishing Company.

³¹ Tate, Lucile C. *LeGrand Richards: Beloved Apostle*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1982.

after they were divided politically. Ephraim, representing the Northern tribes, and Judah, representing those to the South will, under the gospel banner, get along amicably, each with the other.”³²

14 But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines towards the west; they shall spoil them of the east together; they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them.

- ✓ the children of
- ✓ ✓ Edom and Moab shall be the laying on their hand
- ✓ ✓ ✓ their obedience

But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines towards the west; they shall spoil them of the east together. The Targum (Ⲯ) reads: “They shall be united in one mind (literally, *one shoulder*) to smite the Philistines towards the west.” United Israel (Judah and Ephraim) under the Gospel would be able to stand against their enemies by the border of the Philistines toward the sea (now the area of the Gaza Strip in Palestine and elsewhere). ¶ *They shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them.* After attacking the Philistines, Israel would fall upon her other former enemies, including Edom and Moab.

15 And the LORD shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind he shall shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make [men] go over dryshod.

- ✓ in shoes

Regarding the **לְשׁוֹן יַם־מִצְרַיִם** “Tongue of the Egyptian sea” Gill has, “Which Kimhi and Abarbinel interpret of the Egyptian river Sichor, or the Nile; others of a bay of the Egyptian sea, so called because in the form of a tongue; the destroying of it designs the drying of it up, so that people might pass over it dry shod; the allusion is to the drying up of the Red Sea, when the Israelites came out of Egypt, and passed through it, as on dry land....” The expression **הַנָּהָר** “the river,” we said, often stands for the Euphrates. Elder Orson Pratt wrote: “The Lord says in the sixteenth chapter— ‘Behold the days shall come when it shall no more be

³² Sperry, Sidney B. *Book of Mormon Compendium*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1968. 2nd Book of Nephi, p. 228.

said the Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;’ but instead of that saying, there will be another more glorious saying, namely that ‘the Lord liveth who brought up the children of Israel from the north country, and from all other countries whither he had driven them.’ ... But notwithstanding they have retained this saying, it will be one day done away, superseded by the manifestations of God’s power in bringing Israel from the north country and all other countries whither they have been scattered, and gathering them to their own land. The Israel of the latter day has got to cross the sea dry shod, just as ancient Israel did. It is thus predicted in the eleventh chapter of Isaiah.”³³ Elder Parley P. Pratt wrote, “We have also presented before us, in the 15th verse, the marvelous power of God, which will be displayed in the destruction of a small branch of the Red Sea, called the tongue of the Egyptian Sea: and also the dividing of the seven streams of some river, and causing men to go over dryshod; and lest any should not understand it literally, the next verse says, ‘there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.’”³⁴

VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES: The Targum (ⲧ) reads, “And the Lord shall dry up the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and shall lift up the stroke of His strength upon Euphrates by the word of his prophets, and shall smite it in seven streams, and *men* shall walk through it dryshod (literally, *with sandals*).” The LXX (Ⲭ) reading (as well as the Syriac, Ⲫ) is particularly interesting, in respects to *a strong wind*,³⁵ “And the Lord shall make desolate the sea of Egypt; and he shall lay his hand on the river with a strong wind, and he shall smite the seven channels, so that men shall pass through it dryshod.” In terms of the *seven streams*, Henderson adds, “i.e., *completely* into rivulets or torrents, and so dry up the Euphrates; the number *seven* being employed to express perfection or completeness. The appropriateness of the figure lies in the multitude of canals into which the Euphrates was divided....”

16 And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people which shall be left,

³³ Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*. 26 vols. London: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1854–1886. Volume 24, April 11, 1875, p. 24.

³⁴ Pratt, Parley P. *A Voice of Warning and Instruction to All People Or, an Introduction to the Faith and Doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* By Elder Parley P. Pratt. New Edition. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1957. Included is the preface to the First American Edition (1837) and the Second European Edition (December 4, 1846). P.35

³⁵ “And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided” (Exodus 14:21).

from Assyria, like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.

And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people which shall be left. Elder Bruce R. McConkie said, “... those who are left because they have abided the day of our Lord’s coming shall find a highway to lead them to their appointed gathering places. It shall then be, Isaiah says, ‘like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt’ (ISAIAH 11:16). As the Lord provided a highway through the Red Sea for his people anciently, as they traveled to their promised land, so will he provide a way for them to travel in the latter days. Our latter-day revelation, after stating that the great deep shall be driven back into the north countries and that the continents shall become one land, states that ‘they who are in the north countries,’ meaning the Ten Tribes, shall return. ‘And an highway shall be cast up in the midst of the great deep’ for them (D&C 133:23–27). Would we go too far astray if we were to suggest that the highway is created by the joined landmasses, and that as ancient Israel found a dry path through the Red Sea, so latter-day Israel will find a dry path where the Atlantic Ocean once was? It is at least a thought to ponder, for surely we are expected to seek for interpretations relative to all that has been revealed concerning the Lord and his coming.”³⁶ Nyman wrote, “The remnant which left from Assyria are, of course, the ten tribes who were taken into the north. The apocryphal book of 2 Esdras tells of miracles which will attend their return like those that attended their departure: ‘Then they dwelt there until the last times; and now, when they are about to come again, the Most High will stop the channels of the river again, so that they may be able to pass over. Therefore you saw the multitude gathered together in peace’ (2 Esdras 13:46–47). And the Doctrine and Covenants gives an even more sure prophecy of the event spoken of in Isaiah (see D&C 133:26–33).

President Joseph Fielding Smith refers to the entire eleventh chapter of Isaiah in speaking of the lost tribes coming to their brother Ephraim, the firstborn in Israel, to receive their crowning blessings (see DS, 3:252).”

VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES: The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And there shall be a passage for my people, that is left in Egypt: and it shall be to Israel as the day when he came forth out of the land of Egypt.” Alexander

suggests that the word מִסְלָה does not represent a *path* or *natural way* left after people traverse it, but rather is “an artificial road formed by casting up the earth (from

³⁶ McConkie, Bruce R. *The Millennial Messiah*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, p. 624.

לְלִי to raise),” which fits nicely with Elder McConkie’s thoughts, above. Regarding the remnant that shall return, Barnes makes some interesting comments. Many of the commentators are very anti-Semitic, but here are some remarks which I like and can identify with very much: “The Jews, when converted, make the best missionaries. There is a freshness in their views of the Messiah when they are converted, which Gentile converts seldom feel. The apostles were all Jews; and the zeal of Paul shows what converted Jews will do when they become engaged in making known the true Messiah ... We have every reason therefore, to

expect that God intends to make great use of the Jews, whom he has preserved scattered everywhere—though they be but a ‘remnant’—in converting the world to his Son. And we should most fervently pray, that they may be imbued with love to their long-rejected Messiah [that they may become missionaries for Christ].” As a tribe, however, we know that Judah will be the last to be gathered in.

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Isaiah 12

ISAIAH 12 is a beautiful Psalm to the Lord (or two of them). This is a song of praise to God sung by those who will be redeemed in the last days, as part of the gathering of the children of Jacob. Isaiah sees future Israel singing praises to the Lord. According to Cheyne, and most expositors, this is “The song of the reunited and restored people, with whom the Prophet unites himself in spirit. It is the counterpart of the Song of Moses in Exodus 15; indeed, verse 2b is adopted from Exodus 15:2, and verse 5a alludes to the beginning of the song, Exodus 15:1.” Ludlow well reminds us of the Psalm found in D&C 84: “For I, the Almighty, have laid my hands upon the nations, to scourge them for their wickedness. And plagues shall go forth, and they shall not be taken from the earth until I have completed my work, which shall be cut short in righteousness—Until all shall know me, who remain, even from the least unto the greatest, and shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and shall see eye to eye, and shall lift up their voice, and with the voice together sing this new song, saying: The Lord hath brought again Zion; The Lord hath redeemed his people, Israel, According to the election of grace, Which was brought to pass by the faith And covenant of their fathers. The Lord hath redeemed his people; And Satan is bound and time is no longer. The Lord hath gathered all things in one. The Lord hath brought down Zion from above. The Lord hath brought up Zion from beneath. The earth hath travailed and brought forth her strength; And truth is established in her bowels; And the heavens have smiled upon her; And she is clothed with the glory of her God; For he stands in the midst of his people. Glory, and honor, and power, and might, Be ascribed to our God; for he is full of mercy, Justice, grace and truth, and peace, Forever and ever, Amen” (D&C 84:96–102).

vv 1–3. On behalf of those gathered into Israel, Isaiah sings praises to the Lord, his strength, song and salvation. Regarding this song, Barnes says, “This song is far better applied to the times of the Messiah.”

1 ¶ AND in that day thou shalt say: O LORD, I will praise thee; though thou wast angry with me thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedest me.

AND in that day [בַּיּוֹם] thou shalt say: O LORD, I will praise thee. The Targum (T) reads, “And thou shalt say at that time, I will confess¹ before Thee, O Lord.” Expressions of praise for the Lord are born out of gratitude for His great expiatory sacrifice on our behalf. ¶ Though thou wast angry with me thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedest me. The Hebrew כִּי, the explanatory *for* or *though*, is used here. The LXX (G) reads, “For thou wast angry with me, but thou hast turned aside thy wrath, and hast pitied me.” Henry observes that “God sometimes brings his people into a wilderness that there he may speak comfortably to them.” Kay well observes that we can be full of gratitude when the Lord shows us His displeasure and thus guides us into repentance, “They can even thank Him for His severe discipline: which would not let them glide on smoothly to ruin. His wrath was but the

‘jealousy’ of true love.” Young states, “Isaiah [writes] as though the entire nation were but one man. The people are thus seen to be united in their praise of God.”

2 Behold, God [is] my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid; for the LORD JEHOVAH [is] my strength and [my] song; he also is has become my salvation.

Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid. As Daniel Ludlow observed, “The phrase ‘God is my salvation!’ is actually a play on Isaiah’s own given name, as his name has this exact meaning and uses the same Hebrew root.”² As mentioned by Cheyne, this verse is similar to the praise given by Moses: “The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father’s God, and I will exalt him” (Exodus 15:2, see also Psalm 118:14). ¶ For the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also has become my salvation. Once we recognize that the Lord is our Strength, our Stay and our Staff, then naturally we will desire to sing unto Him praises. The Hebrew (M) reads יהוה יְהוָה, or, “Yah Yahweh.” We see the word יהוה used only two other time in ISAIAH (26:4; 38:11). In both instances it appears as יהוה יְהוָה. The expression יהוה is frequently used in Psalms, although in

¹ Or, praise, thank (see, CAL Targum Lexicon)

² Ludlow, Daniel H. *A Companion to Your Study of the Old Testament*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Desert Book, 1981.

the KJV we only see it used once, “Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name **JAH**, and rejoice before him” (Psalms 68:4). The word **יְהוָה** appears first in Exodus 15:2, and is used 44 times in the Old Testament. In the KJV the word **יְהוָה** **Jehovah** appears four times, as for the most part it is substituted for LORD. Two of these times are in ISAIAH: here and in the similar spot in 26:4. The other two are found in Exodus and Psalms (see also notes on ISAIAH 1:2).

3 Therefore, with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

The waters out of the well of salvation are the very same ones that the Savior invited the Samaritan woman to partake, “There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink ... Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water ... Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:7, 10, 13–14). In Jeremiah 2:13 we read that the Lord is “the fountain of living waters.” LDS and other exegetes alike suggest that this verse also has reference to the Holy Ghost, which bears witness that Jesus is the Christ. Lowth explains: “On the last day of the feast of tabernacles, they fetched water in a golden pitcher from the fountain of Siloah, springing at the foot of Mount Sion without the city; they brought it through the water-gate into the temple, and poured it, mixed with wine, on the sacrifice as it lay upon the altar, with great rejoicing. They seem to have taken up this custom, for it is not ordained in the law of Moses, as an emblem of future blessings, in allusion to this passage of Isaiah, ‘Ye shall draw waters with joy from the fountains of salvation:’ —(*Jerusalem Talmud*) ... Our Saviour applied the ceremony, and the intention of it, to himself, and to the effusion of the Holy Spirit, promised, and to be given, by him. The sense of the Jews in this matter is plainly shown by the following passage of the Jerusalem Talmud: ‘Why is it called the place, or house, of drawing?’ (for that was the term for this ceremony, or for the place where the water was taken up:) ‘Because from thence they draw the Holy Spirit; as it is written, And ye shall draw water with joy from the fountains of salvation’ (see Wolf. Curac Philol. In N. T. on John 7:37, 39).”

vv. 4–6. On behalf of restored Israel, Isaiah praises the Lord, declares His greatness, and exhorts us to share the knowledge of the Lord with others.

4 ¶ And in that day shall ye say: Praise the LORD, call upon his name, ✓ declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.

✓ or, proclaim

And in that day shall ye say: Praise the LORD, call upon his name. We can call upon God the Father through the name of Jesus Christ. When we pass from this mortality, it will be the Savior who will be the *keeper of the gate*: “O then, my beloved brethren, come unto the Lord, the Holy One. Remember that his paths are righteous. Behold, the way for man is narrow, but it lieth in a straight course before him, and the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there; and there is none other way save it be by the gate; for he cannot be deceived, for the Lord God is his name” (2 Nephi 9:41). ¶ *Declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.* The Targum (**ܬܪܓܡܐ**) has, “Praise the Lord (literally, *praise before the Lord*), pray in His name, declare His doings among the people, remember ye that powerful is His name.” The LXX (**Λ**) and Syriac (**ܣ**) use Gentiles, but indeed, the KJV is correct in saying “*among the people*” **בְּעַמִּים**. This is an exhortation to share the Gospel with others once we have found it ourselves. Yeah, make mention that His name is exalted! Delitzsch would translate as, “Boast that His name is exalted.” In Alma we read the words of Ammon, in what could well be entitled the Psalm of Ammon: “Blessed be the name of our God; let us sing to his praise, yea, let us give thanks to his holy name, for he doth work righteousness forever ... I do not boast in my own strength, nor in my own wisdom; but behold, my joy is full, yea, my heart is brim with joy, and I will rejoice in my God.” (Alma 26:8, 11b, see also Alma 26: 8–16, Jeremiah 9:23–24). In this verse Henry speaks about sharing with others what we have come to know and love, “We must not only speak to God, but speak to others concerning him, not only call upon his name, but (as the margin|| reads it) *proclaim his name*; let others know something more from us than they did before concerning God, and those things whereby he has made himself known.” We must, indeed, *invite all to come unto Christ*. The Gospel is to be taken to every corner of the world, first to the Gentile Nations and then to the Jew, so that Israel can be gathered.

5 Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done excellent things: this [is] known in all the earth.

There is nothing more natural than bursting forth in expressions of love for the Lord, whether they are prose or song; whether expressed in loud voices, or the deepest feelings of our heart. Truly, the Lord has done excellent things. It is sweet to contemplate His loving kindness and His atoning sacrifice. We shall praise and sing and shout in thanksgiving, as is done in Solemn Assemblies with the Hosanna shout. For the Lord is Holy, yeah, three times Holy; קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ, “Holy, holy, holy, [is] the LORD of hosts: the whole earth [is] full of his glory” (ISAIAH 6:3b). I have been greatly blessed of the Lord.

6 Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant ✓ of Zion; for great [is] the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

✓ inhabitress

The Targum (ܬ) has, “Cry out and shout, O congregation of Zion, because He is great that promised to cause His *Shekinah* to dwell in the midst of thee, the Holy One of Israel.” Stenning renders it: “Shout for joy, and sing praises, O congregation of Zion; for the Great One hath promised to set his in thy midst, even the Holy One of Israel.” The term *Shekinah* שְׂכִינָה represents the dwelling place of the Lord, such as the Jerusalem Temple. The Lord shall dwell among His people.

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Isaiah 13

Regarding ISAIAH 13 and 14, Lowth says, “The former part of this prophecy is one of the most beautiful examples, that can be given, of elegance of composition, variety of imagery, and sublimity of sentiment and diction, in the prophetic style; and the latter part consists of an ode of supreme and singular excellence.” Isaiah was permitted to see into the future, to see (1) the role that Babylon would play in terms of punishing disobedient Judah, as well as (2) the eventual downfall of Babylon. Robert W. Rogers, after writing about the great history of Babylon concludes his book with, “The glory of Babylon is ended. The long procession of princes, priests, and kings has passed by. No city so vast had stood on the world before it. No city with a history so long has even yet appeared. From the beginnings of human history it had stood. It was in other hands now, and it would soon be a shapeless mass of ruins, standing along in a sad, untilled desert” (*History of Babylonia and Assyria*, Volume II). Babylon represents not only the ancient kingdom that was brought down to her knees, but also the *dark side of the world*. Henderson says, “Babylon was the seat of science, especially astronomy; the center of ancient idolatry; the storehouse of wealth and magnificence; and the asylum of all that was revolting in licentiousness and immorality.” Much is said about Babylon in Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Micah, Zechariah, as well as in the New Testament. The Book of Revelation speaks of Babylon’s eventual fall, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen” (Revelation 14:8b). In D&C we are commanded, “Go ye out from among the nations, even from Babylon, from the midst of wickedness, which is spiritual Babylon” (D&C 133:14). This chapter marks the first of eleven dedicated to the nations. Many of these begin with the words the “burden,” and then address a particular nation. There are nine nations or regions that receive such burdens, beginning with Babylon. Then follow Moab (15:1), Damascus (17:1), Egypt (19:1), the “desert of the sea” (21:1), Dumah (21:11), Arabia (21:13), the “valley of vision” (22:1), and end with Tyre (23:1). Calvin makes some important points about the destruction of Babel: “It may be asked, Was this destruction [that would happen upon Babylon] as cruel as Isaiah here describes it to be? For history gives a different account and Daniel himself, who was an eye-witness of this destruction, relates that the city was only taken, for the Medes and Persians spared the citizens and inhabitants ... Now, when he declares that Babylon will be utterly destroyed, it is certain that he does not merely describe a single calamity, but includes the destruction which followed long afterwards. After having been subdued by the Persians, Babylon continued to flourish, and held the name and rank of a very celebrated city ... Having been gradually weakened, not long afterwards, Babylon again changed its master, and, after having been governed for a short period by Alexander, king of Macedon, immediately passed under the dominion of Seleucus, who endeavoured by every method to degrade it till it was completely ruined. Thus, so long as God permitted the city to remain in existence, it presented a shameful and revolting spectacle to the whole world, that the accomplishment of the prophecy might be more evident and more impressive. Hence the Prophet Isaiah has good reason for asserting that the anger of God will not be appeased till that den of robbers be utterly destroyed.”

vv. 1–5. The hosts are being commanded by the Lord of Hosts, and are ready to attack Babylon and destroy her strength. It is the word of the Lord that we hear in ISAIAH 13:2–3. All is set up for the great battle between good and evil.

1 ¶ THE burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see.

The word *burden* (בִּשָּׁא) is sometimes translated as *prophecy* or *oracle*.¹ Young explains that the minatory,

or menacing, nature of the word is not universal. Here we do have a prophecy of a threatening nature, however, such that the word *burden* fits quite well. This prophecy of doom fell upon Babel, or Babylonia, מִשָּׂא בָבֶל. The prophecy was given to Isaiah, the son of Amoz, in the form of a vision: חֶזֶן יִשְׁעִיהוּ בֶן-אֲמוֹץ. The Targum (ܬܪܓܡ) reads, “The burden of the cup of cursing to give to Babylon to drink, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did prophesy.” Many modern exegetes, intent in destroying the word of God, would love to assign this prophecy to someone other than Isaiah, for the vision predicts things way into the future. Many in the critical school believe that a

¹ Henderson points out that it can sometimes mean *uttering*, such as in the words spoken by King Lemuel, who in turn had been taught by his mother (see Proverbs 31:1). Henderson shows, how in several scriptures, the expression *uttered words* fits the Hebrew expression,

such as in Zechariah 9:1: “מִשָּׂא דְּבַר-יְהוָה” speaking of the word of the Lord, such as might be translated, the *utterance of the word of the LORD*.

prophet is simply a wise man who can discern the signs of the times, rather than one who can peer into the future with the Lord's help. Delitzsch well says, "We may therefore see from this, that the prophecy relating to Babylon was originally complete in itself, and was intended to be issued in that form. But when the whole book was compiled, these headings were retained as signal-posts of the separate portions of which it was composed. Moreover, in the case before us, the retention of the heading may be regarded as a providential arrangement. For if this 'oracle of Babel' lay before us in a separate form, and without the name of Isaiah, we should not dare to attribute it to him, for the simple reason that the overthrow of the Chaldean empire is here distinctly announced, and that at a time when the Assyrian empire was still standing."

2 Lift ye up my* banner upon the high mountain, exalt the voice unto them, shake the hand, that they may go into the gates of the nobles.

* A banner in KJV and Book of Mormon, my in JST.

Lift ye up my banner upon the high mountain. These are the words of the LORD that He speaks through the mouth of Isaiah. As stated by Nyman, "... the Joseph Smith Translation reads 'my banner,' which clarifies that it was the Lord's banner which was to be raised."

Regarding the *high mountain*, **הַר-נִשְׁפָּה** there are a number of translations. Gesenius explains that **נִשְׁפָּה** means *bare, bald or naked when used of a mountain*. BDB also suggests that **נִשְׁפָּה** can mean *bare* as in the *bare treeless height*. **נִשְׁפָּה**, based on the Arabian, means *to appear, become visible, conspicuous, lofty, prominent, to stand out, and elevated place* (AHCL). When mountains are very high, they certainly do not have vegetation on them, as the Andes Mountains, for instance. The scriptures, then, talk about raising a standard or an ensign on a high mountain where it could be seen. Two types of standards are frequently mentioned by Isaiah: one of them to call people to battle; the other to invite people unto Christ. In a spiritual sense, they are the same, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12). Perhaps no more eloquent invitation to leave Babylon and come unto Christ can be found than in the Preface to the Doctrine and Covenants (D&C 1:1–39 as well as D&C 133:1–74). From a historical perspective, most exegetes here speak of the Medes being called to topple Babylon. ¶ *Exalt the voice unto them, shake the hand, that they may go into the*

gates of the nobles. The LXX (6) says, "Exalt the voice to them, beckon with the hand." Henderson, instead of the *raising of the voice unto them*, **הָרִימוּ קוֹל לָהֶם**, can also imagine the voice of a *trumpet* (as does Barnes), **קוֹל שׁוֹפָר** (or, *voice of the shophar*, made of a *ram's horn*, see Jeremiah 4:21). Henderson explains that the **לָהֶם**, *unto them*, "is anticipative, and refers to the warriors under Cyrus, not named but further described [in] ISAIAH 13:3 and expressly stated [in] ISAIAH 13:17, to be the Medes. It can also be understood to be the hosts of God's army. Delitzsch suggests that the conquering armies will enter through the gates reserved for the nobles, "The destination of this army is to enter into a city of princes ... namely, to enter as conquerors; for it is not the princes who invite them, but Jehovah." Several commentators, including Henry, feel that the place is called the *gates of the nobles* on account of the "abundance of nobleman's houses that were in it." Nägelsbach supposed it might mean "the main gates of the hostile city, which alone (in contrast with the small side gates, figuratively called 'needle-eyes' –Matthew 19:24) serve for the entree of princes in pomp, in the present case for the victors. Still the expression occasions surprise." Barnes, leaning on Herodotus, explained: "The walls of Babylon are said by Herodotus to have been eighty-seven feet thick, and 350 high. They were built of brick, or clay dried in the sun, and not burned; and were cemented by a kind of glutinous earth, or bitumen, with which the adjacent region abounded. The whole city was surrounded by an immense ditch, from which this clay had been taken to make the walls of the city, and which, being always filled with water, contributed materially to its defence. There were 100 gates to the city, twenty-five on each side. These gates were solid brass. Between every two of them there were three tower, raised ten feet above the walls." Barnes adds, "If there was any ancient city that appeared to bid defiance to the attacks of enemies, or to the ravages of time, it was Babylon."

3 I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called my mighty ones, for mine anger, [even] is not upon them that rejoice in my highness.

The Targum (7) has, "I have commanded those that are prepared by me, I have also called together my mighty ones, that they may avenge my wrath upon them, my strength, and my praise." The sanctified ones, or 'my sanctified [or *consecrated*—Henderson; to be *set apart*, Barnes] ones' **לְמִקְדָּשִׁי** (from the verb, **קִדַּשׁ**) in the spiritual sense of this verse, are those who have been called to follow Christ in the last days, or the saints of

the most High God. Most commentators speak of the emphatic role of “I” as in *I myself* (אני) have commanded, speaking of the LORD. Alexander explains, “The insertion of אני is not an idiom of the later Hebrew, as explained by Gesenius (Lehrg. P. 801), but as Maurer has correctly stated, an emphatic designation of God as the sole efficient agent, *I myself*, or *I even I*.” Calvin applies the label *sanctified* to those through whom the LORD would accomplish His work, that is, the Medes and the Persians: “[God] threatens, therefore, that *Babylon* shall be destroyed by the Medes and Persians, in the same manner as if they obeyed the call of God; for though they were prompted to battle by their own ambition, pride, and cruelty, yet God directed them, without [them] knowing it, to execute judgment.” ¶ More importantly, the sanctified are those who are involved in a spiritual fight for Zion and against Babylon. It is clear that the Lord is pleased with His servants who are true disciples and who rejoice in the Lord.

4 The noise of a the multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together, the LORD of hosts mustereth the hosts of the battle.

✓ or, the likeness of

The noise of the multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people. Henderson explains: “The description is truly graphical. First, a tumultuous noise is heard, but not so distinctly as to discover the cause: then the appearance of a vast army presents itself; the din becomes louder and louder; and, at last, the hostile army is found to be so numerous, that it appears as if entire kingdoms had transferred their population, and were assembled for battle.” Alexander, and some after him, has noted that “The absence of verbs adds greatly to the vividness of the description. The sentence really consists of a series of exclamations, describing the impressions made successively upon the senses on an eye and ear witness.” In terms of the Medes and the Persians, Rawlinson well has, “The mention of ‘mountains’ here is very appropriate, both Media and Persia being, in the main, mountainous countries.” Nägelsbach calls this the Zagros mountains² but he rather thinks of this verse in a more spiritual or eschatological fashion, regarding a universal judgment that will fall upon the earth: “The army, then, which Jehovah musters, consists of people that have come from a far land, and from the end of heaven.” ¶ A

² *Zagrus mons*, now represented by the middle and southern portion of the mountains of Kurdistan.—Translators note to Nägelsbach.

tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together, the LORD of hosts mustereth the hosts of the battle. Henderson says, “To crown the whole [picture], Jehovah is introduced as inspecting the troops previous to the engagement.” Delitzsch imagines it, as troops running down the mountains in response to the invitation, “The command of Jehovah is quickly executed. The great army is already coming down from the mountains.” In Jeremiah we read, “Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz; appoint a captain against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillars. Prepare against her the nations with the kings of the Medes, the captains thereof, and all the rulers thereof, and all the land of his dominion. And the land shall tremble and sorrow: for every purpose of the LORD shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant” (Jeremiah 51:27–29). Henderson explains that Ararat is not only a mountain, but a region. Also, that the *kings of the Medes* probably refers to “satraps or viceroys ruling in the larger divisions of Media and Persia, who put themselves at the head of the quota of men which they severally brought into the field.” Alexander states that the verse is generic rather than specific in relation to a given mountain range as suggested by other commentators. “But these distinctions seem to rest upon a false view of the passage as a description of particular marches, battles, &c., rather than a generic picture of the whole series of events which ended in the downfall of Babylon.” The Berkeley edition has, “Listen, an uproar on the mountains as of a great multitude! Listen, an uproar of kingdoms, of nations assembling! The Lord of hosts is mustering a battle-host.” (See likewise also, ASV, Moffatt, Tanakh, NASB, NRSV, REB, NAB, NJB, AB, EB, AAT, to name a few.)

5 They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, [even] yea, the LORD, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.

Several expositors explain that the ends of heaven has to do with where the heavens seem to meet the horizon. So Barnes explains, “The expression in the Hebrew, ‘From the end, or extreme part of heaven,’ means, the distant horizon by which the earth appears to be bounded, where the sky and the land seem to meet.” Barnes illustrates the point with Psalm 19 where the apparent circuit of the sun is described, “His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof” (v. 6). While this may well be one meaning,

there is no need to limit the *ends of heaven* to this definition as God is able to bring forth reinforcements from whence He pleases. Rawlinson makes this interesting observation, “With a most effective anthropomorphism, Jehovah is made to march with the army that he has mustered (ISAIAH 13:4) against the land that has provoked his wrath—*i.e.* Babylonia.” Likewise, the Lord will gather out of Babylon, or the world, the descendants of Israel from the ends of heaven: “If any of thine *be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven*, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee” (Deuteronomy 30:4, emphasis added³). Nägelsbach continues with an eschatological view: “The end that the LORD will accomplish by means of the ‘weapons of His indignation’ is: to overturn the whole earth. ‘The whole *earth*!’ For this judgment on Babylon belongs to ‘the day of the Lord.’ It is thus an integral part of the world’s judgment.”

vv. 6–18. Spiritual Babylon will be destroyed and then a description of physical Babylon’s destruction, and the fierce barbarism of those who would take her, is mentioned. Kay says, “Some of the language employed carries our thoughts far beyond the judgment on any single nation (ISAIAH 13:10, 11, 14). It is a world-wide visitation ...”

6 ¶ Howl ye; for the day of the LORD [is] at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.

The Targum (T) reads, “Howl ye, for nigh is the day, ready to come from before the Lord; like spoil from before the Almighty it shall come.” ¶ *Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand.* The *day* of the *Lord*, *יְהוָה יוֹם*, is an eschatological expression. It is a frequent expression in the scriptures. We read in Joel, “Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come” (Joel 1:15); in Jeremiah, “For this is the day of the Lord GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries: and the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood: for the Lord GOD of hosts hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates,” (Jeremiah 46:10); in Zephaniah, “The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly” (Zephaniah 1:14). The term is also used by Amos, Obadiah, and Malachi in its eschatological character.

³ To me, not only every quarter of the earth, but also from the *Spirit world*, will the Lord gather His people.

But who can escape the day? We read, “Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD’s anger”

(Zephaniah 2:3). The word *קָרוֹב*, which is translated as “at hand” in the KJV, means *near*. ¶ *It shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.* The destruction spoken off comes from the Almighty *יְהוָה*⁴, and thus it is an exquisite or perfect destruction (see also D&C 19:10–15).

7 Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man’s heart shall melt;

✓ or, fall down

In the LXX (G) we read, Therefore every hand shall become powerless, and every soul of man shall be dismayed.” This verse is intended to reflect the absolute fear, panic and devastation in the faces and hearts of all those who are not prepared to meet the Lamb. Rawlinson suggests that the Babylonians were so afraid that they did not even resist their enemies: “Recently discovered accounts of the capture of Babylon by Cyrus show a great want of activity and vigour on the part of the defenders.”

8 And they shall be afraid; pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces [shall be as] flames.

✓ wonder ✓ every man at his neighbour
✓ faces of the flames

Note: Book of Mormon does not include, “they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth” but JST does.

In the Targum (T) we have, “They shall be struck with consternation; distress and pangs shall take hold of them.” In the LXX (G), “And shall change their countenance as a flame.” It has been cleverly suggested that the expression *לְהִבִּים פְּנֵיהֶם*, *their faces flames*, may well mean pale with fear, such as that of the white ashes left after wood or coals are spent.⁵ Gill also says, “Not red with blushing, through shame, as Kimhi; but pale with fear.” ¶ Great pain and distress is often compared to that of a woman giving birth. Young says, “Theirs is the deepest anguish, for the day of Yahweh is

⁴ Gesenius explains, “It is the plural excellentiae, from the singular *יָד* powerful.”

⁵ I must apologize for I cannot find the original source for this clever citation at this time.

breaking. And this is the forerunner of the great last day of which the apostle writes, ‘For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape’ (1 Thessalonians 5:3).”

9 Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.

Barnes, speaking about the *cruel* אִכְזָרִי day of the Lord—mercy contrasted with justice, “his does not mean that ‘God’ is cruel, but that the ‘day of Yahweh’ that was coming should be unsparing and destructive to them. It would be the exhibition of ‘justice,’ but not of ‘cruelty;’ and the word stands opposed here to mercy, and means that God would not spare them. The effect would be that the inhabitants of Babylon would be destroyed.” ¶ President Howard W. Hunter explained it this way, “When these experiences humble us and refine us and teach us and bless us, they can be powerful instruments in the hands of God to make us better people, to make us more grateful, more loving, and more considerate of other people in their own times of difficulty ... Those problems and prophecies were never intended to do anything but bless the righteous and help those who are less righteous move toward repentance ... Our task is to live fully and faithfully and not worry ourselves sick about the woes of the world or when it will end. Our task is to have the gospel in our lives and to be a bright light, a city set on the hill, which reflects the beauty of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the joy and happiness that will always come to every people in every age who keep the commandments.”⁶ Delitzsch says, regarding the land that would be affected by the desolations, “not only the *land* [אֶרֶץ] of Babylon ... but *the [whole] earth* [תְּהִלָּה].” Young adds, “Over Babylon the judgment pours out, for it will also pour out over all the earth.”

10 For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

⁶ Howard W. Hunter, *Ensign*, October 1993, An Anchor to the Souls of Men.

⁷ See ISAIAH 13:11.

Nyman explains, “Oliver Cowdery apparently was quoting or paraphrasing this verse, along with ISAIAH 13:13, when he reported what scriptures the angel Moroni quoted to Joseph Smith in September 1823 and noted that they were soon to be fulfilled (see *MA*, April 1835, pp. 111–112).” Regarding ISAIAH 13:10–13, Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: “From the Inspired Version we learn that the signs promised in Matthew 24:29 are to occur after the abomination of desolation sweeps Jerusalem for the second time. They will thus come almost at the very hour of the Second Coming. From other scriptural accounts of these same signs we learn that ‘the earth shall tremble and reel to and fro as a drunken man’ (D&C 88:87), and ‘shall remove out of her place’ (ISAIAH 13:10–13); that ‘the islands shall become one land’ (D&C 133:23); and that ‘the stars shall be hurled from their places.’ (D&C 133:49.) Thus it would seem, when the Lord makes his appearance and the earth is restored to its paradisiacal state, that there will be great physical changes. When the continents become one land and the earth reels to and fro, with all that then occurs, it will surely appear unto men as though the very stars of heaven were being hurled from their places, and so they will be as far as their relationship to the earth is concerned. That there may be other heavenly bodies, having the appearance of stars, that shall fall on the earth may also well be. Truly the scriptures testify of many signs and wonders in the heavens above (D&C 29:14; Joel 2:31; Revelation 6:12–17).”⁸ Also see notes under ISAIAH 13:13.

11 And I will punish the world for [their] evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low down the haughtiness of the terrible.

Those who have refused to turn and follow the Lord will not do so with impunity. The world תִּבְלָה refers both to the global nature of the punishment, and is also an allusion to the natural man. “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world” (1 John 2:15–16). At that time the pride of man will be brought low.

⁸ McConkie, Bruce R. *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1:678.

12 I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.

Gold is a precious metal, especially considered so because of the limited quantities available in the earth. There will be so few humans left after the disasters marking the end-of-days, that man will be considered more precious than the finest gold. Or, one can also think of the individuals who will inherit the earth and the exaltation of the Celestial Kingdom, and apply this verse to that circumstance. Indeed, “Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” (ISAIAH 33:14b). It is precisely this Celestial world view that the Targum (Ⓢ) seems to address: “And I will love them that fear me more than gold, in which the sons of men glory; and those that keep the law more than the fine gold of Ophir.” Kay likewise contends, “Of far greater value than all the ‘gold of Ophir’ (1 Chronicles 29:4; 2 Chronicles 3:6), and ‘fine gold’ (2 Chronicles 3:5, 8) which Solomon overlaid the sanctuary, was a sanctified human soul (Psalm 49:8).” The Lexicons give **זָהָב** as *refined* or *pure gold*, probably derived from **זָהָב** (*refined*, or *refined gold*, Gesenius, BDB, NAS Hebrew-Aramaic Dictionary). **קֶטֶן**, means something *precious* (Gesenius), often *gold* (BDB, HALOT). So it is that ASV rather has, “I will make a man more rare than fine gold, even a man than the pure gold of Ophir.” Barnes explains, “‘Ophir’ was a country to which the vessels of Solomon traded, and which was particularly distinguished for producing gold; but respecting its particular situation, there has been much discussion. The ‘ships of Tarshish’ sailed from Ezion-geber on the Red Sea, and went to Ophir (1 Kings 9:26; 10:22; 22:48). Three years were required for the voyage; and they returned freighted with gold, peacocks, apes, spices, ivory, and ebony (1 Kings 9:28, 10:11, 12; cf. 2 Chronicles 8:18). The gold of that country was more celebrated than that of any other country for its purity.” The exact location of Ophir is disputed.

13 Therefore, I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.

Rawlinson states, “In general, this sign is mentioned in connection with the end of the world, when a ‘new heaven and a new earth’ are to supersede the old (ISAIAH 65:17; 66:22; Revelation 21:1).” Another way

of explaining the falling stars, is that if the earth is moved from this orbit to another location, it would surely seem as if the stars were falling.

14 And it shall be as the chased roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up; and they shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his own land.

The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And he shall be as a roe chased, and as sheep when there is none to gather them together: they shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his own land.” The LXX (Ⓛ), “And they that are left shall be as a fleeing fawn, and as a stray sheep, and there shall be none to gather *them*: so that a man shall turn back to his people, and a man shall flee to his own land.” The DSSB (Ⓢ) renders it, “Like a hunted gazelle and like unherded sheep, all *will* seek their own people and flee to their own land. The Syriac (Ⓢ), “And they shall be like gazelles when they flee, and like sheep that have no one to gather them.” While these animals run in herds, when frightened, each turns and runs where they can to escape the perceived danger. ¶ Nägelsbach suggests that beginning with ISAIAH 13:14, “The Prophet turns from the universal judgment that comprehends all the several acts of judgment against the world-power from first to last, to portray the special judgment to be accomplished on Babylon as the climax of the world power in its first stage, or as the head of the first world-monarchy.” And more specifically regarding ISAIAH 13:14 and those who would depart from Babylon and flee to their own lands, “When ruin impends over a community, whoever is not bound to it by ties of piety or of possession flees out of it. Thus first of all the foreigners flee. The crowd of such in Babylon will scatter like scared gazelles, like a herd panic-stricken. Babylon was the world’s capital, and consequently a resort for people of all nations. All these, therefore, will seek safety in flight.” ¶ Elder Parley P. Pratt suggests an eschatological angle: that the land masses shall move back to their former state, before they were divided, in a quick fashion, with the speed of a chased roe. And then Elder Pratt gives us the following poem: “Behold! the Mount of Olives rent in twain; / While on its top he sets his feet again. / The islands, at his word, obedient, flee; / While to the north he rolls the mighty sea; / Restores the earth in one, as at the first, / With all its blessings, and removes the curse.”⁹

⁹ Pratt, Parley P. *A Voice of Warning and Instruction to All People Or, an Introduction to the Faith and Doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* By Elder Parley P. Pratt. New Edition. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1957.

15 Every one that is found **proud** shall be thrust through; **yea**, and every one that is joined [~~unto them~~] **to the wicked** shall fall by the sword.

In the Targum (T) we read, “Every one that shall be found in her shall be slain, and every one that shall enter into the fortified cities shall be slain by the sword.” Delitzsch has, “By ‘every one that is found,’ we understand those that are taken in the city by the invading conquerors; and by ‘every one that is *caught*,’ those that are overtaken in their flight.” The corrected expressions, *proud* (well associated with Babylon, as we see in ISAIAH 13:19) and *joined to the wicked*, seem to indicate that the *proud* represent Babylon while the *joined to the wicked* are those who have adopted Babylon, or joined themselves to her. Kay explains that “Foreigners, who had attached themselves to the city and were resolved to abide in her. They must share in her ruin.” Alexander explains that most “seem agreed that to be thrust through, and to fall by the sword, are one and the same thing.”

16 Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be spoiled and their wives ravished.

The expression here for *their children* **וְעַלְלֵיהֶם** is based on the root **עַלַל**, and has been variously translated—depending on the context—from a pre-pubescent child to an infant to a stillborn (BDB, DBLH). We read, “O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us. Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones” (Psalm 137:8–9). Barnes says, “This is a description of the horrors of the capture of Babylon; and there can be none more frightful and appalling than that which is here presented. That this is done in barbarous nations in the times of war, there can be no doubt. Nothing was more common among American savages, than to dash out the brains of infants against a rock or a tree, and it was often done before the eyes of the afflicted and heart-broken parents.”

17 Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver and [as

~~for~~] gold, **nor** ~~they~~ shall **they** ~~not~~ delight in it.

In the Targum (T) we read, “Behold, I am bringing upon them the Medes, who are not impelled by silver; and *as for* gold, they delight not in it.” Speaking of the end of days punishment that shall come upon the enemies of Israel, Zephaniah writes, “Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD’s wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land” (Zephaniah 1:18). Regarding the Medes we read: “The ‘cities of the Medes’ are first mentioned in connection with the deportation of the Israelites on the destruction of Samaria (2 Kings 17:6; 18:11). Soon afterwards ISAIAH (13:17; 21:2) speaks of the part taken by the Medes in the destruction of Babylon (comp. Jeremiah 51:11, 28). Daniel gives an account of the reign of Darius the Mede, who was made viceroy by Cyrus (Daniel 6:1–28). The decree of Cyrus, Ezra informs us (6:2–5), was found in ‘the palace that is in the province of the Medes,’ Achmetha or Ecbatana of the Greeks, which is the only Median city mentioned in Scripture.”¹⁰ According to Lowth, the conquerors “shall not be induced, by large offers of gold and silver, for ransom, to spare the lives of those whom they have subdued in battle: their rage and cruelty will get the better of all such motives.” Lowth quotes Xenophon speaking to the Medes as follows, “Ye Medes and others who now hear me, I well know that you have not accompanied me in this expedition with a view of acquiring wealth” (Cyrop. Lib. v.). Rawlinson writes, “The Medes were not a particularly disinterested people: but in the attack on Babylon, made by Cyrus, the object was not plunder, but conquest and the extension of dominion. The main treasures of Babylon—those in the great temple of Belus—were not carried off by Cyrus, as appears both from his own inscriptions, and from Herodotus (i. 181–183).”

18 [**Their**] bows ~~also~~ shall **also** dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eyes shall not spare children.

The expression *the fruit of the womb*¹¹ could either mean the unborn child or children in general. Violence

¹⁰ Easton’s Bible Dictionary, Media

¹¹ Regarding *and on the fruit of the womb*, **וּפְרִי-בֶטֶן**, Lowth has found a manuscript that makes the “*and upon the fruit*” more explicit: **וְעַל פְּרִי**.

against the unborn child was not unheard of (e.g., see 2 Kings 8:12; 15:16; Amos 1:13; Hosea 13:16). Calvin explains that some feel the language is exaggerated in this verse, but he rather feels represents the thought “that the cruelty of the Medes will be so great, that they will not spare even infant children, on whom men do not commonly lay hands unless where there is the utmost barbarity; and, in short, that no allowance will be made for age ... But we do not read that the Medes exercised so great cruelty, and Babylon stood and flourished for a very long period after that calamity... Besides, after the dawn of the following day, no cruelty was exercised but against those who bore arms. Though it was the Prophet’s design to include other judgments of God which awaited the Babylonians, and by which the first calamity was followed long afterwards,¹² yet it is not improperly or unseasonably that he describes the barbarous manners of the nation, that the Jews may be more fully aware that a just reward is prepared for the tyranny of Babylon.” Rawlinson tells it that “both the Medes and the Persians were skilled archers. Herodotus tells us that every Persian youth was taught three things—‘to ride, to draw the bow, and to speak the truth’ (i. 136).” Some exegetes stumble on the bow being mentioned as piercing the youth, rather than the arrow. Just as we might say today that “someone was killed by a gun,” when more properly it may be said that the same was “killed by the bullet,” so it is with the bow, for the mention of the one or the other corresponds to the same meaning.

vv. 19–22. Babylon, the physical nation, despite her grandeur, would become a desert land.

19 ¶ And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

✓ as the overthrowing

The Targum (Ⲯ) reads, “And Babylon shall become, she that was aforesaid the joy of kings, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, as the overthrow wherewith the Lord overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.” Alexander would translate as, “And Babylon, the beauty of kingdoms, the ornament, the pride of the Chaldees, shall be like God’s overthrowing Sodom and Gomorrah.” Both of these reference *pride*, and match the LDS scriptural correction to verse 15. Lowth states that

¹² Some historians call this *telescoping*. When a subject is looked upon with telescoping lenses (such as powerful binoculars, or telephoto lenses in a camera), it sometimes appears that two objects are close to each other when in reality vast distances may separate them.

“Cyrus took the city by diverting the waters of the Euphrates, which ran through the midst of it, and entering the place at night by the dry channel. The river, being never restored afterwards to its proper course, overflowed the whole country, and made it little better than a great morass: this, and the great slaughter of the inhabitants, with other bad consequences of the taking of the city, was the first step to the ruin of the place.” At the time of Lowth’s writing, they had not even discovered the location of Babylon! Much is known about ancient Babel בָּבֶל, or Babylon, today.

20 It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.

This did not happen at once, but rather, over a long period of time. Calvin makes some interesting comments in this place, which remind us of how even the fertility of the soil is affected by the righteousness of those who dwell in the land. “The picture is still further heightened by adding, that the desolation will be so great that *in that place neither will the Arabians pitch their tents, nor the shepherds their folds*. That place must have been marvelously forsaken and uncultivated, when it was disregarded by those roving tribes; for the Arabians were a wondering and unsettled nation, and had no fixed abode. Having left their native country, because it was barren, and is therefore called *Arabia Deserta*, ... they devoted themselves to feeding flocks and to hunting, and wandered without any fixed residence ... Now the country around Babylon was exceedingly fertile before that calamity, which rendered this change the more astonishing and almost miraculous, either because the place lost its former fertility, or because the constant slaughter made all men abhor the sight of it. Undoubtedly the Prophet means that not only will the buildings be thrown down, but the very soil will be accursed.” Barnes writes, “Babylon thus gradually declined until it lost all its importance, and the very place where it stood was, for a long time, unknown ... It became gradually a great desert; and, in the fourth century, its walls, repaired for that purpose, formed an enclosure for wild beasts, Babylon was converted into a hunting place for the pastime of the Persian monarchs.” Henderson writes about the gradual destruction of Babylon over the centuries, ending with a quote from Sir Robert Ker Porter, “My eyes ranged on all sides, while crossing this vast barren tract, which assuredly had of old been covered, if not by closely compacted streets, at least with the parks and gardens attached to distinct mansions or divisions of this once

imperial city; but all was withered and gone, and comparatively level to the very horizon, till the object of my expedition presented itself, standing alone in the solitary waste, like the awful figure of Prophecy herself, pointing to the fulfillment of her word” (*Travels*, 2:306). Nägelsbach speaks of another instance of telescoping, “When the Prophet at the last declares the judgment on Babylon to be near, that is only in consequence of his having said generally (ISAIAH 13:6, 9) that the day of the LORD is at hand. Moreover the notion ‘near’ is a relative one. Here also from the Prophetic view-point that is represented as near, which according to common human reckoning, is still far off. As regards the fulfillment of this prophecy, it is sufficiently proved that it has been accomplished, not at once, but gradually in the course of the centuries. We have thus here again an example of that prophetic gaze which, as it were, sees in one plain what in reality is extended through many successive stages of time.”

21 But wild beasts[✓] of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures;[✓] and owls^{✓ ✓} shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there.

✓ Ziim ✓ ✓ Ochim
✓ ✓ ✓ or, ostriches

But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures. Calvin explains that little is known of the possible origin of the word צִיִּים (see margin ||), but that “the Prophet means either wild beasts which cannot be tamed, or birds which build their nests in distant forests ... and that צִיִּים is often used in Scripture for devils; and it is derived from צִיָּה which means *dryness*, or, a desert, as אֵיִם is derived from אִם, which means to *terrify* [and thus are names given to the Devil].” Nägelsbach writes, “צִיִּים (from צִי unused, from which צִיָּה *terra arida*¹³) are dwellers in the desert; whether men or beasts is undetermined. Yet analogy favors the latter; for in what follows only beasts are mentioned.” Alexander states that צִיִּים means “those belonging to or dwelling in the desert ... But if צִיִּים has the generic sense which all now give it, the very parallelism of the clauses favors the explanation of אֲחִים [howls and cries of animals] in its original and proper sense of *howls* or *yells*, viz. those uttered by the צִיִּים.” Nägelsbach (as does Alexander) includes quite a complete section on the subject at hand,

¹³ Latin for *arid land*.

but concludes that there have been two schools of thought, those who have taken the term in a more literal manner to mean “wild goats, or more generically *hairy*, shaggy animals” or else have taken it to mean demons. Alexander, however, complains that some commentators are too quick to try and expose “mythology in scripture” were none exists. If devils are intended, Alexander contends, this should be taken at face value.¹⁴ ¶ *And owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there.* The HEB has *daughters of ostriches* instead of owls: בָּנוֹת יַעֲנָה, or as Henderson explains, “*daughters of greediness*, a name given to *ostriches*, on account of their voracious appetite; and frequently used both of the males and the females ... they are also notorious for the doleful and hideous noise which they make, particularly at night.” Regarding the second term, translated as satyrs in our KJV, Henderson suggests that “It is most natural to suppose that real animals are intended; and as שְׂעִירִים elsewhere signify *goats*, there seems no reason why this sense should be departed from in the present instance ... by which they obviously meant hairy, shaggy animals, such as *goats*.” Delitzsch describes the animals similarly, as “the full-grown shaggy buck-goat.” (In my trip to the Holy Land I saw a shepherd bring his animals through the remains of an ancient magnificent building, to grace there for a while and then move on.)

22 And the wild beasts[✓] of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses,[✓] and dragons in [their] pleasant palaces; and her time [is] near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged. For I will destroy her speedily; yea, for I will be merciful unto my people, but the wicked shall perish.

✓ leaders, or, great goats ✓ ✓ or, palaces

And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces. At this place Barnes speaks about islands in the same connotation as the word is used in the Book of Mormon to denote the American continent: “The word [rendered ‘islands,’ אֲרָצִים] denotes islands, or coasts, and as those coasts and islands were unknown and unexplored, the

¹⁴ Two interesting scriptures mentioned by Alexander are (1) in Matthew 12:43, regarding evil spirits and desert lands, “When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none,” and (2) Revelation 18:2, with clear allusions to Isaiah, “And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.”

words seems to have denoted unknown and uninhabited regions in general.” And when it comes to the creatures involved, Alexander wisely adds, “But whatever be the species here intended, the essential idea is the same as in the foregoing verse, viz. that Babylon should one day be inhabited exclusively by animals peculiar to the wilderness, implying that it should become a wilderness itself.” One may here draw his mind to the wilderness mentioned back in ISAIAH 12, with the spiritual and physical wilderness co-existing. ¶ And her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged. For I will destroy her speedily; yea, for I will be merciful unto my people, but the wicked shall perish. The LXX (6) has “It will come soon and will not tarry.” The Syriac (5), “Its time is soon to come, and its days shall not be prolonged.” The DSSB (9) has, “Its time is drawing near, and its days will not be drawn out any further,” with a note that *any further* appears in 1QIsa^a (9) but not in the Masoretic Text (11). Regarding the desolation of Babylon, it would be complete. Kay quotes Mr. Layard, “The site of Babylon [is] a naked and hideous waste.” Kay adds this quotation regarding the fulfillment of scripture: “For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry” (Habakkuk 2:3). Nyman points us to an interesting verse (2 Nephi 25:15), that states that

because physical Babylon would be destroyed, the scattering of Judah would be left to other nations: “Wherefore, the Jews shall be scattered among all nations; yea, and also Babylon shall be destroyed; wherefore, the Jews shall be scattered by other nations.” Nevertheless, as in so many scriptures, the Lord offers the good news next through the *Hosea Principle*. “And after they have been scattered, and the Lord God hath scourged them by other nations for the space of many generations, yea, even down from generation to generation until they shall be persuaded to believe in Christ, the Son of God, and the atonement, which is infinite for all mankind—and when that day shall come that they shall believe in Christ, and worship the Father in his name, with pure hearts and clean hands, and look not forward any more for another Messiah, then, at that time, the day will come that it must needs be expedient that they should believe these things. And the Lord will set his hand again the second time to restore his people from their lost and fallen state. Wherefore, he will proceed to do a marvelous work and a wonder among the children of men.” ¶ Spiritual Babylon will be subdued quickly at the Second Coming.

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Isaiah 14

ISAIAH 14 is closely related to ISAIAH 13. The Lord has a message of hope and mercy for the children of Jacob who would be gathered to their lands of promise. The fall of Satan, from his former glory as well as that of the king of Babylon. The Philistines are also warned.

vv. 1–3 The Lord would gather Israel back to her lands of restoration, and many converts would join with her, and others would help her return to her lands of restoration. For the Lord's chosen people would not be forgotten.

1 ¶ FOR the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land; and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob.

FOR the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land. The Targum (Ⲯ) reads, “For the Lord will have compassion upon the house of Jacob, and will delight again in Israel, and shall make them to dwell in their land.” This is the message of hope delivered by Isaiah (similar to the *good words and comfortable words* spoken in Zechariah 1:13), that indeed the Lord would have mercy on Israel, His ancient chosen people. Alexander well says, “Jacob and Israel are here used for the whole race.” Young says, “In this first verse we have in germ the entire blessed message of comfort which Isaiah develops in the last twenty-seven chapters of his book. Again Yahweh will show mercy, he declares, and again He will choose His people.” Kay says, regarding *yet again*, “‘Choosing’ again him who once had been ‘rejected’ (ISAIAH 2:6) as reprobate silver, but had now been purified ‘in the furnace of affliction’ (ISAIAH 48:10).” Many exegetes limit this mercy to the rescue of the people from Babylonian captivity, but such a rescue is only a type and a shadow of the greater latter-day rescue from spiritual Babylon. This verse uses the prophetic **כִּי**, *for*, as something that *will* come to pass, often, *in that day*, or in this case, as the second coming approaches and as part of the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In Zechariah we find three instances of the Lord choosing His people again, there **יְרוּשָׁלַם** (Jerusalem) is put for all of **יִשְׂרָאֵל** (Zechariah 1:17; 2:12; 3:2). ¶ *And set them in their own land?* This refers to **Israel** or Jacob. What a sublime message, that the

God of Israel would restore her to her lands. Lowth well writes, “[God] will still regard Israel as his chosen people; however he may seem to desert them, by giving them up to their enemies, and scattering them among the nations. Judah is sometimes called Israel; see Ezekiel 13:16, Malachi 1:1; 2:11; but the name of Jacob and of Israel, used apparently with design in this place, each of which names includes the twelve tribes, and the other circumstances mentioned in this and the next verse, which did not in any complete sense accompany the return from the captivity of Babylon, seen to intimate, that this whole prophecy extends its view beyond that event.” The Lord, then, would continue to make covenants with Israel and would not abandon her. It is the great message of the Lord, “For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee” (ISAIAH 54:7). The time will come when it will be *amor correspondido* or reciprocated love. ¶ *And the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob.* Even strangers or converts would join Israel. The Targum (Ⲯ) has: “And proselytes shall be joined unto them, and they shall be united unto¹ the house of Jacob.” While the greatest number of proselytes will join with the Lord in the last days, it is believed that there were converts who joined in with those who returned from the Babylonian captivity. Henderson writes, “[In] Ezra 2:65 ... it is expressly stated, that *seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven* servants and maids accompanied the exiles on their return. That these were foreigners and not Israelites, is evident from their not being reckoned in the total number of the congregation.” Cheyne suggests that the Hebrew word ‘sojourner’ came to mean *proselyte*. ¶ Delitzsch suggests, “Babylon falls that Israel may rise. This is effected by the compassion of God. He chooses Israel once more ... and therefore makes a new covenant with it. Then follows their return to Canaan, their own land, Jehovah’s land (as in Hosea 9:3). Proselytes from among the heathen, who have acknowledged the God of the exiles, go along with them, as Ruth did with Naomi. Heathen accompany the exiles to their own place ... For, according to the prophet’s meaning, to be ruled by the people of God is

¹ Stenning, “stay on.” **יִסְתַּמְכִּין**, that is, and lean on, or find support (CAL).

the true happiness of the nations, and to allow themselves to be so ruled is their true liberty.” Henry quotes this beautiful scripture: “Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you” (Zechariah 8:23). Barnes states, “If it is asked what *evidence* there is that any considerable number of the people of Chaldea became Jewish proselytes, I answer, that it is expressly stated in Esther 8:17b: ‘And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.’” In the last days, the number of proselytes from the gentile nations who would join themselves to the Lord would grow: “And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising” (ISAIAH 60:3). ¶ President Joseph Fielding Smith explained that through the scattering of Israel the Gentile nations would be blessed, “So the Lord fulfilled his promise to Abraham in scattering his blood among all nations, and through the atonement made by Jesus Christ. It is written: ‘For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob.’”²

2 And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place; yea, from far, unto the ends of the earth; and they shall return to their lands of promise. And the house of Israel shall possess them, ~~in~~ and* the land of the LORD shall be** for servants and handmaids; and they shall take them captives, ~~whose captives they were~~ ✓ unto whom they were captives,*** and they shall rule over their oppressors.

* KJV and JST use *in*; Book of Mormon, *and*.

** KJV and JST use *for*; Book of Mormon, *shall be*.

*** KJV and JST use *whose captives they were*; Book of Mormon, *unto whom they were captives*.

✓ that had taken them captives

And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place; yea, from far, unto the ends of the earth; and they shall return to their lands of promise. Nyman well observes, “The second verse of the Book of Mormon contains an eighteen word retention which emphasizes the extent of the gathering of Israel—from ‘the ends of the earth’—and establishes that there will be more than

one land for the gathering.” DSSB (Q), has in one instant, “To their land and their place” and in 1QIsa^a, “To their places.” Two important messages underscored by the Book of Mormon manuscript is that, along with 1QIsa^a (Q), there would be multiple gathering places (Israel and the American continent); and that the gathering would be universal in nature (Deuteronomy 30:4). Who shall bring the people to their place? Rawlinson says, “The heathen nations among whom they have dwelt shall rejoice at the restoration of Israel to their own land, and even escort them in a friendly spirit to their borders (comp. Ezra 1:4, 6; Nehemiah 2:7–9). Some shall go so far as voluntarily to become their bondservants in Palestine.” ¶ *And the house of Israel shall possess them, and the land of the LORD shall be for servants and handmaids.* The *land* of the LORD, אֶרֶץ יְהוָה, could be taken for the Promised Land. This includes both Israel and the American continent. ¶ *And they shall take them captives, unto whom they were captives; and they shall rule over their oppressors.* Ruling over their oppressors is given in contrast to: “they that hate you shall reign over you” (Leviticus 26:17, *Rain in Due Season*). Israel had been slave to other nations and now these other nations would be subservient to Israel—but not in the same way, but rather, “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19). According to Alexander, “The true principle of exposition is adopted even by the Rabbins. Jarchi refers the promise to the future (לעתיד), to the period of complete redemption. Kimhi more explicitly declares that its fulfillment is to be sought partly in the restoration from Babylon, and partly in the days of the Messiah.” Once again, the idea is not one of vengeance and retribution, but rather one of prominence. Many of these wonderful things will begin to happen as Israel turns unto the Lord, and recognizes Jesus as the Messiah: “Until they shall be persuaded to believe in Christ, the Son of God, and the atonement, which is infinite for all mankind—and when that day shall come that they shall believe in Christ, and worship the Father in his name, with pure hearts and clean hands, and look not forward any more for another Messiah, then, at that time, the day will come that it must needs be expedient that they should believe these things. And the Lord will set his hand again the second time to restore his people from their lost and fallen state. Wherefore, he will proceed to do a marvelous work and a wonder among the children of men” (2 Nephi 25:16b–18a). I feel to rejoice that I am counted among those of Israel—being a descendant of Judah on my father’s side and Ephraim on my mother’s side—who have been found of the Messiah. Truly the Lord gathered me in mercies when I was not looking. This is the best thing that ever

² Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Restoration of All Things*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1973, p. 137.

happened in my life and my feelings of gratitude swell in my heart as I write these words.

3 And it shall come to pass in ~~the~~ **that** day that the LORD shall give thee rest, from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve.

And it shall come to pass in that day that the LORD shall give thee rest, from thy sorrow, and from thy fear. Lowth contributes once again, with his collection of manuscripts: “*in that day*] **כִּי־יוֹם הַהוּא**.” The word **הַהוּא**³ is added in two MSS., and was in the copies from which the LXX and Vulgate translated . . . This is a matter of no great consequence: however, it restores the text to the common form almost constantly used on such occasions; and is one among many instances of a word lost out of the printed copies.” The Book of Mormon preserved the lost word, as does the LXX (6), which has “*that*” instead of “*the*”: “And it shall come to pass in *that* day, that the Lord shall give thee rest from thy sorrow and vexation.” The Douay (Vulgate (v)) translation) version also has *that*, “And it shall come to pass in *that* day, that when God shall give thee rest from thy labour.” As does SOT, “And it shall come to pass in *that* day that Jehovah will give thee rest . . .” ¶ *And from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve.* The bondage refers to the servitude under which she had served when she was taken into captivity by Babylon and Assyria. The following warning was given in *Rain in Due Season*: “Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them; for they shall go into captivity” (Deuteronomy 28:41). The time would come when such bondage would be done away with, both physical and spiritual. The return from Babylon would represent but a partial fulfillment of the prophecy in ISAIAH 14:3, with the gathering of Israel in the last days being the more complete fulfillment.

vv. 4–23. The King of Babylon⁴ is compared to Satan, as both desired to be lifted up and displace God, but where instead brought to an inglorious end.

4 ¶ **And it shall come to pass in that day that thou shalt take up this proverb**[✓]

³ Or, “*this, that, the same*,” based on **הַהוּא**, AHCL. Gesenius thus has under **הַהוּא**: “**כִּי־יוֹם הַהוּא** *in that day*, an expression of frequent use in the prophets, in speaking of a future time. See ISAIAH 2:11.

⁴ Barnes and Alexander suggest that the king was Nabonned, also known as Belshazzar (Daniel 5:1). Such an opinion is not unanimous.

against the king of Babylon, and say: How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city[✓] ceased!

✓ or, taunting speech

✓ ✓ or, exactress of gold

And it shall come to pass in that day that thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon. The

Inspired Version includes **כִּי־יוֹם הַהוּא** as in ISAIAH

14:3. Here begins a taunting speech against both the King of Babylon and Lucifer. Regarding the latter, we read: “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (Revelation 12:9). The nation of Babylon and spiritual Babylon cannot be separated in these verses, but both are subject to the words of the Lord. As Christ reigns over Zion, Satan does over Babylon. Speaking of *the proverb* or *satirical song*, **מִשָּׁל**, Calvin says, “By the term *witty saying*, or

parable, (for the Hebrew word **מִשָּׁל** denotes ‘saying that are weighty and remarkable, and worthy of being observed,’) he shows that the ruin of Babylon will be so great that it will even become *a proverb*, which usually happens in great and astonishing events.” Henderson explains further, “**מִשָּׁל**, *Mashal*, the term by which it is designated, is singularly appropriate, since it signifies not merely *similitude*, *parable*, *figurative composition*, but also, *what is peculiarly sublime and energetic*, what is calculated by its boldness and force to strike and *influence the mind*. The signification of the root **מָשַׁל**, is to *assimilate*, and also to *rule or have dominion*, to *exert an influence over other* . . . **נִשְׂאֵמָשַׁל** means to give utterance to such sublime composition *in an elevated tone of voice*.” Cheyne also explains regarding the meaning of **מִשָּׁל**, “[That it is] a parallelistic poem (*Dichtung*)—the parallelism may consist either in the moral application of emblems, or simply in the parallel disposition of the lines and the sense. From the fact that emblems were generally applied in a witty, satirical manner, *mashal* sometimes obtains the meaning of taunt-song, as here, and in Micah 2:4; Habakkuk 2:6.” Delitzsch has: “According to its primary and general meaning, *mashal* signifies figurative language, and hence poetry generally, more especially that kind of proverbial poetry which loves the emblematical, and, in fact, any artistic composition that is piquant in its character; so that the idea of what is satirical or defiant may easily be associated with it, as in the passage before us.” Henderson explains, “The *Mashal* opens with a sudden exclamation of joy on the part of the Jews. The oppressed world and its inhabitants are then introduced as participating in the exultation. The forests

of Lebanon join in the song; Hades personified, rouses departed kings and princes to receive the king of Babylon on his entrance into their gloomy abode. These give expression to no words of condolence, but merely to a brief sentence of surprise, not unmingled with satisfaction at his reverse of fortune. The Jews then tauntingly resume the song in which they confirm at some length the sentiment just uttered in Sheol⁵; and introduce the monarch boasting of his power and vastness of his purposes, while they contrast with these, his present state of utter prostration and ignominy; concluding with an execration on his offspring and memory.” Alexander suggests, “The dramatic form of the prediction is repeatedly shifted, so that the words of the triumphant Jews, of the dead, of the Prophet, and of God himself, succeed each other, as it were, insensibly, and without any attempt to make the points of transition prominent.” Regarding this *taunt*, Lowth considers it “one of the first and most eminent examples extant of the truly great and beautiful in poetic style.” The king of Babylon has become a proverb, and stands for Lucifer, also. ¶ *And say: How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased!* Sin and the associated pain and suffering is the tribute we pay Satan. Just as Babylon would no longer be able to extract a tribute from Israel and the nations of the earth, the day will come when Satan will no longer be able to extract anguish from those who follow Messiah and come unto Zion. The taunting tone here as well as in ISAIAH 37 (e.g., “Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.” ISAIAH 37:29), is in part a response to the prideful arrogance of Babylon. Henry has, “Babylon was a *golden city*, ISAIAH 14:4 (it is a Chaldee word in the original, which intimates that she used to call herself so), so much did she abound in the riches and excel all other cities, as gold does all other metals.” Following the LXX (Ϝ) and Vulgate (ϝ), Barnes suggests, “The word ‘oppressor’ (גִּזְלוֹ) denotes, properly, the *extractor of tribute*, and refers here to the fact that Babylon had oppressed its dependent provinces, by exacting large revenues from them, and thus cruelly oppressing them.”

5 The LORD hath broken the staff of the wicked, [and] the sceptre of the rulers.

The Targum (ܬ) reads, “The Lord hath broken the strength of the wicked, the government of sinners.” The KJV added a connective *and*, where there is none in the MT. The MT, LXX (Ϝ), Douay (Vulgate) (ϝ)

⁵ See ISAIAH 14:9, below.

translation) agree with the Book of Mormon. In ISAIAH 3 we spoke about the stay and the staff upon which someone may lean. The wicked would not have anyone or anything to lean on, but be left desolate. A scepter is an ornamental staff, a symbol of the power held by a monarch. Babylon and Satan would be left powerless.

6 He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke,[✓] he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, [and] none hindereth.

✓ a stroke without removing

The Targum (ܬ) reads, “Of him who was smiting the people in fury (Chaldee, *with might*), with a perpetual stroke (Chaldee, *with a stroke which shall not cease*)⁶, of him who was ruling (Chaldee, *making servile*) the nations in anger (Chaldee, *with might*), ruling (Chaldee, *making servile*), and none hindered.” The Syriac (ܣ) reads, “He who smote the peoples in wrath, smiting without instruction, who chastised the peoples in anger and persecuted them without pity.” After acknowledging the great and formal power of Babylon and of Lucifer, we are informed that the tides have changed. Barnes says, regarding “he who smote” that “This may either refer to the king of Babylon, or to the rod or sceptre which he had used, and which was now broken.”

7 The whole earth is at rest, [and] is quiet; they break forth into singing.

As a result of the defeat suffered by Babylon, the surrounding nations could rejoice that the bully was no longer there to exact tribute from them. So also will it be with Satan’s defeat. No wonder all will *break forth* into *singing* and praises unto God! Delitzsch tells us, “The omission of the subject in the case of פָּצְחוּ (they break forth) gives the greatest generality to the jubilant utterances: רָנְהוּ פָּצְחוּ (erumpere gaudio⁷) is an expression that is characteristic of Isaiah alone (e.g., ISAIAH 44:23; 49:13)⁸; and it is a distinctive peculiarity of the prophet to bring in the trees of the forest, as living and speaking beings, to share in the universal joy (cf. ISAIAH 55:12).”

⁶ Compare to the margin ¶.

⁷ That is, they *break forth* into *singing*.

⁸ Yet another indication of the unity of Isaiah.

8 Yea, the fir trees rejoice at thee, [and] also the cedars of Lebanon, [saying]: Since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us.

Yea, the fir trees rejoice at thee, and also the cedars of Lebanon, saying: That trees may stand as a type of people is included directly in the Targum (ܬ), “Rulers (Royal Polyglot, מְלָכִין, kings) also rejoiced over thee.” This is not the only time, of course, where even nature will rejoice. In Isaiah we also read: “For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands” (ISAIAH 55:12). We know that if man will not give glory to the Savior, that nature will: “And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out” (Luke 19:40). Cheyne explains that the cedars of Lebanon are mentioned “Because they had been cut down (a type of Israel’s ruin) by the Babylonians, see on 37:24.” Delitzsch continues, “Cypresses and cedars rejoice because of the treatment which they received from the Chaldean, who made use of the almost imperishable wood of both of them for ornamental buildings, for his siege apparatus, and for his fleets, and even for ordinary ships,—as Alexander, for example, built himself a fleet of cypress-wood, and the Syrian vessels had masts of cedar. Of the old cedars of Lebanon, there are hardly thirty left in the principal spot where they formerly grew.” ¶ *Since thou art laid down, no feller⁹ is come up against us.* 1QIsa^a (Q) has it, “come up against us.” These words continue the same thought, that once the evil one is put away, that there will be no one to disturb the peace.

9 Hell[✓] from beneath is moved for thee to meet [thee] at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, [even] all the chief ones[✓] of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.

- ✓ or, the grave
- ✓ ✓ learners, or, great goats

Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee. Or rather, *sheol* שְׁאוֹל as found in the Biblia Hebraica (א) and Targum (ܬ), as well as the Syriac (ܫ) and a number of translations. Once again, the allusion in this verse is to

the world of Spirits, and how they will meet the Babylonian king. Luther explains, “Among the Hebrews *Sheol* very rarely means the place of punishments, but often it means grave, which they also call the pit.” Barnes has: “It is not the residence of the wicked only—the place of punishment—but the place where *all* the dead are supposed to be congregated before their final doom is pronounced.” ¶ שְׁאוֹל would be our LDS equivalent to the *spirit world*, which itself is divided into *spirit prison* and *paradise*. Young explains, “Isaiah refers not merely to the grave but to Sheol itself, and the expression, ‘the sides of the pit,’ even implies that there are distinctions of position in Sheol, and that this king was to be brought to the lowest part.” Young continues, “We may then note the following contrasts between this verse and ISAIAH 14:13: Sheol – mount of meeting – depths of the pit – extreme parts of Saphon¹⁰.” ¶ *Even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.* Delitzsch and many others prefer a more literal translation, and use *all the he-goats or rams*, כָּל-עֵתוּדֵי instead of *all the chief ones*. Those who thought themselves great while they lived will come forth to meet the Babylonian king in the Spirit world. The men of pride may well be the chiefs of the goats, but are among the goats nevertheless.¹¹ Likewise, those who will glance upon Lucifer will be amazed that he is a common man.

10 All they shall speak and say unto thee: Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us?

The Babylonian king, and Satan, will no longer have power. There will be those who will stare at them and wonder how these at one time preeminent men have lost all strength and have become common. Calvin writes, “Tyrants are blinded by their greatness, and do not think that they are mortal, and even make themselves to be half-gods and adore themselves. On this account it is made known after their death that they shared in the condition of all mortals, to which they did not think that they were liable.”

11 Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, [and] the noise of thy viols is not heard; the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.

¹⁰ צָפוֹן, the north, v. 13.

¹¹ (Matthew 25:32–34).

⁹ That is, someone who *fells* or brings down trees—a woodcutter.

Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, the noise of thy viols is not heard. Once again, שָׂאוֹל should rather be translated as spirit world rather than grave. ¶ The Syriac (S) comes close to the JST, in terms of the clause, *is dead*, which is equivalent of *is not heard*, “Your pomp is brought down to Sheol, the noise of your harps is dead.” In royal courts of old, music often played an important role in creating *pomp and circumstance*. This would all be absent now. Calvin suggests, “Under the term *musical instruments*, he includes all the luxuries and enjoyments in which kings are wont to indulge.” As does Henry, “Death is a farewell to the pleasures, as well as to the pomps, of this world.” ¶ *The worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.* Men will be eaten by worms when they die, whether rich or poor, and this thought must be especially repugnant to those who think they will never die or face consequences for the use of moral agency. The word *worm* here represented by two different words, the first being רֶמָּה and of the second תוֹלְעָה. Barnes explains: “*And the worm (תוֹלְעָה)*—the same word which occurs in ISAIAH 1:18, and there rendered *crimson*. This word is usually applied to the insect from which the crimson dye was obtained.” The Lord has power over both *death* and *sin*.

12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, [✓] son of the morning! [how] art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

✓ or, O day star

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! The Hebrew (מ) uses *morning star* הַיָּלֵל rather than Lucifer. The Targum (T),¹² “How hast thou been cast down from the height, who wast resplendent among the sons of men as the *bright star* among the stars!” The LXX (G) also uses *morning star*, ἑωσφόρος. The Vulgate (V) uses Lucifer, “Quomodo cecidiste de coelo, lucifer, qui mane oriebaris?” Regardless of whether we call him Lucifer, morning star or bright star, this verse is foremost about the fall of Satan. Kay points out a scripture in Luke 10:18: “And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.” Henry well observes, regarding Lucifer: “Here is the language of his vainglory, borrowed perhaps from that of the angels who fell, who [were] not content with their first estate.” Nägelsbach has, “If, then, the Babylonian reigns in the loftiest heights and everywhere, he has become like the highest God. But thereby he has supplanted the highest

God: for two cannot occupy the highest place. And this, as remarked above, is the aim of Satan and of his earthly sphere of power, the world-power, which culminates in Antichrist.” In this respect, pre-mortal life was probably not unlike this earth, and the same principles and warnings against unrighteous dominion (D&C 121:36–40) applied then as they do now. ¶ *Art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!* In Moses 1:9–18 we read about how Moses was able to contrast between the glory of God and the nothingness of Satan. “Moses looked upon Satan and said: Who art thou? For behold, I am a son of God, in the similitude of his Only Begotten; and where is thy glory, that I should worship thee?” (Moses 1:13b). Brent L. Top wrote extensively on the topic of the war in heaven from an LDS perspective in his book, *The Life Before*.¹³ Here I quote a brief passage: “President George Q. Cannon said, ‘[Lucifer] was a mighty personage, without doubt. The record that is given to us concerning him clearly shows that he occupied a very high position; that he was thought a great deal of, and that he was mighty in his sphere.’ . . . Mark E. Petersen indicates that despite his strengths, Lucifer’s weaknesses brought about his rebellion and resentment. Foremost among his character defects were his pride, selfishness, and jealousy. Elder Petersen suggests that Lucifer ‘coveted honor, prestige and glory; he wanted the adulation and praise of others; he sought to be lifted up above the rest.’”

13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north;

For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. The expression “said in thine heart” is here an allusion to the wicked intents or imaginations of man, and specifically here of the king of Babylon (compare to ISAIAH 47:10) and Satan. Zechariah also warned us against imagining evil intents regarding our neighbors (Zechariah 8:16). According to the *Enchiridion of Epictetus* (further elaborated by psychologist Albert Ellis, in *The Story of Psychology*, and the authors of *Crucial Conversations*), every negative emotion is preceded by our telling ourselves some story. As we learn to moderate such stories, we will also learn to manage our emotions.¹⁴ Regarding the premortal

¹³ Top, Brent L. *The Life Before*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1988. pp. 102–133.

¹⁴ “At the time, I was the high council speaker assigned to deliver a Sacrament talk to the singles branch in our Modesto, California stake.

¹² Stenning.

The stake was an accurate reflection of the multi-cultural California population. As I was speaking, I noticed a young man sitting by an attractive Asian young woman, whispering something in her ear. I found this quite distracting. Being an educator by profession, I know the importance of only one person speaking at a time. When this happens to me in seminars or in the classroom, I simply stop talking until the guilty parties have done the same. So, true to form, I stopped talking. The young man also stopped conversing. It worked! But as soon as I resumed my talk, the young man once again leaned over to whisper pretty things in his friend's ear. This pattern was repeated several times until I had completely lost all composure. I stopped in the middle of my talk and approached the Branch President and explained that I simply could not concentrate with the young couple flirting back there. The Branch President calmly explained that the young man was interpreting for a visitor from Japan. ¶ I frequently use this embarrassing episode, slightly changed, to illustrate presentations on interpersonal communication skills. I later learned that we cannot experience a negative emotion without it being first preceded by a story or narrative we tell ourselves. Negative emotions such as anger, jealousy, pride, and envy, then, can only take place—or grow into uglier feelings—if preceded by the corresponding negative self-talk. ¶ My frustration during the Sacrament Meeting talk had grown as I told myself that these individuals were being rude, interrupting, and not paying attention while they flirted. Since then, I have had countless opportunities to change the narrative in challenging situations into positive ones. ¶ Self-talk is behind both negative as well as positive attitudes, and furthermore, that all sin—both of omission and commission—requires that we tell ourselves a story. In the language of scripture, negative self-talk is sometimes referred to with such words as *the vain imaginations and thoughts of the heart*. These are all the excuses we allow ourselves for not doing that which is right—or for being judgmental and unforgiving. ¶ No wonder we read in Mosiah that we will be judged not only by our deeds and by our words, but also by our thoughts (Mosiah 4:30). It is easy to think that our thoughts are somehow disassociated from our words and acts in some way: that perhaps our thoughts are not such a serious problem. That we can entertain impure or unkind feelings, and that this is somehow natural. ¶ It has become clearer than ever that surely, 'For as [man] thinketh in his heart, so is he' (Proverbs 23:7). While we often excuse our unrighteous thoughts, we take these excuses even further when we give ourselves permission, through a story, to say something that is unkind rather than tame our tongue. "I probably shouldn't say this, but...." It is a good thing when we can tame our tongue and when we realize that Mosiah is right. Our thoughts, our words, and our deeds are inseparably connected. ¶ It is a difficult challenge to rule our thoughts. We must master our thoughts if we wish to master our tongues and our deeds—and become more Christ like. We can tell ourselves stories that are full of mercy and kindness, especially as we look for the *honorable unmet needs* behind the behavior of others. ¶ Joseph of Egypt was in a position of power over his brothers when the famine came. He could have entertained thoughts of revenge and sent his brothers back empty handed—or made sure they suffered retribution for the abuse he experienced at their hands. Instead, Joseph repeatedly consoled his brothers and suggested they forgive themselves, as he had already forgiven them: "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life ... to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance" (Genesis 45:5, 7). Joseph picked the best, most generous, of the possible stories he could have entertained. ¶ Every day we make countless choices as to the stories we will contemplate. The imaginations and thoughts of our hearts, truly, if they are good, can bring us unbound joy. The right stories can also give us the strength to think what is right and then do what is right." Adapted from my blog posted 8 September 2010, *The Imaginations and Thoughts of the Heart*. (Additional references include Gregorio Billikopf, *Party-Directed Mediation*, 2014; Al Switzler, Joseph Grenny, Kerry Patterson, and Ron McMillan, *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High*, 2002; and Marshall Rosenberg, *Non-*

council, we see the contrast between the Savior's humility and Satan's pride: "And the Lord said: Whom shall I send? And one answered like unto the Son of Man: Here am I, send me. And another answered and said: Here am I, send me. And the Lord said: I will send the first. And the second was angry, and kept not his first estate; and, at that day, many followed after him" (Abraham 3:27–28). Satan was the other who got angry and did not keep his first estate, and thus, was cast down to the earth. We read more about this pivotal event: "AND I, the Lord God, spake unto Moses, saying: That Satan, whom thou hast commanded in the name of mine Only Begotten, is the same which was from the beginning, and he came before me, saying—Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor. But, behold, my Beloved Son, which was my Beloved and Chosen from the beginning, said unto me—Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever. Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord God, had given him, and also, that I should give unto him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten, I caused that he should be cast down. And he became Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice" (Moses 4:1–4). Cheyne says, "The king of Babylon expected to join the ranks of the gods. No, replies the prophet, thou shalt be hurled down to Sheól (v. 15)." ¶ *I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north*. The Targum (Ⲯ) reads, "And I will sit upon the mountain of the solemn assembly upon the ends of the north." We know that the exalted Lord was to sit high and lifted up (ISAIAH 6) on the *mount of the congregation*, probably an allusion to the temple. Luther suggests, "This is Zion, and Jerusalem is situated on the side of the far north. There God dwelled." We also read in Psalms, "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King" (Psalms 48:2). Lowth suggests, "It appears plainly from Exodus 25:22 and 29:42, 43, where God appoints the place of meeting with Moses, and promises to meet with him before the ark, to commune with him, and to speak unto him; and to meet the children of Israel at the door of the tabernacle; that the tabernacle, and afterward the temple and Mount Sion (or Moriah, which is reckoned a part of Sion), whereon it stood, was called the tabernacle, and the mount of convention, or of appointment; not from the people's assembling there to perform the services of their religion (which is what our

violent Communication: A Language of Life, 2003; Morton Hunt, *The Story of Psychology*, 2007.)

translation expresses by calling the tabernacle of the congregation), but because God appointed that for the place where he himself would meet with Moses, and commune with him, and would meet with the people. Therefore, **הר-מועד**,¹⁵ or **אהל מועד**,¹⁶ means the place appointed by God, where he would present himself; agreeably to which I have rendered it, in this place, the **mount** of the divine presence.” Cheyne argues that the **mount** is not intended to represent an earthly one: “Still it is not of that mountain in its phenomenal but in its ideal character that he speaks—not of mount Zion as it appears, but as it is before God, and will be one day before men. Now, a conception of this kind would be unintelligible to a Babylonian, unless he could connect it with some similar beliefs of his own people ... only since the recent advances of Assyriology that we have learned their existence among the Assyrians and Babylonians. Among the titles of the great god Assur is ‘king of all the **assembly** of the great gods’ (Syce, R. P., iii. 83), and there is a fragment of Berosus (Moses of Khorene, i. 7), which speaks of a **mountain** of the **assembly** of the gods.” Barnes and some others also point out, “‘The **mount** of the **congregation**, in the sides of the north,’ there is a reference to a belief prevalent in Babylon that the [heathen] gods had their residence on some mountain of the north. This was a common opinion among the ancients.” Calvin writes, “This plainly shows the reason why the Prophet especially accuses the Babylonian tyrant of so great madness, and what the Prophet means by such figures. He desired to *sit on the mountain of the testimony*. By this effrontery he attempted to make himself equal to God.” Isaiah was speaking not only of the king of Babylon, but also about Lucifer. Satan had wished to take this honor to himself and thus satisfy his vain ambition. Paul speaks with an obvious allusion to Lucifer, the great antichrist, “that the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (2 Thessalonians 2:3b–4).”

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

Alexander suggests, “As **אֶדְמֶה** is a reflexive form (Gesenius 53, 2), it means not merely *I will be like*, but *I will make myself like*, or as Michaelis supposes, *I will act like*.” The ASV has, “I will make myself like the Most High.”

¹⁵ **Mount** of congregation.

¹⁶ **Tent** of congregation.

15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

Even though the Hebrew (**שְׁאוֹל**) has **Sheol** or *spirit world*, it is to the *spirit prison* that the arrogant Babylonian king would be removed. Satan, on the other hand, would be altogether expelled from the presence of God. The word *hell* is an elliptical addition by the translators of the AV, for it is not in the Hebrew text (**שְׁאוֹל**) where instead we have, **אֶל-יַרְכְּתֵי-בֹר**, to the **sides/depths** of the **pit**. Leeson renders it: “But into the nether world shalt thou be brought down, into the lowest depth.” LITV, “Yet you shall go down to Sheol, to the sides of the Pit.” Even so, the ellipsis is appropriate to our understanding. ¶ Henderson comments: “In accordance to the Oriental custom of erecting splendid mausoleums for kings and other great men, in the sides of which were subordinate apartments or cells fitted for the reception of the dead bodies, and of depositing them in these apartments, after the previous funeral solemnities had been completed, all the other kings of the earth are represented as occupying in silent state the chambers allotted to them; whereas to the king of Babylon the rites of sepulture are denied; no royal mausoleum receives his dead body; nor is it committed to a common grave, but is left to putrefy on the ground.” Regarding the idea of **sides** Alexander suggests, “According to its probable etymology the Hebrew word does not mean **sides** in the ordinary sense, but rather **hinder parts** and then **remote parts** or **extremities**, as explained by the Targum (**ט**) here and in Isaiah 14:13.” This corresponds well with **outer darkness**.¹⁷ Cheyne points out the satire here involved, that instead of being sent to the sides of the ‘recesses of the north’ the ‘sides of the pit’ would do.

16 They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, [and] shall consider thee, [saying,] and shall say: [Is] this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms?

¹⁷ **Outer darkness** is sometimes used as a synonym of **hell** in the Scriptures. There are two places so called: (1) the place where the spirits of the disobedient who are *not* sons of perdition abide until they receive a resurrection in the Telestial Kingdom (see Alma 40:13–14); (2) the place reserved for the sons of perdition (D&C 29:37–38). See Hell, LDS Guide to the Scriptures. In *Gospel Principles*, “The Final Judgment, Ch. 46,” the expression *outer darkness* is used in conjunction with the sons of perdition. But we also see the expression used of those who will inherit the Telestial Kingdom, as we see above in Alma 40:13–14.

They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and shall consider thee, and shall say: When Moses gazed upon Satan he was not impressed. He lacked all glory, for Moses had just come from the presence of the Lord and could clearly tell the difference between both. So it will be with all who look upon Lucifer. To look narrowly, seems to mean a focused or detained look. ¶ *Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms?* Satan has surely shook the kingdoms, but his power and strength will have an end. After the chaos and harm that Satan and the Babylonian king have inflicted, people who look upon them will be surprised by their plainness.

17 [That] And made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; [that] and opened not the house of his prisoners? ✓

✓ or, did not let his prisoners loose homeward?

The result of war is desolation. Scenes of beautiful color disappear and give way to black and white. Babylon did not let her prisoners go on their own accord, but only after she was conquered. Not only did the Babylonian tyrants cause such desolation, but also Satan. Beside desolation, we often think as the grave being a place where Satan has captive spirits. Yet the gospel will be taught among them, and the truth shall make them free. Through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ this is made possible. “I beheld that the faithful elders of this dispensation, when they depart from mortal life, continue their labors in the preaching of the gospel of repentance and redemption, through the sacrifice of the Only Begotten Son of God, among those who are in darkness and under the bondage of sin in the great world of the spirits of the dead. The dead who repent will be redeemed, through obedience to the ordinances of the house of God, And after they have paid the penalty of their transgressions, and are washed clean, shall receive a reward according to their works, for they are heirs of salvation” (D&C 138:57–59). This is why Paul well exclaimed, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” (1 Corinthians 15:55).

18 All the kings of the nations, [even] yea, all of them, lie in glory, every one of them in his own house.

The kings of the earth, as disobedient as they may have been, obtained a ‘house’ or mortal body, and thus have the hope of the resurrection, even if it is in the lowest degree of glory. Satan gave up his first estate and the possibility for any kingdom of glory. Thus, he will have

no burial place. Alexander gives another explanation, one that is interesting to note in terms of royalty who have been denied an honorable burial¹⁸: “The ancient oriental practice of burying above the ground and in solid structures, often reared by those who were to occupy them will account for the use of *house* here in the sense of *sepulchre*, without supposing any reference to the burial of kings within their palaces.” It is also interesting to note that many of the nobility are buried *inside* cathedrals and churches, or in imposing mausoleums.

19 But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, [and as] the raiment remnant of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under feet.

But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and the remnant of those that are slain. Satan will not be able to be buried, as he never received a body. Henderson makes the following comments, “הַשֵּׁלֶחֶת מִקְבְּרָיָהּ¹⁹ does not imply that the king had been buried and afterwards thrown out of his sepulchre, that he might be exposed as here described. The ל is used absolutely, signifying *in a state of separation from, at a distance from, without, or destitute of*, and is quite independent of the verb. *Without thy grave*, means, without being deposited in the sepulchre which thou hadst prepared for thyself, or which was destined for thee.” Delitzsch likewise observes “... but the king of Babylon is left lying there, like a carcase that is trampled under foot, and deserves nothing better than to be trampled under foot ... They do not even think him worth throwing into a hole along with the rest of the corpses.” The MT has *raiment* rather than *remnant*. Leiser translates it: “But you are thrown from your grave like a despised branch, like the covering of the slain.” Nägelsbach suggests, “For were they thrust through with a sword, then, too, the garment would be cut into holes, and at least spotted with blood, and if they are buried, it is explained how their garment comes into the hands of others. When the dead are buried on the field of battle, their clothes are taken off them, but those that are torn and cut in holes and smeared with blood, are cast away, while those unharmed are retained

¹⁸ Jehoram, for instance, was not buried in the sepulchers of the kings (2 Chronicles 21:20). The same fate was suffered by Ahaz (2 Chronicles 28:27) and Joash (2 Chronicles 24:25).

¹⁹ Actually, the MT (ל) has הַשֵּׁלֶחֶת מִקְבְּרָיָהּ. This is an easy mistake to make as the פ and ל are pronounced the same.

as valuable booty.” The use of the word remnant, here, changes the meaning of this verse substantially. The branch refers to a group of people, and the remnant, to what is left of that group. It reminds us of what we have already read earlier in Isaiah about the trees leaving but a few to be counted (ISAIAH 10:19), and of those a remnant surviving. Regarding a branch, **נֶזֶר**, Barnes leans on Jerome for the description of what today we would call a *sucker*. Suckers are especially destructive when they exist in grafted trees, for the root does not provide good fruit, but only protection from root diseases. The fruit of such suckers is usually worthless. In some trees these suckers take over and drain all the strength from the good branches. They are only good to be cast away. This is the fate of Satan and the sons of perdition who are assigned to outer darkness after the resurrection. ¶ *Thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under feet.* Henderson likes to think that “While the bodies of the slain courtiers and captains, with which that of the king of Babylon was covered, should be sought out, and after having been embalmed, placed, each in its sarcophagus, in the subterranean chambers, his would be left, no one being able to recognize it, from the mangled state to which it had been reduced, and the disfiguration it had undergone by being trampled upon by the multitude.” Henderson, in carrying out this idea feels that the stones in this verse represent sarcophagi, *Mujelibé*, made out of stone that contain human remains, as have been found near Babylon and can be found in the British Museum. Moreover, Henderson speaks of the death of the king of Babylon, “On entering the city, the army of Cyrus marched straight to the palace; and meeting the king, who was coming out sword in hand, they slew him, and put all who followed him to the sword; and, though Xenophon specially notices the permission given to bury the dead, he takes no notice whatever of the royal corpse.”

20 Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, [and] slain thy people; the seed of evil-doers shall never be renowned.

Henderson suggests that the place of burial of the Babylonian king would never be named, or known, “implying that no inscription should tell where he lay.” Just as the evil kings of Israel and Judah were not buried with the other kings, likewise an allusion is made to the king of Babylon and to Satan—and to the fact that Satan would never have offspring and the royalty line of the Babylonians would die off. Calvin speaks of the disobedient, such that “... the Lord blots out their

name and remembrance, which appeared to be inscribed on lasting records; and the result is, that they are not only despised but even abhorred by all men. This happens to all tyrants, that though, while they live, they are universally applauded and flattered, yet after they are dead, they and their posterity are universally abhorred.” In the Book of Life spoken about in the Book of Revelation, we know that some names will be blotted out and some will be exalted.

21 Prepare slaughter for his children for the iniquity iniquities of their fathers, that they do not rise, nor possess the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities.

Prepare slaughter for his children for the iniquities of their fathers. We read, “For I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me” (Exodus 20:5b). Delitzsch writes, “After the nocturnal storming of Babylon by the Medes, the new Babylonian kingdom and royal house which had been established by Nabopolassar vanished entirely from history. The last shoot of the royal family of Nabopolassar was slain as a child of conspirators ... Nimrod, the first founder of a Babylonio-Assyrian kingdom, built cities for the Medes, for the purpose of keeping them better in check. And it is to this building of cities, as a support to despotism, that the prophet here refers.” ¶ *That they do not rise, nor possess the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities.* Rawlinson suggests, “The destruction of their posterity was a part of the punishment of the fathers. That they do not rise; i.e., ‘that they do not recover themselves and become great monarchs once more, and once more build great cities,’ such as those which they were famous for—Babel, Erech, Accad, Calneh, Ur, Sepharvaim, Borsippa, Opis, Teredon, etc. It was as city builders that the Babylonians were especially celebrated (Genesis 10:10; Daniel 4:30; Herodotus 1:178, etc.).”

22 For I will rise up against them, saith the LORD of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the LORD.

The Douay Vulgate (V) translation gives a very poetic rendering here, “And I will rise up against them, saith the Lord of hosts: and I will destroy the name of Babylon, and the remains, and the bud, and the offspring, saith the Lord.” Regarding *name and remnant* and *son and nephew* Delitzsch writes, “**שֵׁם וְנֶזֶר** and **בֶּן וְנֶזֶר** are two pairs of alliterative proverbial words,

and are used to signify ‘the whole, without exception’ (compare the Arabic expression ‘*Kiesel und Kies*,’ ‘flint and pebble,’ in the sense of ‘altogether:’ Nöldecke, *Poesie der alten Araber*, p. 1620).” Once again, Babylon would be so wiped out that there would be no remnant or posterity. Satan would never have posterity.

23 I will also make it a possession for the bitter, and pools of water; and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the LORD of hosts.

The Targum (T) reads, “And I will make it an inheritance for the hedgehog, a place of desolation, pools of water: and I will sweep her as they are sweeping with a besom:²⁰ and I will throw her down to destroy her, saith the Lord of hosts.” The Talmud tradition (Seder Mo’ed, Rosh HaShana 26b) has: “The Rabbis did not know what was meant by we-tetethia bemate²¹ of destruction, till one day they heard the handmaid of the household of Rabbi say to her companion, Take the tatitha²² [broom] and tati²³ [sweep] the house” (Talmud, Soncino). ¶ Rawlinson explains, “The swampy character of the country about the ruins of Babylon is generally noticed by travelers. It arises from neglect of the dams along the course of the Euphrates.” Likewise, Delitzsch comments, “The destructive forces, which Babylon has hitherto been able to control by raising artificial defences, are now let loose; and the Euphrates, left without a dam, lays the whole region under water. *Hedgehogs* now take the place of men, and *marshes* the place of palaces.” As Delitzsch says, “Jehovah treats Babylon as rubbish, and sweeps it away, destruction ... serving Him as a broom.”

vv. 24–27. Having spoken against Babylonian rule and predicted her fall in future days, the Prophet Isaiah now turns to matters closer at hand, the invasion of Assyria. In future days when Babylon would take Judah captive, the exiles would be able to remember how the Lord saved them from Assyria and know that His word would come to pass about Babylon as surely as it came to pass about Assyria. The latter would fall, and her fall would be in the very act of attacking Judah. So it is, that the Prophet says, “in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot.” It was upon the mountainous

land of Judah that Assyria would be defeated, and most specially upon Mount Zion, where the Temple stood.

24 ¶ The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying: Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, [so] shall it stand—

1QIsa^a (Q) has it, “The Lord of hosts has sworn: Surely as I have thought, so will she be; and as I have purposed, so it will stand.” Regarding נִשְׁבַּע, Henderson says, “The verb *to swear*, in Hebrew, is always used in the passive, in reference to the person who takes an oath, which would seem to intimate *his being laid under the obligation* which such an act involves.” Furthermore, the word *surely*, לֵאמֹר, “is a formula for swearing; but instead of a negative, it has a strongly affirmative meaning” (Henderson, also see ISAIAH 5:9). The expression לֵאמֹר is composed of אֵל, that is, *if*, and לֹא, that is, *not*, and thus means *if not*. It is a warning that something will come to pass. Calvin says, “[*If it hath not been as I thought.*] The elliptical form of an oath which he employs must be well known, for it occurs frequently in Scripture.” The idea is that of a vague threat where each person can fill in the blanks. Alexander writes, “The Prophet suddenly reverts to that of the Assyrian host, either for the purpose of making one of these events accredit the prediction of the other, or for the purpose of assuring true believers, that while God had decreed the deliverance of his people from remoter dangers, he would also protect them from those near at hand.” ¶ Rawlinson says something here that I like, and makes me think of the reassurances that I often ask of God. I may have received a witness of something, such as the propriety of traveling to a certain location, but then find myself asking again for reassurance when fear attempts to creep in. Here is what Rawlinson says: “From the distant prospect of an ultimate deliverance from the power of Babylon, the prophet turns his gaze to a nearer, if not greater, deliverance. The present enemy is Assyria. It is she who has carried Samaria into captivity, and who threatens the independence of Judah. Deliverance from her has already been promised more than once (10:16–19, 25–27, 33–34); but apparently the people are not reassured—they still dread the foe who is so near, and who seems so irresistible. God, therefore, condescends to give them a fresh prophecy, a fresh assurance, and to confirm it to them *by an oath* (ISAIAH 14:24).” Regarding the oath itself, Rawlinson continues, “God but seldom declares his purposes *with an oath*—never but in condescension to the weakness of his creatures, who, though they misdoubt his word, can feel

²⁰ *Besom* means a broom or a sweeping instrument. (Webster, 1960).

²¹ Broom, בְּמַטֵּה.

²² מַטֵּה

²³ לְמַטֵּה, to sweep, or טֹרֵף

the immutability of an oath (Hebrews 6:17), and yield it the credence and the confidence which they refuse to a bare assertion. As I have thought ... as I have purposed. A reference to the prophecies previously given in ISAIAH 10. So shall it come to pass; literally, *so it hath been*—a striking instance of the ‘preterite of prophetic certainty.’²⁴ So shall it stand; literally, *as I have purposed, that shall stand.*”

25 That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot; then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders.

The LXX (6) has, “*Even to destroy the Assyrians upon my land, and upon my mountains: and they shall be for trampling; and their yoke shall be taken away from them, and their glory shall be taken away from their shoulders.*” Assyria would crumble, but the beginning of that crumbling would take place *in my land*, or בְּאַרְצִי, that is, the land of Israel אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, or more precisely, in Judah. For the Lord would allow Assyria to come all the way down to Judah, upon the mountains of Judah, that is *my mountain* הַרִי, and most especially Jerusalem, before He would blast Assyria and break her burden. Calvin has, “Some think that this relates to Sennacherib’s army, which the hand of God destroyed by means of an angel, when he besieged Jerusalem (2 Kings 19:35; ISAIAH 37:36).” Barnes says, “*In my land*—That is, in the land of Canaan. This is often called his land; and this expression shows that the passage does not and cannot refer to the king of Babylon, for he was destroyed in his own city (Daniel 5). *And upon my mountains*—That is, upon the mountains of Palestine. The army of Sennacherib was destroyed on the mountains that were near to Jerusalem.” Regarding *mountains*, Alexander says: “*My mountains*] some have understood to be Mount Zion, others more generally the mountains of Jerusalem; but it seems to be rather a description of the whole land of Israel, or at least of Judah, as a mountainous region.” Yet, those who have supposed *my mountain* to mean Mount Zion have not been far off, as we read the earlier prophecy of the Assyrian attack (ISAIAH 8) that the

²⁴ The prophetic perfect refers to *future actions* pronounced as if they were past already. Joüon, P., & Muraoka, T. (2006) explain: “This prophetic perfect is not a special grammatical perfect, but a rhetorical device” (*A grammar of biblical Hebrew*, Roma: Pontificio Istituto Biblico). Gesenius writes of this very verse: “ISAIAH 14:24, where אֶל־אֱמֹנִי occurs first with the perfect in the sense of a prophetic perfect” (Gesenius, F. W., 1910. *Gesenius’ Hebrew grammar*. (E. Kautzsch & S. A. E. Cowley, Eds.) (2nd English ed., p. 472). Oxford: Clarendon Press.

water would reach to the neck: “And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel” (ISAIAH 8:8).

26 This [is] the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth; and this [is] the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations.

Note the anthropomorphic figure is removed in the Targum (7) reading, “This is the purpose that is purposed upon all the inhabitants of the earth; and this is the might of the ruler which is lifted up over all the kingdoms.” The Douay version, based on the Vulgate (8), also has *all nations* as does the Book of Mormon, dropping *the* in *the nations*²⁵: “This is the counsel that I have purposed upon all the earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all nations.” ¶ Cheyne explains that the words “all the earth” are used, “Partly because this is an act of the great drama of the world-judgment.” In Jeremiah 50:23, we read of Babylon—and the same could be said of Assyria: “How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations!” These nations may have felt mighty but true and enduring might is not of man.

27 For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul [it]? and his hand [is] stretched out, and who shall turn it back?

For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul? This idea mentioned in ISAIAH 14:24 takes greater strength with its repetition here. What the Lord decides to do, He can perform even when it seems impossible. ¶ *And his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?* Even going back to Exodus we read as to how the Lord stretched out His mighty hand in protecting Israel (see Exodus 3:20, Deuteronomy 5:15a). This verse, then, is an allusion to the power of God to take us out of Egypt and out of Babylon if we will but turn to Him and worship Him and none else. The Lord will stretch out His arm to punish, to save, or do as it pleases Him, in order to bless man.

vv. 28–32. The people of Philistia (or Philistines) should not rejoice upon the death of Ahaz (about 726 B.C.), for after him would come one more formidable,

²⁵ MT (9) has אֶל־אֱמֹנִי.

King Hezekiah. Likewise, in a more global way, Philistia, or *The World* should not rejoice over the apparent despair of Zion, the pure in heart, for Messiah will eventually triumph and all evil will be put away in the Lord's mountain or Zion. Regarding prophecies against the Philistines, we also can see Jeremiah 47; Ezekiel 25:15–16; and Amos 1:8.

28 In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden.

Nägelsbach suggests that these words were written after Ahaz (see notes on ISAIAH 7) had died. This may well be so, based on the taunting words that follow.

29 Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina, because the rod of him that smote thee is broken; for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a cockatrice, and his fruit [shall be] a fiery flying serpent.

Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina, because the rod of him that smote thee is broken. The Targum (T) reads, “Rejoice not, O Philistia, all of ye, because the government that hath made you servile is broken.” The Philistines were known to laugh at the troubles of Israel, and so it was that David mourned when Saul and Jonathan died and said: “The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen! Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph” (2 Samuel 1:19–20). Henderson suggests, “By the ‘rod which smote’ the Philistines, is meant the Jewish power, which had ... punished them in the days of Uzziah, but was now broken in those of Ahaz, partly by the Syrians and Israelites, partly by the inroads of the Edomites and Philistines, and partly by Tiglathpileser (2 Chronicles 28). To repress their joy at these disastrous events, the prophet tells them, in highly figurative language, that from the royal house of Judah, a prince should arise, who would prove more formidable and destructive to them than his predecessors.” Many commentators rightly see Hezekiah as this prince. Yet on a larger scale, there would yet be another PRINCE to come forth, even the LORD OF HOSTS, even Jesus the Christ. ¶ *For out of the serpent's root shall come forth a cockatrice, and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent.* Note the Messianic application in the Targum (T), “Because from the children of Jesse shall come forth the Messiah (מִשִּׁיחַ), and His works among you shall be as a flying serpent.” In earlier chapters we have spoken about the flying serpent, and its Messianic connotations,

too (see ISAIAH 6, also see Numbers 21:9). Kay observes, “It is scarcely possible not to see here an antithesis to ISAIAH 11:1, 10. Out of the root of Jesse should come forth One, who should defend the poor; and make the viper innocuous; and set up a standard, beneath which should be rest.” Henderson says that the fiery serpents get their name “on account of their *vivid fiery colour*, being somewhat like the copper-coloured snake in appearance; on which account, a serpent of copper or brass was set up, to which the bitten Israelites were to look, in order to be healed ... The most remarkable circumstance connected with those described here ... is that of their *flying*: no serpents now in existence being known to naturalists to have wings, from which it is inferred that they never did exist. There can, however, be no doubt that some of the most respectable authorities among the ancients speak of winged or flying serpents, on occasions which would lead us to suppose that they are not treating the fabulous, but of facts known to themselves and their contemporaries.” Regarding the flying serpents, one possibility is as described by Henderson of some extinct species, while another is that these snakes were so agile when striking that they gave the appearance of flying through the air to attack their victims. Delitzsch well says, “The power from which Philistia had escaped was a common snake (נָחָשׁ), which had been either cut to pieces, or had died out down to the very roots. But out of this root, *i.e.*, out of the house of David, which had been reduced to the humble condition of its tribal house, there was coming forth a נָחָשׁ, a basilisk (*regulus*, as Jerome and other translators render it: see at ISAIAH 11:8)); and this basilisk, which is dangerous and even fatal in itself, as soon as it had reached maturity, would bring forth a winged dragon as its fruit. The basilisk is Hezekiah,²⁶ and the flying dragon is the Messiah (this is the explanation given by the Targum); or, what is the same thing, the former is the Davidic government of the immediate future, the latter the Davidic government of the ultimate future.”

30 And the first-born of the poor shall feed, and the needy shall lie down in safety; and I will kill thy root with famine, and he shall slay thy remnant.

And the first-born of the poor shall feed, and the needy shall lie down in safety. Barnes writes, “The phrase ‘the

²⁶ We read of Hezekiah that he was a righteous king, trusting in the Lord, a man often described as a type of Christ, and as a result: “He smote the Philistines, even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city” (2 Kings 18:8).

first-born of the poor' is an Hebraism, a strong, emphatic expression, denoting those who are the most poor; the most abject sons of poverty; those who have an eminence or a double portion of need, as the first-born among the Hebrews were entitled to special distinctions and privileges. The idea is, that even the most poor and defenseless would be safe." When the Messiah would come—in the First Advent—he would feed the poor and heal the lame. There is also an allusion to the Millennium and the Second Advent, when there would be peace even among the animals. These would be returned to their paradisiacal state, as formerly found in the Garden of Eden. In the Millennial day, these would include the *poor in spirit*. ¶ *And I will kill thy root with famine, and he shall slay thy remnant.* 1QIsa^a (Q) has it, "and I will kill thy root ... and I will slay thy remnant." In ISAIAH 11:11a we read of the remnant that would be preserved. Those who would read this would be well acquainted with the promises made to the remnant of Israel. In Genesis we have: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15). This is as to say that in the long run God will punish the wicked, but will allow the wicked to inflict punishment on His people, that only a remnant shall remain.

31 Howl, O gate; cry, O city; thou, whole Palestina, [art] dissolved; for there shall come from the north a smoke, and none [shall be] alone in his appointed times.

The Targum (T) reads, "Howl, on account of thy gate, cry on account of the city, ye, O Philistines, all of you; ye shall be broken: because from the north vengeance is coming, and is not delaying its appointed time." *Howl for thy gates* seems to mean that a person is homesick to return for the homeland. Some exegetes believe that the smoke is the dirt raised by the armies of the approaching enemy. Others, like Cheyne, prefer the thought of the devastations left behind of burning buildings and towns after the invading armies have passed. The invading armies are those of Babylon. The expression *the north* is used frequently in Jeremiah to mean Babylon (e.g., Jeremiah 1:13; 47:2–3). Gill likewise suggests that "the utter destruction of Palestine was by the Chaldean army under Nebuchadnezzar; and so the prophecy from the time of Hezekiah, with which it begins, is carried on unto the entire dissolution of this country by the Babylonians."

32 What shall [one] then answer the messengers of the nations? That the LORD

hath founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it.

Outside the Hebrew Bible (M) most ancient texts (C, S, V) use a plural form גוֹיִם, *nations*, as does the Book of Mormon, instead of *nation*, גוֹי. The SOT based on the *Boothroyd's Biblia Hebraica* (Kennicott) also renders it as the Book of Mormon, *nations*. ¶ President George Q. Cannon had this to say about Zion: "The Lord has shown His people that He is able to take care of His own work, to carry out His own purposes, and to fulfill His promises ... The testimonies of the servants of God have been amply sustained wherein they have said that whatever might occur, and however fiercely the work of God might be warred against, it would stand impregnable and unshaken and would proceed in its onward march unchecked by the attacks that should be made upon it. This ought to be a great source of comfort to all who are connected with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. God has spoken. He has laid the foundation of His work. He has promised that it shall be built up and that no power shall prevail against it. As one of the Prophets has said, 'What shall one then answer the messengers of the nation? That the Lord hath founded Zion, and the poor of His people shall trust in it' (ISAIAH 14:32). This prediction is literally fulfilled in our case. We do put our trust in Zion, the Lord having founded it (1 January 1893, JI 28:24)."²⁷

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²⁷ George Q. Cannon, *Gospel Truth: Discourses and Writings of President George Q. Cannon*, selected, arranged, and edited by Jerreld L. Newquist, p.116–117.

Isaiah 15

In Genesis 19:30–38 we read about Lot’s daughters and how they gave birth to their respective firstborns, **Moab** (מוֹאָב, ‘water’ or ‘seed’ of the **father**—Gesenius) and **Ben-Ammi** (בֶּן-אַמִּי, or *son of my people*) who in turn became the fathers of the nations to be called Moabites and Ammonites, on the eastern side of the Dead Sea. This oracle is directed to the peoples of Moab. Rawlinson says, “Having threatened Philistia, Israel’s nearest enemy upon the west, he turns to Moab, her nearest foe towards the east.” Most expositors agree that ISAIAH 15 and 16 form one unit or prophecy. ISAIAH 15 and Jeremiah 48 have much in common. The latter is not only a prophecy in the mouth of a second witness, it is also an exegetical review of ISAIAH 15. Cheyne informs us that, “Seven (probably) of the names in this prophecy are mentioned in the Moabitish monument—Dibon, Nebo, Arnon, Jahaz, Medeba, Horonaim, Sibmah (see on ISAIAH 16:8).” The prophecies found in ISAIAH 15 and 16 would begin to be fulfilled within a three year period (see ISAIAH 16:14) but the complete fulfillment would reach into the end of days. Moab, like Babylon, is also a name for the *world at large*. These words of desolation would pertain to those who turn against Israel in the latter days. Nägelsbach says, “The safest conclusion seems to be, that the prediction is generic, and intended to describe the destruction of Moab, without exclusive reference to any one of the events by which it was occasioned or promoted, but with special allusions possibly to all of them.” Kay observes, “As in the history of David’s conquests the Philistines came first, and then Moab (2 Samuel 8:12); so here, in the prophet’s survey of that ‘shaking’ of nations, which is to prepare for the coming-in of the future of Kingdom of God.” Certainly, in the last days, the nations of the earth shall be shaken, in preparation for the coming of the Savior. Despite the terrible things that would befall Moab, we read in Jeremiah that Moab would someday, like Israel, be *restored* from captivity: “Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days, saith the LORD. Thus far is the judgment of Moab” (Jeremiah 48:47, also see AMP). This speaks of a turning unto the Lord of the descendants of Moab, rather than Moab as representative of the whole world at large.

vv. 1–9. Isaiah is moved with compassion for the people of Moab, who will be destroyed quickly, in a night. Moab will cry out to her gods with no avail and be filled with lamentation. The destruction will be almost complete. Those who escape destruction will have to face yet others to come. Luther says, “After the Philistines the most hostile enemies of the Jews were the Moabites, who were extraordinarily proud because of the fertility of their country and because it was densely populated.” Of the Moabites and their cousins, the Ammonites, we read, “An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to their tenth generation” (Deuteronomy 23:3a). Ruth the Moabite, a direct ancestor of our Savior, was accepted into the covenant. In regards the conflict between Moab and Israel, read about King Balak and his attempt to have Balaam curse Israel (Numbers 24:9) as well as “the unkindness they had ... done to the camp of Israel, notwithstanding the orders God had given not to distress or vex them (Deuteronomy 2:9, 19)” (Henry, also see Delitzsch).

1 ¶ THE burden of Moab. Because in the night Ar of Moab is laid waste, [and] brought[✓] to silence; because in the night

Kir of Moab is laid waste, [and] brought[✓] to silence;

✓ or, cut off [in both instances]

THE burden of Moab. Because in the night Ar of Moab is laid waste, [and] brought to silence. It would be at night that **Ar** of **Moab** אֶר מוֹאָב would be destroyed. For some exegetes this is representative of the speed of the attack; for others, the surprise involved. The exact location of the various towns and rivers mentioned are subject to some uncertainty and disagreement. The ISBE has “The city of Ar is named in a snatch of ancient song (Numbers 21:15), literally ‘the site of Ar.’ It is identical with ‘Ar of Moab’ (Numbers 21:28; ISAIAH 15:1). This is probably the place called the **City** of **Moab** in Numbers 22:36, where the Hebrew (אֲר) is **עִיר מוֹאָב**. It is probably also intended by ‘the city that is in the middle of the valley’ (Deuteronomy 2:36; Joshua 13:9, 16; 2 Samuel 24:5). It lay ‘on the border of the Arnon, which is in the utmost part of the border’ (Numbers 22:36). A possible identification might be the ruin noted by Burckhardt, in the floor of the valley, on a piece of pasture-land below the confluence of the *Lejjun* and the *Mōjib*. Buhl however thinks that not a city but a Moabite district somewhere in the region south of the Arnon may be intended (*GAP*, 269).” Luther suggests that the very pride of Moab added to the utter despair of

the moment, as they had not expected to be attacked. In Jeremiah 49:29 we have: “We have heard the pride of Moab, (he is exceeding proud) his loftiness, and his arrogancy, and his pride, and the haughtiness of his heart.” ¶ *Because in the night Kir of Moab is laid waste, [and] brought to silence.* Henderson, speaking of the word כִּי in *because in the night* בַּלַּיִל says, “There is nothing answering to the כִּי in the LXX (6) and Syriac (5), but this conjunction frequently occurs at the commencement of a prediction, in order to express the certainty of its fulfillment.” Nägelsbach explains, regarding Kir of Moab מוֹאָב קִיר: “Kir-Moab (to distinguish it from the Assyrian Kir, ISAIAH 22:6) is mentioned by Isaiah under this name only here. Yet Kir-Haresh or Kir-Haresheth (ISAIAH 16:7, 11) are identical with it. The place was a strong fortress, on a high, steep mountain, visible from Jerusalem. It lay about three hours south of Rabbat-Moab, and about the same distance from the Dead Sea. In the Chaldee it is called כְּרִכָּא דְּמוֹאָב,² i.e. ‘castle, wall of Moab.’” The Targum (7) reads, “Because in the night Leheyath-Moab is destroyed, and they were asleep. Yea, in the night the fortified city of Moab was subdued, and they were in deep slumber.” The Targum (7), LXX (6), and Syriac (5) prefer to render קִיר, to mean not a place, but a stronghold, enclosure, or wall of defense. Luther has this to say, “Kir, קִיר, sometime means a wall or partition. Here it is a proper noun, like Beth, בֵּית, which otherwise means house. The Moabites named

their temple thus because of its outstanding character.” ¶ Calvin has, regarding *brought to silence*, “That is, *destroyed*, and hence also *Silence* sometimes means Death. Others disregard the metaphor, and choose to render it, *She is cut off*; but I leave the point undecided.” Young compares this concept of brought to silence or destroyed also in ISAIAH 6:5, נִדְּמִיתִי, when Isaiah after seeing the Savior high and lifted up feels he is doomed, and says that he is *undone*.

2 He is gone up to Bajith, and to Dibon, the high places, to weep: Moab shall howl over Nebo, and over Medeba: on all their heads [shall be] baldness, [and] every beard cut off.

He is gone up to Bajith, and to Dibon, the high places, to weep. Moab shall howl over Nebo, and over Medeba.

Other ancient versions translate תַּבְיִת as house בֵּית or rather, *the house*, often meaning *the temple*—or in this case, the Moabite house of idols. So it is that the translation in the Bishop’s 1568 Bible reads: “Moab went vp to the idols house, euen to Dibon to the hygh places to weepe: for Neba and Moab shall mourne for Medba, All their heades were balde, and all their beardes shauen.” After Jeroboam broke off Ephraim (the Northern Tribes) from Judah he built an altar in Beth-el (1 Kings 12:27, 29) to a golden calf and made it into a temple for the people to worship idols. In Jeremiah 48:13 we have, “And Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh, as the house of Israel was ashamed of Beth-el their confidence.” *Beith-El* בֵּית אֱלֹהִים, is short for *Beith Elohim*, and means *house of God*. So would it be that Moab would be ashamed of her idols. The people of Moab had not leaned on the Lord, but instead, had trusted in idols, *the work of their own hands*: “For because thou hast trusted in thy works and in thy treasures, thou shalt also be taken: and Chemosh shall go forth into captivity *with* his priests and his princes together” (Jeremiah 48: 7). Furthermore we read, “Moreover I will cause to cease in Moab, saith the LORD, him that offereth in the high places, and him that burneth incense to his gods” (Jeremiah 48:35). The crying and weeping and *howling* shall be generalized throughout the land: “Therefore will I howl for Moab, and I will cry out for all Moab; *mine heart* shall mourn for the men of Kir-heres. O vine of Sibmah, I will weep for thee with the weeping of Jazer: thy plants are gone over the sea, they reach *even* to the sea of Jazer: the spoiler is fallen upon thy summer fruits and upon thy vintage” (Jeremiah 48:31–32). Cheyne says, regarding תַּבְיִת, “No doubt the prophet means the Beth-bamoth (‘House of High Places’) of the inscription on the

¹ In other parts we have referred to this כִּי as the *prophetic ‘for.’* Nägelsbach proposes a different theory: “As in ISAIAH 15 and 16 there is a surprisingly frequent use of the particle כִּי—it occurs nine times in 15, and five times in 16, —so, too, the כִּי of verse 1 is surely to be interpreted according to this usage. Nowhere else is Isaiah wont to multiply this particle in a surprising way. It seems to me that he had here a particular aim. Perhaps he imitates Moabite language. The same is the case with לַיִל. It must occasion surprise that of the five times that Isaiah uses לַיִל (except these he uses לַיִלָּה) three belong to the chapters on Moab (compare 16:3). In 21:11 לַיִל occurs, and probably for the sake of variety in the parallelism, perhaps too, as mimicking the dialect of Edom and as reminiscence of Exodus 12:42. But 30:29, the form לַיִל occurs as *st. constr.*, and also with allusion to Exodus 12:42. On the monument of king Mesa, in line 15, the *night* is actually called לַיִלָּה (comp. SCHLOTTMAN in *Stud. And Krit.* 1871, *Heft.* IV., p. 596) from which it appears that the pronunciation with *e* is Moabitic ... [So also] — עֵר is without doubt the Moabitic word for עֵיר (comp. SCHLOTTMAN, *l. c.*, p. 607). For it is used only of the capital of Moab and the territory immediately belonging to it ... [And furthermore] — בְּלָהָ, which occurs again in Isaiah only 16:7, seems likewise to be a mimicry of Moabite form of speech.”

² כְּרִכָּא דְּמוֹאָב in CAL, In Stenning’s *Targum of Isaiah*, כְּרִכָּא דְּמוֹאָב.

Moabite Stone (line 27), which Schlottmann rightly identified with the Bamoth-Baal mentioned in Joshua 13:17, side by side with Dibon. Instead of simply saying ‘Dibon is gone up to Beth-bamoth to weep,’ the prophet breaks the clause into two, for there can be little doubt that ‘the high places’ in the second member of the verse means the same spot as ‘the temple’ in the first ... Nebo is of course not the mountain-range so called, but a town near, deriving its name from the same old Semitic divinity, Medeba, at any rate, is on an eminence³.” Henderson translates this clause as: “Upon Nebo and upon Medeba, Moab howleth” and explains that the weeping is not on account of the destruction, but rather, as part of the idolatrous worship, for “they mingled the most pitiable wailings with their rites.” ¶ *On all their heads [shall be] baldness, [and] every beard cut off.* The DSSB (Q) shows that in 1QIsa^a that the **and** **1** is present rather than implied, “on all its head and every beard” In Jeremiah we 48:37 we have, “For every head *shall be* bald, and every beard clipped: upon all the hands *shall be* cuttings, and upon the loins sackcloth.” Regarding *cuttings*, Gill says, “it was usual with the Heathens to make incisions in the several parts of their bodies, particularly in their hands and arms, with their nails, or with knives, in token of mourning; which are forbidden the Israelites.” Baldness and cut off beards are signs of mourning and at times subjection to slavery. Jeremiah wrote, “Thou daughter that dost inhabit Dibon, come down from *thy* glory” (Jeremiah 48:18), with reference also to mourning and sitting on the ground (cf. ISAIAH 3:26; 47:1; Lamentations 2:10; Ezekiel 26:16). Regarding the shaving of the head, Rawlinson mentions several peoples where this custom has been found, among them the Natives of North America. In Jeremiah 48:7b the idea of captivity is implied: “For because thou hast trusted in thy works and in thy treasures, thou shalt also be taken: and Chemosh shall go forth into captivity *with* his priests and his princes together” as does Jeremiah 48:46, “Woe be unto thee, O Moab! the people of Chemosh perisheth: for thy sons are taken captives, and thy daughters captives.” The LXX (G) would rather show the impotence of Moab in another way, with her arms being cut off, probably with reference to Moab’s idols: “baldness shall be on every head, *and* all arms *shall be* wounded (Greek: cut to pieces).” Having the beard cut off was such a sign of embarrassment, explained Barnes, that men would choose to either hide from the public, or cover their face in a veil, until it had grown back.

3 In their streets they shall gird themselves with sackcloth: on the tops of

³ Hill, mount, or elevated place.

their houses, and in their streets, every one shall howl, weeping abundantly. ✓

✓ descending into weeping, or, coming down with weeping

In their streets they shall gird themselves with sackcloth. Sackcloth is the garment of sorrow and affliction. In ISAIAH 22:12 we have, “And in that day did the Lord GOD of hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth.”⁴ For sackcloth, *Easton’s Bible Dictionary* has, “Cloth made of black goats’ hair, coarse, rough, and thick, used for sacks, and also worn by mourners (Genesis 37:34; 42:25; 2 Samuel 3:31; Esther 4:1–2; Psalm 30:11, etc.), and as a sign of repentance (Matthew 11:21). It was put upon animals by the people of Nineveh (Jonas 3:8).” ¶ *On the tops of their houses, and in their streets, every one shall howl, weeping abundantly.* In Jeremiah we have: “*There shall be* lamentation generally upon all the housetops of Moab, and in the streets thereof: for I have broken Moab like a vessel wherein *is* no pleasure, saith the LORD” (Jeremiah 48:38). The Targum (C) reads, “On their house-tops, and in their broad-places all of them shall howl, crying and weeping.” Barnes explains, “The roofs of the houses in the East were, and still are, made flat, and were places of resort for prayer, for promenade, etc. The prophet here says, that all the usual places of resort would be filled with weeping and mourning. In the streets, and on the roofs of the houses, they would utter the voice of lamentation.” Cheyne comments on the marginal ¶ translation, *coming down with weeping*, “So Jeremiah, ‘that our eyes may run down in tears’ (Jeremiah 9:18; compare Jeremiah 13:17; 14:17⁵). By a bold extension of the figure, the whole person is represented as immersed in tears.” When it comes to crying, a literal translation into English, can sometimes be curious, such as “my eyes water,” and so on. Delitzsch says, “In other cases it is the eyes that are said to run down in tears, streams, or water-brooks; but here, by a still bolder metonymy, the whole man is said to flow down to the ground, as if melting in a stream of tears.” Regarding the idea of howling, Barnes tells us, “It is known that, in times of calamity in the East, it is common to raise an unnatural and forced howl, or long-continued shriek. Persons are often hired for this purpose (Jeremiah 9:17).” In Jeremiah 19:17a we read, “Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Consider ye, and call for the mourning women, that they may come.” Such a

⁴ It is interesting that the word **sack** in English and **שַׂק** in Hebrew are pronounced the same, and is an example of a word that has been derived from the Hebrew (for instance, see *Webster’s New World Dictionary*, 1960).

⁵ “Therefore thou shalt say this word unto them; Let mine eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease” (Jeremiah 14:17a).

custom is also known is South America, where the women are called *lloronas*. The idea here, however, is that they would not need to hire anyone to weep for them. Nägelsbach points out a number of contrasting thoughts: “It has been overlooked that **יָרַד בְּבִכָּי**, **descending with weeping** should form an antithesis to **עָלָה לְבִכָּי**, ‘goeth up to weep,’ ISAIAH 15:2. They went *up* on the high places at Dibon and Beth-Bamoth to weep; they howled *on* the high places of Nebo and Medebah; but they came *down* also from these high places with weeping; they weep because imploring the gods with tears availed nothing.”

4 And Heshbon shall cry, and Elealeh: their voice shall be heard [even] unto Jahaz: therefore the armed soldiers of Moab shall cry out; his life shall be grievous unto him.

And Heshbon shall cry, and Elealeh: their voice shall be heard [even] unto Jahaz. Barnes explains: “*And Heshbon shall cry*] This was a celebrated city of the Amorites, twenty miles east of the Jordan (Joshua 13:17). It was formerly conquered from the Moabites by Sihon, and became his capital, and was taken by the Israelites a little before the death of Moses Num_21:25. After the carrying away of the ten tribes it was recovered by the Moabites. Jeremiah (Jeremiah 48:2) calls it ‘the pride of Moab.’ The town still subsists under the same name, and is described by Burckhardt. He says, it is situated on a hill, southwest from El Aal (Elealeh). ‘Here are the ruins of an ancient town, together with the remains of some edifices built with small stones; a few broken shafts of columns are still standing, a number of deep wells cut in the rock, and a large reservoir of water for the summer supply the inhabitants’ (*Travels in Syria*, p. 365).” ¶ *And Elealeh*] Barnes says: “This was a town of Reuben about a mile from Heshbon (Numbers 32:37). Burckhardt visited this place. Its present name is El Aal. ‘It stands on the summit of a hill, and takes its name from its situation - Aal, meaning ‘the high.’ It commands the whole plain, and the view from the top of the hill is very extensive, comprehending the whole of the southern Belka. El Aal was surrounded by a well-built wall, of which some parts yet remain. Among the ruins are a number of large cisterns, fragments of walls, and the foundations of houses, but nothing worthy of notice. The plain around it is alternately chalk and flint’ (*Travels in Syria*, p. 365).” ¶ Barnes concludes: “*Even unto Jahaz*] This was a city east of Jordan, near to which Moses defeated Sihon. It was given to Reuben (Deuteronomy 2:32), and was situated a short distance north of Ar, the capital of Moab.” On all these locations also see ISBE and other

Bible encyclopedias and atlases. ¶ *Therefore* [עַל־כֵּן] *the armed soldiers of Moab shall cry out; his life shall be grievous unto him.* The KJV seems to indicate a desire to die, rather than the terror of living. The Other translations have: “the soule of euey one shall lament in him selfe” (Geneva Bible) or “and crye for very sorowe of their myndes” (Bishops). The ASV, and some others, translate the last clause as rather: “. . . his soul trembleth within him.” Alexander notes the paronomasia between יִרְעֵו, “shall cry out” and יִרְעָה, “shall be grievous.”

5 My heart shall cry out for Moab; his fugitives [shall flee] unto Zoar, an heifer✓ of three years old: for by the mounting up of Luhith with weeping shall they go it up; for in the way of Horonaim they shall raise up a cry of destruction.✓✓

- ✓ or, to the borders thereof, even to Zoar, as an heifer
- ✓ ✓ breaking

My heart shall cry out for Moab; his fugitives [shall flee] unto Zoar. An heifer of three years old. The Lord weeps for Moab, and as a result so does Isaiah through the pure love of Christ (see ISAIAH 16:13). The Syriac (S) version reads, “My heart shall cry out for Moab; they shall howl as they flee to Zoar; Moab was strong like a three year old heifer.” Gill suggests: “*an heifer of three years old*] of the cry of the fugitives, that should be very loud and clamorous, like the lowing of an ox, or an heifer in its full strength, which is heard a great way.” ¶ In Jeremiah we read, “Therefore mine heart shall sound for Moab like pipes, and mine heart shall sound like pipes for the men of Kirheres: because the riches that he hath gotten are perished” (Jeremiah 48:36). The Lord commanded, “Thou shalt live together in love, insomuch that thou shalt weep for the loss of them that die, and more especially for those that have not hope of a glorious resurrection” (D&C 42:45). A three year old heifer is thought of as carefree and not subjugated. ¶ *For by the mounting up of Luhith with weeping shall they go it up. For in the way of Horonaim they shall raise up a cry of destruction.* The equivalent verse in Jeremiah 48:5 reads, “For in the going up of Luhith continual weeping shall go up; for in the going down of Horonaim the enemies have heard a cry of destruction.” The Targum (T) reads, “For the ascent of Luhith they shall ascend it as with weeping; because of the descent of Horonaim they shall declare the cry of the broken in battle (i.e., of the conquered in battle).”

6 For the waters of Nimrim shall be desolate: [✓] for the hay is withered away, the grass faileth, there is no green thing.

✓ desolations

For the waters of Nimrim shall be desolate. The implication is that the waters of Nimrim dried up. Barnes here makes an interesting observation: “It is possible that the waters failed by a common practice in times of war when an enemy destroyed the fountains of a country by diverting their waters, or by casting into them stones, trees, etc. This destructive measure of war occurs, with reference to Moab, in 2 Kings 3:25, when the Israelites, during an incursion into Moab, felled the fruit trees, cast stones into the plowed grounds, and ‘closed the fountains, or wells.’” Some feel that a drought may be responsible for such dryness, instead. ¶ *For the hay is withered away, the grass faileth, there is no green thing.* This speaks of a terrible draught that would befall Moab. Delitzsch writes, “לא תִּיהְיֶה” ‘it is not in existence’ or ‘it has become not,’ i.e., annihilated.” Alexander, supported by many others including the Targum (ܬ) translation, suggests, “הַצִּיר”⁶ is not *hay*, as Luther and the English version give it, but *mature grass*, יֶשֶׁן the springing herbage, יֶרֶק greenness or verdure in general ... the whole is given with great precision in the Vulgate: *herba, germen, viror*.” The Douay version, based on the Vulgate (V), reads: “... for the grass is withered away: the spring is faded, all the greenness is perished.” The Vulgate (V) translated into Spanish has, “... por cuanto se secó la hierba, marchitáronse las plantas, pereció todo vigor” (VL). The Douay has *spring* for *plants* or *vegetation*. The Latin *germen* can be translated here as *bud* or *shoot*.

7 Therefore the abundance they have gotten, and that which they have laid up, shall they carry away to the brook of the willows. [✓]

✓ or, valley of the Arabians

Therefore the abundance they have gotten. Among their abundance, we read that they cultivated rich vineyards that had given them much joy in the past, but today only silence and sorrow: “And joy and gladness is taken from the plentiful field, and from the land of Moab; and I have caused wine to fail from the winepresses: none shall tread with shouting; *their shouting shall be no*

shouting” Jeremiah 48:33. ¶ *And that which they have laid up, shall they carry away to the brook of the willows.* There are differences of opinion as to whether the Moabites were carried away or if they carried their own possessions into another land. Also, if they were transported to Babylon or to Edom. ¶ Alexander writes, “It is now commonly agreed that whatever be the meaning of the name, it denotes the Wady el Ahsa of Burckhardt (the Wady el Ahsy of Robinson and Smith), running into the Dead Sea near its southern extremity, and forming the boundary between Kerek and Gebal, corresponding to the ancient Moab and Edom ... The older writers make the enemy the subject of the verb; the moderns the Moabites themselves. On the whole, the most probable meaning of the verse is that the Moabites shall carry what they can save of their possessions into the adjacent land of Edom.” Weeping willows and other trees often line brooks. Some translate as the margin ||, Valley of the Arabians.

8 For the cry is gone round about the borders of Moab; the howling thereof unto Eglaim, and the howling thereof unto Beerelim.

For the cry is gone round about the borders of Moab; the howling thereof unto Eglaim. It has been noted that the Prophet seems to be using a play of words here, with the bellowing of a *heifer*, עֵגֶלֶת, in ISAIAH 15:5, sounding much like the cry proceeding from Eglaim, אֶגְלַיִם, here. ¶ *And the howling thereof unto Beerelim.* The LXX (C) has, “And her howling *has gone* as far as the well of Aelim,” and has Beerelim as a compound of *well* and *Elim*, בְּאֵר אֵילִים.

9 For the waters of Dimon shall be full of blood: for I will bring more [✓] upon Dimon, lions upon him that escapeth of Moab, and upon the remnant of the land.

✓ additions

For the waters of Dimon⁷ shall be full of blood. The Targum (ܬ)⁸ reads, “For the waters of Dimon are filled with the blood of the slain.” It seems that its waters were filled with blood from the dead and the wounded. Alexander writes, “It is an ingenious conjecture of Junius that the *Dimon* in the stream mentioned (2 Kings 3:20, 22), in which case the meaning of the clause would be, this stream shall not be merely red as it then

⁶ Alexander has the word incorrectly typeset as: הַצִּיר.

⁷ 1QIsa^a (Q) has *Dibon*.

⁸ Stenning.

was, but really full of blood.” ISBE has, “The form of the name, Dimon, in ISAIAH 15:9, may have been given to make it resemble the Hebrew *dām*⁹, ‘blood,’ to support the play upon words in the verse.” ¶ *For I will bring more upon Dimon, lions upon him that escapeth of Moab, and upon the remnant of the land.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “For I will appoint upon Dimon an assembly of armies. Upon the escaped of Moab, a king with his army shall ascend; yea, to spoil the remainder of their land.” The LXX (Ⲅ) has, “For I will bring Arabians among Dimon, and I will take away the seed of Moab, and Ariel, and the remnant of Adama.” ¶ The idea of “bring more” is similar to that of “my hand is stretched out still” as the Lord had warned the Israelites if they would not obey, their punishment would continue. The thought here with “lions upon him that escaped &c.” is very much of that which is further developed in ISAIAH 24:18, “And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from

on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake.” In fact, this very idea would later be used again by Jeremiah in speaking of Moab, “He that fleeth from the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that getteth up out of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for I will bring upon it, even upon Moab, the year of their visitation, saith the LORD” (Jeremiah 48:44). When the Lord pursues, there is no hiding. Some feel this verse refers to wild beasts who shall overtake the Moabites; others suggest that while the original attackers will be the Assyrians, the lions represent the Babylonians. Delitzsch, Green, Gesenius, and BDB, among others, have *lion* here to coincide with the Masoretic Text (ⲙ) אֲרִיָּה, rather than the plural *lions*, אֲרִיִּים. Gesenius says of אֲרִיָּה, “used of a powerful and fierce enemy, ISAIAH 15:9; Jeremiah 4:7 &c.”

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⁹ דָּם

Isaiah 16

A continuation of ISAIAH 15, this is the word of the LORD to Moab. She is encouraged to put her trust in the Lord, or else, within three years she would begin to pay the price for her lack of repentance. Many modern exegetes (e.g., Skinner, Cheyne) have a conversation between Moab and Judah, one in which *Moab asks for protection* for her fugitives. Others think that the invitation for Moab to send an appeasement offering to Judah was of a sarcastic nature, for no matter what she did, Moab would still be punished. With Kay, Nägelsbach, Alexander, Govett, Jenour, and Rawlinson, I believe that Moab was given a chance for mercy if she would reestablish her tribute to Judah (ISAIAH 16:1), and turn to the Lord (ISAIAH 16:4–5). Because punishment is assured to Moab (ISAIAH 16:6), we can assume that she refused the offer of mercy. A number of important allusions to the Messiah are found in this chapter.

vv. 1–5. Moab is told that her way of escape is to send a tribute of *lambs* (לָמַד can actually mean lambs or goats) to Jerusalem. King David defeated Moab and required tribute of her (2 Samuel 8:2). Sometime after the civil war that divided Israel at Solomon’s death, Moab paid a tribute to Israel (2 Kings 3:4) but then broke off from doing so at the death of Ahab (2 Kings 3:5). Now, it seems that Judah is asking for the tribute, with a warning of the evils that will overcome Moab if she refuses. Among these, the women will be found running in despair and arrive at the waters of Arnon (Ammonite territory), where they would not be able to ford the river. The waters will not part before them, however, as they did for the children of Israel before the Red Sea and subsequently, the Jordan. Isaiah pleads with the people of Moab that they should think through this proposal of protection carefully. That they should meet, consider and take counsel together, and not decide too hastily to reject the offer. Moab is then also counseled to protect the fugitive of Judah and possibly of Israel, and hide them from—or at the very least not give their presence away to—the enemy. Multiple suggestions have been tendered as to who the enemy is. By doing what is kind and what is right Moab, in turn, will find kind judgment from Messiah.

1 ¶ SEND ye the lamb to the ruler of the land from Sela to the wilderness, unto the mount of the daughter of Zion.

✓ or, Petra, Heb. A rock

SEND ye the lamb to the ruler of the land from Sela to the wilderness. We know from the Moabite stone as well as from 2 Kings that Moab had paid tribute to the Northern Kingdom: “And Mesha king of Moab was a sheepmaster, and rendered unto the king of Israel an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool. But it came to pass, when Ahab

was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel” (2 Kings 3:4–5). Ahab, was the seventh King of Israel after the civil war. Nothing is known about Moab also paying a tribute to Judah. Rawlinson writes, “The prophet recommends that this [i.e., one such as in 2 Kings 3:4], or some similar, tribute should now be paid to the King of Judah instead, Israel having been absorbed into Assyria¹.” Even before the civil war we read about the subjugation of Moab: “And he smote Moab, and measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive. And so the Moabites became David’s servants, and brought gifts” (2 Samuel 8:2). Barnes tries to connect the scripture in Samuel and the one in Kings: “It is probable that as this tribute was laid by ‘David’ before the separation of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, and as the kings of Judah claimed to be the true successors of David and Solomon, they demanded that the tribute should be rendered to ‘them,’ and not to the kings of Israel, and this is the claim which Isaiah enforces in the passage before us. The command of the prophet is to regain the lost favor of Israel by the payment of the tribute that was due.” ¶ Rawlinson makes an invaluable contribution here, towards the understanding of this verse: regarding *Sela*, סֵלָע and its relationship to this verse: “The enemy being regarded as in possession of the northern end of the Dead Sea, Moab is recommended to send her tribute round the southern end, and so by way of ‘the wilderness of Judah,’ to Jerusalem.” Delitzsch believes that סֵלָע corresponds to

¹ Israel, or the Northern tribes, was taken captive into the north by Sargon, סַרְגִּין, King of Assyria, after Samaria could no longer withstand the three year siege to which she was subjected. She would subsequently be known as the Lost Tribes. Israel had been repeatedly warned by the Lord through His prophetic servants to no avail: “Until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day” (2 Kings 17:23). Depending on the chronologist, this took place anywhere from 130 to 175 years after the death of Ahab.

what is known as “Petra² (*Wady Musa*), near Mount Hor in Arabia Petraea.” Henderson explains that the site of Petra was completely unknown until it was “discovered by Burckhardt, on his route from Damascus to Egypt, in 1812.” ¶ *Unto the mount of the daughter of Zion*. The Targum (Ⲯ) reads, “Unto the mountain of the congregation of Zion.” The mount of the daughter of Zion represents Jerusalem, or it could also imply the temple or House of the Lord situated in Mount Zion.

¶ **MESSIANIC ALLUSIONS.** The Targum (Ⲯ) paraphrase has a Messianic message that well corresponds with the mention of David (which here and in many instances stands for *Messiah*) in ISAIAH 16:5, “They shall bring tribute to the Anointed One (משיח)³ of Israel, who has prevailed over him who was as a wilderness . . .” Lowth also has instead of שְׁלַחְךָ, *send ye the lamb*, the idea of שְׁלַחְךָ, where בֵּר could be translated *son, chosen one, the chosen one*, or *Messiah* (see Gesenius, under בֵּר). With further changes, Lowth rather translates, “I will send forth the son” leaning on the LXX (Ⲯ) and the Syriac (Ⲫ), for the first person singular, *I will send*, אֲשַׁלַּח. The Syriac (Ⲫ) version reads, “The prophecy concerning the rest of the land. I will send the son of the ruler of the land from the rock [Petra] city of the wilderness.” The Vulgate (ⲫ) also preserves the idea of the *lamb*, “*Emitte agnum⁴ Domine, dominatorem terrae, de Petra deserti.*” Calvin writes—although not believing it himself—“Jerome explains it as referring to *Christ*, because he drew his birth from the Moabites (Ruth 1:4; Matthew 1:5), from whom Ruth was descended; and that opinion has been adopted by almost all Christians; as if the Prophet had said, ‘O Lord, though a judgment so severe as this awaits the Moabites, still thou wilt not utterly destroy them; for they will send thee a *Lamb*, the ruler of the world.’”

2 For it shall be, [that], as a wandering bird cast out of the nest, ✓ [so] the

² Linda & I had the opportunity to visit the beautiful wonders of Petra as part of our trip to the Holy Land in 2012. At the time I wrote in part, “Beside seeing all the beautiful sandstone, we also rode in a horse chariot and camel (I also rode a horse and a donkey in Petra) and had more fun watching the Bedouin and the donkeys, horses and camels than anything else.” I took lots of photos there as it is one of the most spectacular places I have ever visited.

³ Barnes, quoting the Targum (Ⲯ), suggests that if one thinks of משיח as *messiah*, or *anointed one*, then it could fit the king of Judah (the kings were also anointed), to whom Moab needed to send the sheep and the goats.

⁴ *Agnus* means *lamb* in Latin. The Douay, which translates the Vulgate (ⲫ) into English, has, “Send forth, O Lord, the lamb, the ruler of the earth, from Petra of the desert.” Or the VL into Spanish has, “Envía, Señor, el *Cordero* dominador de la tierra, de la Piedra del desierto.”

daughters of Moab shall be at the fords of Arnon.

✓ or, a nest forsaken

For it shall be, [that], as a wandering bird cast out of the nest. Those who suggest the futility of Moab’s repentance are quite mistaken. There is no instance in Scripture where the Lord—through His prophets—has *invited* people to humble themselves, or repent, if the existence for a pardon had been eliminated. If He gives a warning, it is always because He also gives a way for the escape. It needs to be understood, then, that ‘for it shall be’ here is a warning, “For it shall be that if they do not comply, it will come to pass that as a wandering bird &c.” A more correct translation is to take the 1 as *else, lest, or otherwise*. Gesenius provides several examples, including Psalm 143:7: “Hear me speedily, O LORD: my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, *lest* I be like unto them that go down into the pit” (emphasis added). ¶ Calvin has, “By the metaphor of *birds* he describes the terror with which they shall be struck, so that they will flee at the rustling of a leaf.⁵ He threatens that the Moabites, who had abused their tranquility, shall have a trembling and wearisome flight.” ¶ *[So] the daughters of Moab shall be at the fords of Arnon*. The Syriac (Ⲫ) has, “So that the daughters of Moab shall be deserted at the fords of Arnon.” Henry has, “*The daughters of Moab* (the country villages, or the women of your country) shall flutter about the *fords of Arnon*, attempting that way to make their escape to some other land, *like a wandering bird thrown out of the nest* half-fledged.” Henry, with his wonderful one-liners adds, “Those that will not yield to the fear of God shall be made to yield to the fear of everything else.”

3 Take ✓ counsel, execute judgment; make thy shadow as the night in the midst of the noonday; hide the outcasts; bewray not him that wandereth.

✓ Bring

Take counsel, execute judgment; make thy shadow as the night in the midst of the noonday. Here we have a temporary change of topic. The Targum (Ⲯ) reads, “Take counsel, execute counsel. Make thy shadow as the night in the day, in the midst of the noonday.” The LXX (Ⲯ) has, “Take farther counsel, and continually make thou a shelter from grief: they flee in darkness at mid-day.” The Douay translation, “Take counsel, gather a council: make thy shadow as the night in the midday.” Why make full daylight like the shadow of the night?

⁵ Reference to Leviticus 26:36, *Rain in Due Season*.

To *hide* the outcasts in the dark shade and not flash a light upon them—not betray them. It is the same idea as what follows below, “... hide the outcasts, bewray [ASV, betray] not &c.” The prophet Isaiah sees in vision when Moab will have the opportunity to lend a hand to the people of Judah. Moab is admonished to do everything in her power to protect the people of Judah who would be outcasts in the upcoming wars, and by so doing, Moab would be eventually blessed. Barnes has “as if he had said, ‘Take counsel; seek advice in your circumstances; be not hasty, rash, impetuous, unwise; do not cast off the friendship of the Jews; do not deal unkindly with those who may seek a refuge in your land, and thus provoke the nation to enmity; but let your land be an asylum, and thus conciliate and secure the friendship of the Jewish nation, and thus mercy shall be reciprocated and shown to you by him who shall occupy the throne of David’ (ISAIAH 16:5). The ‘design’ is, to induce the Moabites to show kindness to the fugitive Jews who might seek a refuge there, that thus, in turn, the Jews might show them kindness.” ¶ *Hide the outcasts; bewray⁶ not him that wandereth.* The Douay (Vulgate, **V**) translation, “Hide them that flee; and betray not them that wander about.” Some exegetes feel that the outcasts refer to Moab (see note on ISAIAH 16:4), but this is unlikely. Nägelsbach well points out that Judah would one day be scattered to the land of Moab: “This was fulfilled by Nebuchadnezzar, and in Jeremiah 40:11 Moab is expressly named among the lands into which scattered Judah (נִדְּרָה⁷), out of all the places *they were driven*, Jeremiah 40:12) had fled.”

4 Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler: for the extortioner[✓] is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, the oppressors^{✓✓} are consumed out of the land.

✓ wringer

✓ ✓ the treaders down

Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler. The Targum (**Ƨ**)⁸ reads, “Let the outcasts dwell with thee, O kingdom of Moab; be a covert unto them from before the spoilers.” This verse, again, seems to plead with Moab to show tender mercies to the outcasts of Judah who would likely travel to Moab and seek refuge. The Douay translation, “My fugitives shall dwell with thee: O Moab, be thou a covert to them from the face of the

destroyer.” The Syriac (**ܣ**) version, along with most moderns, completely changes the meaning, by making the outcasts those of Moab rather than those of Judah, “Let the outcasts of Moab dwell with you; be a shelter to them from the face of the spoiler.” I prefer to think of Judah as being the outcasts here, for the Lord using the possessive says, *my outcasts*, נִדְּרָהּ, much as He would say, *my people*. And who are the Lord’s people, but Israel? Calvin has: “This passage ought to be carefully observed; for God shows how great is the care which he takes of his people, since the injuries done to them affect him in the same manner as if they had been done to himself; as he declares by Zechariah, that *whenever they are touched, the apple of his eye is touched* (Zechariah 2:8) ... Let us therefore learn from this passage to be kind and dutiful to fugitives and exiles, and especially to believers, who are banished for their confession of the word ... If we wish to obtain any alleviation of our calamities, let us be kind and compassionate, and not refuse assistance to the needy ... When calls them *his banished* ... he likewise means, that they continue to be under his defence and protection, because, though they are banished and driven out of their native country, still he acknowledges them to be his people. That calamity which the Jews endured might be regarded as an evidence that they were cast off; but the Lord acknowledges them to be *his children*, though he chastises them severely.” ISAIAH 16:3–4, then, seems to be a warning to Moab not to lack compassion for the terrible afflictions of a suffering Judah (and not again repeat what happened when Israel came up out of Egypt). ¶ *For the extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, the oppressors are consumed out of the land.* The Targum (**Ƨ**) has, “For the extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, all that trampled underfoot have come to an end.” Why should Moab hide the outcasts and do that which was right? Because the *extortioner is at an end*, those who do wickedly will be pushed away, and the throne will be given to its rightful heir, even Messiah who will triumph. Some here translate נִדְּרָהּ as *when* (LHI) or *until* (Calvin). Calvin suggests: “Let my banished dwell with thee, Moab, be thou a place of concealment from the face of the destroyer, until the extortioner shall have ceased.” Calvin is not so far off, the idea being that the world, represented here by Moab, needs to protect the people of God until Messiah comes triumphantly, at which point He will protect them Himself (ISAIAH 16:5). As Balaam said of Israel before they entered into the land of Canaan: “Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee” (Numbers 24:9b). Nägelsbach feels that instead of נִדְּרָהּ, translated here as *the land*, we should have *the earth* for, “according to the context, signifies the whole earth. For the world-

⁶ Divulge, reveal, betray (Webster).

⁷ From נִדְּרָהּ, to scatter, drive, banish.

⁸ Stenning.

power that is characterized in the preceding words dominates not a single land, but the whole earth.”

5 And in mercy shall the throne be established: [✓] and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness.

✓ or, prepared

And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David. The Targum (ܬ) reads, “Then the throne of the **Messiah** (ܡܫܝܚܐ) of Israel shall be established in goodness, and He shall sit upon it in truth in the city of David.” Cheyne has, “We hardly need to ask, Whose throne? ‘Kindness and faithfulness,’ ‘justice and righteousness’ are it is true, the pillars of every divinely prospered king (Proverbs 20:28; 29:14), but here we are manifestly in the **Messianic** region of thought.” ¶ *Judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness.* This righteous Davidic King will be no other than **Messiah** Himself. Isaiah seems in this verse to dwell on the beautiful day when **Messiah** shall reign, and thus speaks of righteous judgment, and other descriptions of His throne. But now, as suddenly as we gazed together on the refreshing waters of **Messiah**, we return together to the draught of the desert, even to the pride of Moab, or of the world.

vv. 6–8. But will Moab listen? There is a huge difference between predestination and foreknowledge.⁹ The Lord knows the end from the beginning and knows that Moab will be too proud to listen. Consequences will come forth as a result of Moab’s prideful disobedience. All that she prized in terms of buildings and agriculture will be devastated.

6 ¶ We have heard of the pride of Moab; ~~[he is]~~ very proud: ~~[even]~~ of his haughtiness and his pride, **for he is very**

⁹ Some have incorrectly suggested that if God knows the future, that this, in effect, determines the future. As a result, they argue, the principle of *agency* and *free will* are limited by God’s foreknowledge. The same individuals freely admit that a person’s knowledge of history—or of the past—does not affect history. This is truly putting an artificial limit on God, based on human constraints. In reality, God can see the future as well as the past. That is why God sends Prophets to warn us, that we may make the needed corrections now, while we can. The blessings in a Patriarchal Blessing, likewise, are contingent to the recipient living the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The sacred principle of *moral agency* is never violated.

proud; and his wrath, ~~[but]~~ his lies, ~~[shall]~~ ~~not [be]~~ so and all his evil works.

We have heard of the pride of Moab; of his haughtiness and his pride, for he is very proud. Delitzsch speaks of a contrast between a Moab who will have to humble herself and the present arrogance of Moab, “the prophecy enters here upon a new stage, commencing with Moab’s sin, and depicting the fate of Moab in still more elegiac strains. ‘We have heard of the pride of Moab, the very haughty (pride), his haughtiness, and his pride, and his wrath, the falsehood of his speech.’ The future self-humiliation of Moab, which would be the fruit of its sufferings, is here contrasted with the previous self-exaltation, of which these sufferings were the fruit. ‘We have heard,’ says the prophet, identifying himself with his people. Boasting pompousness has hitherto been the distinguishing characteristic of Moab in relation to the latter (see ISAIAH 25:11). The heaping up of words of the same verbal stem (cf., ISAIAH 3:1) is here intended to indicate how thoroughly haughty was their haughtiness (cf., Romans 7:13, ‘that sin might become exceeding sinful’), and how completely it had taken possession of Moab.” Regarding these words based on the same root, Henderson explains: “Four different forms of the same word are here employed, the more emphatically to express the overbearing pride of the Moabites.” These are, respectively, “pride of / ܡܝܬܝܢ, pride / ܡܝܬܝܢ, his haughtiness / ܡܝܬܝܢ, and finally, and his pride / ܡܝܬܝܢ.” ¶ *And his wrath, his lies, and all his evil works.* The Masoretic text (מ) (in contrast to the Inspired Version) has **לֹא-כֵן**. Delitzsch has, “[Moab] boasted and was full of rage towards Israel, to which, so far as it retained its consciousness of the truth of Jehovah, the talk of Moab . . . must necessarily appear as **לֹא-כֵן**, *not-right*, i.e., at variance with fact.” Henderson has for **לֹא-כֵן**, *unstable, untrue, false*, and yields, “to speak falsely, feignedly, &c.). Calvin takes **כֵן** to mean *so*, therefore **לֹא-כֵן** as *not so*. YLT speaks of the *devices* of Moab, much like saying the *evil works* or *designs*. “We have heard of the pride of Moab—very proud, His pride, and his arrogance, and his wrath, Not right *are* his devices.”

7 Therefore shall Moab howl for Moab, every one shall howl: for the foundations of Kirhateseth shall ye mourn; [✓] surely ~~[they are]~~ stricken.

✓ or, mutter

Therefore (לִּכְנֹחַ) shall Moab howl *for Moab* (לְמוֹאָב), every one shall howl. This points to the pain or anguish to be experienced by Moab. ¶ For the foundations of Kirhareth shall ye mourn; surely [they are] stricken. To mourn for the foundations means that the rest of the structure is gone. Cheyne has, “Kir-Hareth or Kir-Heres (ISAIAH 16:11); usually explained as ‘brick-fortress,’ and identified with Kir-Moab. Prof. E. H. Palmer, however, suggests another meaning. ‘Asking one of the Arabs where the Moabite Stone was found, the latter replied that it was “between the *hárithin*,” i.e., between the two *háriths* . . . On Mr. Palmer’s demanding a further explanation, the Arab pointed out the two hillocks upon which the ruined village of Dhibán stands. . . . Nearly all the towns in Moab are built upon similar eminences, and Mr. Palmer found that they are invariably called *Háriths* by the Arabs’ (*Athenaeum*, August 19, 1871).”

8 For the fields of Heshbon languish, [and] the vine of Sibmah: the lords of the heathen have broken down the principal plants thereof, they are come [even] unto Jazer, they wandered [through] the wilderness: her branches are stretched out, [✓] they are gone over the sea.

✓ or, plucked up

For the fields of Heshbon languish, [and] the vine of Sibmah. Henderson, leaning on Jerome, says, “*Sibmah* was only half a Roman mile distant from Heshbon, and is mentioned on account of the superior excellence of its grapes.” Barnes has, “The ‘fields’ here evidently mean ‘vineyards,’ for so the parallelism demands. So in Deuteronomy 32:32: ‘Their vine is of the vine of Sodom, / And of the fields of Gomorrah.’” ¶ *The lords of the heathen have broken down the principal plants thereof, they are come [even] unto Jazer.* Delitzsch says, “This *Sibmah* wine was cultivated, as the prophet says, far and wide in Moab - northwards as far as *Ja’zer* (between Ramoth, i.e., Salt, and Heshbon, now a heap of ruins), eastwards into the desert, and southwards across the Dead Sea—a hyperbolical expression for close up to its shores.” While the destruction of these valued vineyards and fields seem to be meant, some moderns suggest that it was the wine itself that was so strong as to cause intoxication to those who imbibed. ¶ *They wandered [through] the wilderness: her branches are stretched out, they are gone over the sea.* *Going over the sea* seems to be an expression of how widely known the vines had become, being cultivated beyond the present borders into other nations even beyond the Euphrates. Delitzsch asks, “But what sea can the sea of Jazer be? Probably some celebrated large

pool, like the pools of Heshbon, in which the waters of the *Wady (Nahr) Sir*, which takes its rise close by, were collected. Seetzen found some pools still there.”

Henderson says, “The יַם, *sea*, spoken of, is by some interpreted of a lake or sea in the vicinity of Jazer; but as there is no appearance of any in the region, it seems preferable to refer it to the Dead Sea, the only water which, in such connexion, deserves the name.”

Rawlinson explains, “The young shoots or slips are taken by the cultivators and spread further and further. They are even carried across the Dead Sea, and planted on its western shore.” Grapevines were best propagated, in a pre-phylloxera era, through cuttings of the young woody canes.

vv. 9–14. The LORD (see ISAIAH 16:13) will join Moab in weeping for Moab, He will feel pain for her. Where at one time there had been shouts of joy for the harvest, there would be silence. Moab will take her petitions to her gods in the high places, but the no-gods will not listen; she will then take her petition to her temple, but her no-gods at the temple will not hear. This prophecy against Moab had been known from before, but now it would begin to come to pass.

9 ¶ Therefore I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah: I will water thee with my tears, O Heshbon, and Elealeh: for the shouting for thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen. [✓]

✓ or, the alarm is fallen upon &c.

Therefore I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah. The people of Jazer would mourn for the loss of the fruit of the vine of Sibmah, and with great tears. I will speak a few words here about my own tears, those for a tangerine tree. Sometime after 1991, Linda gave me a tangerine tree which I planted in the front of our California home. Oh, how I loved this tree. I loved it so much, that I asked a friend to help me graft it lest some harm would befall this tree whose fruit reminded me of Chilean tangerines. The graft did not take. Over the next few years the tree grew in strength and beauty and fruitfulness, but the last crop it would give would be in the winter of 2000–2001. By the next winter the tree was completely dead. I was filled with so much comfort when I wept over my tangerine tree. I was sure the tree would be healed and live. The comfort I felt, however, was the love of God, through the Spirit of the Holy Ghost. I wish I knew what variety it was. Linda has bought for me several tangerine trees, since then, which I planted in the back garden. This experience has taught me what it is to weep for a vine

or for a tree.¹⁰ I have quite a bit of empathy for Moab, here. Henry points out, regarding Moab, that while in former days shouts of joy had been heard, “Nothing is said of their praising God for their abundance, and giving him the glory of it.” ¶ *I will water thee with my tears, O Heshbon, and Elealeh.* Delitzsch has, “The beauties of nature and fruitfulness of the land, which come into the possession of any nation, are gifts from the riches of divine goodness, remnants of the paradisiacal commencement of the history of man, and types of its paradisiacal close; and for this very reason they are not matters of indifference to the spirit of prophecy. And for the same reason, it is not unworthy of a prophet, who predicts the renovation of nature and the perfecting of it into the beauty of paradise, to weep over such a devastation as that of the Moabitish vineyards which was now passing before his mind (cf., ISAIAH 32:12–13).” ¶ *For the shouting for thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen.* Delitzsch has, “the word **הִתְהַלְלִי**, which was the shout raised by the pressers of the grapes, to give the time for moving their feet when treading out the wine (ISAIAH 16:10; Jeremiah 25:30). A **הִתְהַלְלִי** of this kind had fallen upon the rich floors of Heshbon-Elealeh, inasmuch as they had been trodden down by enemies—a *Hedad*, and yet no *Hedad*, as Jeremiah gives it in a beautiful oxymoron (Jeremiah 48:33), i.e., no joyous shout of actual grape-treaders.” Most of the ancient versions have the **הִתְהַלְלִי** rather, to be the shouting of the conquering peoples rather than to the joyful one emanating from the treaders of the grapes.

10 And gladness is taken away, and joy out of the plentiful field; and in the vineyards there shall be no singing, neither shall there be shouting: the treaders shall tread out no wine in [their] presses; I have made [their vintage] shouting to cease.

Harvest time bring joy. But the time would come when the noises of harvest and treading would cease to be heard. The Syriac (S) version reads, “Nor shall they tread out wine in the press; nor shall men tread out wine with their feet; for I have made the vine treaders to cease.” This translation reminds us of a completely different type of treading—the atoning sacrifice of our Lord: “Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his

apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment” (ISAIAH 63:1–3).

11 Wherefore my bowels shall sound like an harp for Moab, and mine inward parts for Kirharesh.

Wherefore my bowels shall sound like an harp for Moab. Kay suggests that it is Immanuel Himself who weeps, for Moab has not accepted the mercies He has invited them to partake. Young explains that Isaiah assigns a body to God, in his excitement—but we know that God indeed has a body, “Did God also have such tenderness toward Moab, that ancient enemy of His chosen ones? At a later time Isaiah becomes emboldened sufficiently to ascribe bowels to God. ‘Where,’ he asks, ‘is thy zeal and thy strength, the wounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me? Are they restrained?’ (ISAIAH 63:15b).” ¶ *And mine inward parts for Kirharesh.* The Syriac (S) version reads, “And my soul for the fortified walls which will be destroyed.” The Douay translation, “And my inward parts for the brick wall.”

12 And it shall come to pass, when it is seen that Moab is weary on the high place, that he shall come to his sanctuary to pray; but he shall not prevail.

And it shall come to pass, when it is seen that Moab is weary on the high place. Henry explains, “Men are generally so stupid that they will not believe, till they are made to see, the vanity of idols and of all creature-confidences, nor will come off from them till they are made weary of them. But, when he is weary of his high places, he will not go, as he should, to God’s sanctuary, but to *his* sanctuary, to the temple of Chemosh, the principal idol of Moab (so it is generally understood); and he shall pray there to as little purpose, and as little to his own case and satisfaction, as he did in his high places; for, whatever honours idolaters give to their idols, they do not thereby make them at all the better able to help them.” ¶ *That he shall come to his sanctuary to pray; but he shall not prevail.* The Targum (T) reads, “He shall enter his idol-temple to pray, yet he shall not prevail.” Cheyne says, “The tender compassion of the prophetic writer for Moab leads us to

¹⁰ These other tangerine, lemon and orange trees were extremely productive, and were yielding fruit even after we moved back to Chile in 2014.

expect that some happier prospect will be opened than a useless religious ceremony. Lastly, the idea of conversion as resulting from a terrible judgment lies at the very foundation of Old Testament prophecy ... Ewald has with great sagacity restored what in all probability embodies the sense of the lost apodosis:— ‘Then shall Moab be ashamed of Kemosh his confidence, and turn unto Jehovah.’” While such creative interpretation is doubtful for the time of Moab, it is true that the day will come when all the world will be ashamed, who have leaned on any false gods, no-gods who cannot save. Jeremiah has, “And Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh, as the house of Israel was ashamed of Bethel their confidence” (Jeremiah 48:13).

13 This [is] the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning Moab since that time.

Up to here we read about a vision that Isaiah had received regarding Moab in the past, but now we read that the time will quickly come for its fulfillment.

Delitzsch says, “The *massa* [מַשָּׂא, i.e., *burden*, that commenced in ISAIAH 15] is now brought to a close, and there follows an epilogue which fixes the term of the fulfilment of what is not predicted now for the first time.”

14 But now the LORD hath spoken, saying, Within three years, as the years of an hireling, and the glory of Moab shall be contemned, with all that great multitude; and the remnant [shall be] very small [and] feeble. ✓

✓ or, not many

But now the LORD hath spoken, saying, Within three years, as the years of an hireling, and the glory of Moab shall be contemned. To contemn means to despise, to treat with contempt or scorn (see Webster). Rawlinson,

leaning on Kay, gives the idea of a hireling as someone who is working under a contract that stipulates a given amount of pay for a specific period of time: “A hireling would not consent to serve a day longer than his contract bound him, nor would his master consent that he should serve a day short of it.” While the beginning of the fulfillment may have begun at the time of Isaiah, from Jeremiah 48:16 it is clear that the prophecy against Moab had still not fully taken place—but would soon be: “The calamity of Moab *is* near to come, and his affliction hasteth fast.” Delitzsch explains, “Unfortunately, we know nothing certain as to the time at which the three years commence. The question whether it was Shalmanassar, Sargon, or Sennacherib who treated the Moabites so harshly, is one that we cannot answer. In Herodotus (2:141), Sennacherib is called ‘king of the Arabians and Assyrians;’ and Moab might be included in the Arabians. In any case, after the fulfilment of Isaiah’s prophecy in the Assyrian times, there was still a portion left, the fulfilment of which, according to Jeremiah 48, was reserved for the Chaldeans.” And since so many of these prophecies have a latter-day component, we can expect this to be the case with this burden, also. ¶ *With all that great multitude; and the remnant [shall be] very small [and] feeble.* This is a curious phrase when referring to a nation other than Israel, *the remnant*. Delitzsch suggests that the “...history of the nations is but the shadow of the history of Israel.” Rawlinson, leaning on Reverend George Adam Smith, has: “Moab seems to have offered a very slight resistance to Asshur-bani-pal” (History of Asshur-bani-pal, p. 259). Barnes speaks of Moab at the time he wrote his commentary back in 1838, “All travelers concur in the general desolation of that country which was once so thickly studded with towns, and that abounded so richly in flocks, and produced so luxuriantly the grape. It is now strewn with ruins. All the cities of Moab have disappeared.”

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Isaiah 17

Syria and Ephraim—to their hurt—had banded together to fight against Judah (see ISAIAH 7). Judah was saved, but not because of the righteousness of King Ahaz. The Lord would leave a remnant of Judah and Israel who in the latter days would stay on the LORD—not on idols or on man. The most beautiful part of this verse is the center of the chiasmus focusing on the turnabout of the children of Jacob (both portions of divided Israel) in the last days: “At that day shall a man look to his Maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the Holy One of Israel. And he shall not look to the altars, the work of his hands, neither shall respect that which his fingers have made, either the groves, or the images” (ISAIAH 17:8). Most of this chapter is about Judah and Israel, rather than about Damascus (the capital of Syria). If we recall from ISAIAH 7, Ahaz, king of Israel, had preferred to form an alliance with Assyria when threatened by the Syro-Ephraimite coalition. The end of the chapter (ISAIAH 17:12–14) seems to reference the defeat of Assyria, as well as a latter-day allusion the nations gathering against Jerusalem for no avail, as the Holy One of Israel would step in to save her.

vv. 1–5. Syria is to be destroyed. Only flocks shall be left in her land and graze undisturbed. Syria had been a fortress for Ephraim (Northern Kingdom) but this would no longer be the case. Like Syria, the glory of Israel would cease.

1 ¶ THE burden of Damascus. Behold, Damascus is taken away from [being] a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap.

THE burden of Damascus. The Targum (Ⲯ) paraphrase has a bolder figure here, “The burden of the cup of cursing to give Damascus¹ to drink.” From the ISBE narrative, we note that “In 773 Assyria again invaded the territory of Damascus. Tiglath-pileser III (745–727 BC) pushed vigorously westward, and in 738 Rezin of Damascus paid tribute. A year or two later he revolted, and attempted in concert with Pekah of Israel, to coerce Judah into joining an anti-Assyrian league (2 Kings 15:37; 16:5; ISAIAH 7). His punishment was swift and decisive. In 734 the Assyrians advanced and laid siege to Damascus, which fell in 732. Rezin was executed, his kingdom was overthrown.” In 2 Kings 16 we read how **Ahaz**, king of Judah, sought the help of Assyria when threatened by a coalition of Syria and Ephraim: “So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglathpileser king of Assyria, saying, I am thy servant and thy son: come up, and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, which rise up against me. And Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king’s house, and sent it for a present to the king of Assyria. And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him: for the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, and took it, and carried the people of it captive to Kir, and slew

Rezin” (2 Kings 16:7–9, see ISAIAH 7). In Jeremiah we read, “Concerning Damascus. Hamath is confounded, and Arpad: for they have heard evil tidings: they are fainthearted; there is sorrow on the sea; it cannot be quiet. Damascus is waxed feeble, and turneth herself to flee, and fear hath seized on her: anguish and sorrows have taken her, as a woman in travail. How is the city of praise not left, the city of my joy! Therefore her young men shall fall in her streets, and all the men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the LORD of hosts. And I will kindle a fire in the wall of Damascus, and it shall consume the palaces of Benhadad” (Jeremiah 49:23–27). ¶ *Behold, Damascus is taken away from [being] a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap.* The Douay translation from the Vulgate (ⲱ) has, “Behold, Damascus shall cease to be a city, and shall be as a ruinous heap of stones.” Rawlinson has, “According to Vitranga, Damascus has been destroyed oftener than any other town; but it has a wonderful power of rising again from the ashes. Probably a destruction by Sargon is here intended.” Luther speaks about Damascus standing in for the whole nation: “It was customary with the prophets to take a part for the whole, so as to include under the destruction of the metropolis the fate of the whole nation; for what must ordinary towns expect when the citadel of the kingdom has been stormed?” Furthermore, the metropolis of the nations are often their pride. So it was, for instance, in the hideous attacks against the USA that took place on 11 September 2001, that the pride of the USA was wounded.

2 The cities of Aroer [are] forsaken: they shall be for flocks, which shall lie down, and none shall make [them] afraid.

The cities of Aroer [are] forsaken. The LXX (Ⲅ) does away with the reference to either a city or Aroer here,

¹ In Chile, *damascos* is the word used for *apricots*.

“Abandoned forever.” Delitzsch explains: “There were two *Aroers*: an old Amoritish city allotted to the tribe of Reuben, viz., ‘Aroer on the Arnon’ (Deuteronomy 2:36; 3:12, etc.); and an old Ammonitish one, allotted to the tribe of Gad, viz., ‘Aroer before Rabbah’ (Rabbath, Ammon, Joshua 13:25). The ruins of the former are *Arair*, on the lofty northern bank of the *Mugib*; but the situation of the latter has not yet been determined with certainty ... The name of Aroer was ominous, and what its name indicated would happen to the cities in its circuit. ערער means ‘to lay bare,’ to pull down

(Jeremiah 51:58); and עריעי, ערער signifies a stark-naked condition, a state of desolation and solitude.

After ISAIAH 17:1 has threatened Damascus in particular, and ISAIAH 17:2 has done the same to Israel, ISAIAH 17:3 comprehends them both. Ephraim loses the fortified cities which once served it as defences, and Damascus loses its rank as a kingdom. Those that are left of Aram, who do not fall in the war, become like the proud citizens of the kingdom of Israel, i.e., they are carried away into captivity. All this was fulfilled under Tiglath-pileser.” Barnes has, “Gesenius supposes (‘Commentary *in loc.*’) that the phrase ‘the cities of Aroer’ means the cities round about Aroer, and that were connected with it, similar to the phrase ‘daughters of a city.’ This city he supposes was near the river Arnon, within the limits of Moab, and that the prediction here was fulfilled by Tiglath-pileser, when he carried away the inhabitants of Galilee, Gilead, and other places mentioned in 2 Kings 15:29. There can be no doubt that it was under the jurisdiction of Damascus.” Naegelsbach offers yet another explanation regarding Aroer: “The Prophet makes the Syrian capital his starting point, announcing to it first that it will be reduced to a place of ruin (ISAIAH 17:1). From there he turns to the territory of Israel, and traverses first east Jordan Israel to its extremest point (ISAIAH 17:2), then passes over to west Jordan, and then returns back to Damascus (ISAIAH 17:3). Thus he describes a circuit, carries the destruction over Gilead to Ephraim and thence back to Damascus, so that thus Ephraim becomes as Damascus and Damascus as Ephraim; thus both, as they are politically closely united, appear joined in a common ruin ... Three cities of Old Testament mentioned are called by the name Aroer: (1) a city of Judah (1 Samuel 30:28) which cannot by any sense be meant here; (2) a city in the tribe of Gad, which according to Joshua 13:25 (compare Judges 11:13) lay ‘before Rabbah’; (3) a city in the tribe of Reuben, situated on the north bank of the Arnon (Deuteronomy 2:36; Joshua 12:2; 13:9, 16; Judges 11:26; 2 Kings 10:33, and often). But if the Prophet meant only *one* of the two Aroers, then we miss an element that is of importance in the connection of thought of our passage. Are both Aroers meant, then the

Southern one, on the bank of Arnon, must be one of them. But in that case the words ‘cities of Arnon’ involve the sense: the *entire* east Jordan territory. But also the etymological primary sense (ערער = *nudus*, ‘bare,’ עריי *inops*, ‘poor’) recommended the mention of the name of these cities. So that it thus seems to have been chosen for a threefold reason. From Damascus the judgment of God moves southward like a tempest or a hail cloud though Gilead to rebound from the mountain chain of Abarim and be deflected thereby westward across the Jordan into the territory of Ephraim. Thus Gilead becomes unfit for human habitation. Only herds of animals stop there, that can repose without fear of disturbance.” ¶ *They shall be for flocks, which shall lie down, and none shall make [them] afraid.* The Targum (ܬ) has a clear explanation here, “They shall be for dwelling-places for flocks of sheep; they shall lie down, and none shall make them to move away.” Such shall be the nature of the desolation, that Gill writes, “the flocks of sheep, timorous creatures, easily frightened; but so great should be the depopulation now, there would be no man upon the spot, or any pass by, to give them any disturbance.”

3 The fortress also shall cease from Ephraim, and the kingdom from Damascus, and the remnant of Syria: they shall be as the glory of the children of Israel, saith the LORD of hosts.

The fortress also shall cease from Ephraim, and the kingdom from Damascus, and the remnant of Syria: The sense I got from the AV, is that Damascus had been there, to the north of Ephraim, to be the first in line of attack, and in this fashion, had been a wall of protection or a fortress for Ephraim. With the destruction of Damascus, Ephraim would have no such protection in the future, and the invading forces from the north, in this case Assyria, would be able to come all the way down to Ephraim unimpaired. Barnes well writes, “Shall come to an end; *shall cease* to be, for so the word

שבת² is often used, Genesis 8:22; ISAIAH 24:8; Lamentations 5:15.” *The remnant of Syria*, explains Barnes, is “That which is left of the kingdom of Syria after the capital Damascus shall be destroyed.” ¶ *They shall be as the glory of the children of Israel, saith the LORD of hosts.* The LXX (Ϟ) reads, “For thou art no better than the children of Israel, *even* than their glory; thus saith the Lord of Hosts.” In other words, as the children of Israel (Northern Kingdom) had lost their glory, so would the people of Damascus.

² *Sabbath*, and thus also, “to cease, to desist, leave off” (Gesenius).

4 And in that day it shall come to pass, [that] the glory of Jacob shall be made thin, and the fatness of his flesh shall wax lean.

And in that day it shall come to pass, [that] the glory of Jacob shall be made thin. The Syriac (S) version has, “And in that day it shall come to pass that the glory of Jacob shall wane.” There is an allusion to the punishment that would come upon all of the tribes of Israel so only a small remnant would remain. ¶ *And the fatness of his flesh shall wax lean.* The Targum (T) has, “And the riches of his glory shall be carried away.” Calvin here explains, “When he next threatens them with *leanness*, his object is to reprove their indolence, as the Prophets frequently reprove them for their fatness (Jeremiah 5:28; 1:11). On account of their prosperity and of the fertility of the country, they became proud, as horses that are fat and excessively pampered grow restive. Hence also they are elsewhere called ‘fat cows’ (Amos 4:1). But however fierce and stubborn they might be, God threatens that he will take away their fatness with which they were puffed up.”

5 And it shall be as when the harvestman gathereth the corn, and reapeth the ears with his arm; and it shall be as he that gathereth ears in the valley of Rephaim.

And it shall be as when the harvestman gathereth the corn,³ and reapeth the ears with his arm. Most exegetes suggest that with the ease that those who harvest twist and remove the ears of standing grains and gather them for the harvest, with that same ease would the children of Jacob be harvested and removed, despite their great numbers. Gill gives life to the metaphor: “That is, with one hand he gathers the standing corn into his fist, and then reaps it with his other arm . . . just as a harvestman cuts down the corn, and with as much ease and quick dispatch; they being no more able to stand before him than a field of corn before the reaper!” Alexander prefers to think of חֲסִידֵי to “the whole act of reaping.” חֲסִידֵי stands for any *standing grain* (Gesenius, HAL).

³ Not maize, but rather *grains* such as wheat, oats, etc. In the AV the word corn always means grains. This is something that I learned from Rabbi Shaye J.D. Cohen. For instance, to note two examples, where in Wycliffe the term wheat is used in Genesis 27:28 and 27:32, in the KJV we have the word corn, instead. Geneva also uses wheat. The AV followed after the Bishops’ Bible in using the word corn instead of wheat. Most Bibles today use the word wheat or grain (e.g., ABP {LXX (Θ)}, AMP, ASV, BBE, CEV, ESV, GNB, GW, HCSB, ISV, JUB, LEB, LITV, MKJV, NASB, as well as most Spanish editions).

¶ *And it shall be as he that gathereth ears in the valley of Rephaim.* Perhaps this is equivalent to saying the San Joaquín Valley in California in the twentieth century, with all its vineyards, fruit trees, agronomic and vegetable crops, as well as grains. Rephaim has also been called the valley of the giants by some. It was supposed to be close to Jerusalem (DBL). Gill says that “[Rephaim] was a valley not far from Jerusalem, as Josephus says; who also calls it the valley of the giants: it is thought to have been a very fruitful place, where the ears of corn were very large and heavy, and so great care was taken in gathering and gleaning that none be lost . . .” Henry writes, “The corn is the glory of the fields (Psalms 65:13); but, when it is reaped and gone, where is the glory? . . . And the victorious army, like the careful husbandmen in the valley of Rephaim, where the corn was extraordinary, would not, if they could help it, leave an ear behind, would lose nothing that they could lay their hands on.” Young has, “Through the field of standing corn the reapers go to pluck the harvest grain, and with their arms reach out to take the ears. Once the ears are taken, only the stalks remain. So will the glory of Jacob be at the time when the Lord visits it in judgment.” One may then wonder if Isaiah meant that it would go from producing rich abundance to giving a shadow of what it used to in former days.

vv. 6–9. A remnant would remain, which represents a remnant of Ephraim as well as of Judah. In the last days the children of Jacob would look to God and have faith in Him, and not in the idols they had built.

6 ¶ Yet gleaning grapes shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive tree, two [or] three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four [or] five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof, saith the LORD God of Israel.

Yet gleaning grapes shall be left in it, The Targum (T) has: “Yet a gleaning shall be left in it.” As Rawlinson and several versions of the Bible point out, the Hebrew (אֵל) simply has, “Yet gleanings shall be left in it” and there is no mention of grapes. The ellipsis could be filled with the word *fruit*, rather than grapes: “Yet gleaning *fruit* shall be left in it.” A small remnant would remain of both Ephraim and Judah. ¶ *As the shaking of an olive tree, two [or] three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four [or] five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof, saith the LORD God of Israel.* The Targum (T)⁴ has an interpretative paraphrase here, “Two or three berries at the top of the uppermost bough,

⁴ Stenning.

four or five in the straggling (literally, *rebellious*) branch; so shall the righteous be left solitary in the midst of the world among the kingdoms, saith the Lord God of Israel.” ¶ The Talmud tradition (Seder Zera’im, Mishna, Hallah Chapter 3) suggests that there is a regular harvest after which a few (probably hard to reach) olive berries are left to be gleaned by the poor by striking off (probably with a rod). Thus the remnant shall be few, and interestingly, the remnant will be positioned in a place difficult for man to get to. Because of the chiasm, it seems as if ISAIAH 17:6 is tied to ISAIAH 17:9, and the allusion is to the remnant of Ephraim and Judah, rather than that of Damascus. In this case, the idea of the LORD preserving some of Ephraim in a difficult place to get, could well represent the children of Lehi, as well as the Lost Tribes: one of them in the far branches, and the latter on the topmost boughs. ¶ Gills, following Kimhi, rather explains that Jerusalem is out of reach for Assyria, “Kimhi applies this to Jerusalem, which was the highest part of the land of Israel; and what was in it the hand of the king of Assyria could not reach.”

7 At that day shall a man look to his Maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the Holy One of Israel.

At that day shall a man look to his Maker. Some exegetes have not understood this verse, because they have failed to see that it stands as the center of a chiasm, along with verse ISAIAH 17:8, as an allusion to latter-day hope. In the latter days the children of Israel would turn to their Maker, and acknowledge that He, even He, Jesus is the promised Messiah. The expression to *look to his Maker* has reference to man’s turning toward the Lord and putting his trust in Him. ¶ *And his eyes shall have respect to the Holy One of Israel.* And man will love Christ, and know that He is the Holy One of Israel. The testimony of Jesus will be in their bosoms and will rejoice in the Savoir of mankind, to follow Him and do His will. This is in contrast to what follows.

8 And he shall not look to the altars, the work of his hands, neither shall respect [that] which his fingers have made, either the groves, or the images. ✓

✓ or, sun images

And he shall not look to the altars, the work of his hands. This refers to altars built up to idols, rather than to the Holy One of Israel. ¶ *Neither shall respect [that] which his fingers have made, either the groves, or the images.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Or stay himself upon that which his fingers have prepared, neither upon the

groves⁵ nor upon the sun-images.” In terms of groves, most think of these as trees planted in hills, but Faussett has, “A symbolical tree is often found in Assyrian inscriptions, representing the hosts of heaven (‘Saba’), answering to Ashteroth or Astarte, the queen of heaven, as Baal or Bel is the king. Hence the expression, ‘image of the grove,’ is explained (2 Kings 21:7).” Whether they be sun-images or any other type of idol, there is false security when we look to—or putting out faith in—anything other than God, whether the strength of man, nature, idols or intellectual idolatry is meant.

vv. 9–11. The strong cities would be devastated as the people had not trusted in God. There would prepare for a great harvest but would be disappointed. The focus is on the children of Jacob in general. In ISAIAH 17:11 the Targum Ⲯ has, “After that ye were sanctified to be a people, there ye made your works despicable.” It was the children of Jacob who were sanctified to be a people.

9 ¶ In that day shall his strong cities be as a forsaken bough, and an uppermost branch, which they left because of the children of Israel: and there shall be desolation.

In that day shall his strong cities be as a forsaken bough. While keeping an allusion to the previous figure, the scene changes here. As the olive fruit that is left in the tree might feel forsaken, so will the desolation of the strong cities be in that day. Just as those who inhabited Canaan melted in fear and were conquered by the children of Jacob as they returned from Egypt, so now Ephraim and Judah would be overcome by Assyria and Babylonia, except for a remnant. Lowth is a strong proponent of the LXX (Ⲯ)⁶ version, “The translation of the LXX has happily preserved what seems to be the true reading of the text, as it stood in the copies of their time; though the words are now transposed, either in the text, or in their version.” The Tanakh has, “In that day, their fortress cities shall be like the deserted sites which the Horesh and the Amir [note: Septuagint reads ‘the Amorites and the Hivites’] abandoned because of the Israelites; and there shall be desolation.” ¶ *And an uppermost branch, which they left because of the children of Israel: and there shall be desolation.* In a footnote, the Douay (Ⲫ) suggests, that this would be

⁵ אֲשֵׁרָה, “neither upon the Asherah,” or tree for idolatrous worship.

⁶ The LXX (Ⲯ) has Ἀπορραῖοι καὶ οἱ Εὐαῖοι: “In that day thy cities shall be deserted, as the Amorites and the Evaeans (Hivites) deserted theirs.”

equivalent to the desolation left by the children of Israel, when they came into the land of Canaan. The Syriac (S) has, “Which was left destitute before the children of Israel; so you will become a desolation.” Calvin insightfully comments as follows, referring to the contrast between Leviticus 26:8 (Israel obedient, *Rain in Due Season*) and Deuteronomy 32:30 (Israel disobedient), “Here the particle אֲשֶׁר, I have no doubt, denotes comparison; and therefore I have rendered it *in like manner as*, which makes the statement of the Prophet to be, in connection with what had been already said, that the people would tremble and flee and be scattered, in the same manner as God had formerly driven out the ancient inhabitants.”

10 Because thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength, therefore shalt thou plant pleasant plants, and shalt set it with strange slips:

Because thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength. Israel had often turned to idolatry and the Lord reminds her that He is the only God capable of saving, as the dumb idols would not be able to do so. Apostasy is the act of forgetting God, the very Rock of our Strength; the God of our Salvation. ¶ *Therefore shalt thou plant pleasant plants, and shalt set it with strange slips.* When the Lord brought Israel into the land of Canaan, He warned His people not to marry outside of the covenant, nor to take upon themselves strange or foreign wives (e.g., Exodus 34:11–16). Israel was unable to keep this commandment (e.g., Judges 3:5–6). Grapevines and many fruit trees are grafted. Roots have a number of functions, such as reduce or increase plant vigor, or fight soil borne diseases. These root materials, however, often do not produce the best fruit, so they are grafted with a fruit producing material. The expression *strange slips* means plants grafted with exotic materials that are not necessarily good for fruit production: the marriage of Israel with alien peoples not of the covenant as well as unholy alliances with other nations. Several expositors focus on the expense of bringing in these special grafts from far away. Barnes opines: “Though they should be at great pains and expense in cultivating their land, yet the enemy would come in and make it desolate.” No expenses were spared in the cultivation of these, but the growth would be for naught.

11 In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish: [but] the harvest [shall

be] a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow. ✓

✓ or, removed in the day of inheritance, and there shall be deadly sorrow

In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish: The Syriac (S) renders it, “On the day that you plant them, they shall put forth blossoms, and in the morning your seed shall flourish.” Despite how vigorously the plant would grow thanks to her unholy alliances, little good would come out of it. ¶ *[But] the harvest [shall be] a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow.* Despite what appears to be a promising harvest, it will instead be a time of grief and sorrow. Deuteronomy 28:39 warns disobedient Israel: “Thou shalt plant vineyards, and dress them, but shalt neither drink of the wine, nor gather the grapes; for the worms shall eat them” (see also Deuteronomy 28:30, *Rain in Due Season*). Calvin has, “A similar punishment is also threatened against the wicked in general terms, that ‘in vain do they rise early, and vex themselves with unremitted toil;’ for they gain nothing from it (Psalm 127:2).”

vv. 12–14. Although Assyria, perhaps representative of the nations, would rush against Jerusalem in violence, they would not prevail against her, but should be blown away by the wind as tumbleweed. Likewise, in the latter days, when all the nations come upon Jerusalem, the LORD will come to her protection once again. Many exegetes feel that these verses have come out of nowhere. However, if one understands the chiasmic pattern of this chapter, it becomes clear that these three verses bring us back to the first three or four verses of the chapter, and have to do with the punishment Assyria would receive, the same Assyria that had attacked the Syro-Ephraimite coalition.

12 ¶ Woe to the multitude ✓ of many people, [which] make a noise like the noise of the seas; and to the rushing of nations, [that] make a rushing like the rushing of mighty ✓ waters!

✓ or, noise

✓ ✓ or, many

Woe to the multitude of many people, [which] make a noise like the noise of the seas. The Targum (T) has, along with the margin ¶, “Woe to the multitude of many people, which make a noise like the noise of the sea.” Luther explains that the multitudes are the Assyrians, “This is the comfort for the king and the people of the Jews, that Assyria, about to lay waste the plantings and

about to attempt to destroy the kingdom of Judah, will not achieve it but will itself perish. Yet it will come with an incalculable number of people, just like the sea, which cannot be contained at all when it breaks through, and will come with great turbulence and noise, as of rampaging waters.” In ISAIAH 7 we hear that the waters would come to the neck of Jerusalem. ¶ *And to the rushing of nations, [that] make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters!* The Douay (V) has, “And the tumult of crowds, like the noise of many waters.” Henry writes, “The Assyrian army was made up out of divers nations: it was *the multitude of many people*, by which weight they hoped to carry the cause. They were very noisy, like the roaring of the seas; they talked big, hectoring, and threatened, to frighten God’s people from resisting them, and all their allies from sending in to their aid. Sennacherib and Rabshakeh, in their speeches and letters, made a mighty noise to strike a terror upon Hezekiah and his people; the nations that followed them *made a rushing like the rushing of many waters*, and those mighty ones, that threaten to bear down all before them and carry away everything that stands in their way.” In the last days it will be many nations who will pour into Israel, but the LORD of lords and King of kings will step in to rescue His people Israel.

13 The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters: but [God] shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing⁷ before the whirlwind.

✓ or, thistle-down⁷

The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters: but [God] shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off. The word *God* is supplied to fill the ellipsis. The Syriac (S) version deletes the repeated allusion to the rushing waters: “He shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off.” Henderson would translate as: “As for the nations, like the roaring of many waters they may roar, But he shall rebuke them, and they shall flee away.” ¶ *And shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind.* The Douay (V) has, “And he shall be carried away as the dust of the mountains before the wind.” ¶ *And like a rolling thing before the whirlwind.*

גִּלְגָּל, and as a rolling thing, refers to the tumbleweed גִּלְגָּל. For the LORD will expel the invading forces as easily as the wind will blow the tumbleweed.

14 And behold at eveningtide trouble; [and] before the morning he [is] not. This [is] the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us.

And behold at eveningtide trouble; [and] before the morning he [is] not. The LXX (G) reads, “Towards evening, and there shall be grief; before the morning, and he shall not be.” The Dead Sea Scrolls (Q) has an *and before he is not*: “... before the morning and he is not.” ¶ This is an allusion to the approaching Assyrian armies that encamped round about Jerusalem and were a terror to the inhabitants of the citadel; yet by dawn, they were destroyed by the angel of the LORD. Thus, at eventide trouble and fear, and by morning the armies are not: “Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses” (ISAIAH 37:36). ¶ *This [is] the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us.* Henry writes, “And this is written for the encouragement of the people of God in all ages, when they find themselves an unequal match for their enemies; for *this is the portion of those that spoil us*, they shall themselves be spoiled.”

Delitzsch argues against ISAIAH 17:12–14 from this prophecy: “If the substance of the *massâ Dammeseek* (the oracle concerning Damascus) had been restricted to the prophecy contained in the name Mahershalal, the element of promise so characteristic of the prophecies against the nations of the world would be entirely wanting. But the shout of triumph, ‘This is the portion,’ etc., supplied a terminal point, beyond which the *massa* could not go without the sacrifice of its unity. We are therefore warranted in regarding ISAIAH 18:1–7 as an independent prophecy, notwithstanding its commencement, which apparently forms a continuation of the fourth strophe of ISAIAH 17:1–14.” Cheyne LAO has, “Though most recent critics connect these three verses (vv. 12–14) with chapter 18 the concluding words of ISAIAH 17:14 are decidedly against this; besides which there are no phraseological affinities in vv. 12–14 to chapter 18, and the former passage describes the ruin of the enemy under an image which is clearly inconsistent with those in chapter 18.”

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⁷ Tumbleweed (Tanakh)

Isaiah 18

Some students of the Scriptures are honest enough to say they are lost when it comes to ISAIAH 18. Perhaps no one states it better than Lowth: “This is one of the most obscure prophecies in the whole book of Isaiah. The subject of it, the end and design of it, the people to whom it is addressed, the history to which it belongs, the person who sends the messengers, and the nation to whom the messengers are sent; are all obscure and doubtful.” Delitzsch quotes Böttcher as saying that ISAIAH 18 is “perhaps the most difficult chapter in the whole of the Old Testament.” Calvin, being lost says, “We must resort to probable conjectures.” In other words, the world is lost on the subject of this chapter. ¶ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints provides the much needed clarity. Elder Joseph Fielding Smith stated: “No one understands this chapter, but the Latter-day Saints.” Gratefully, the Brethren have had much to say about it. ¶ One man who wrote shortly before the restoration of the Gospel and who was undoubtedly inspired in regards to ISAIAH 18, was Samuel Horsley, from Great Britain: “[ISAIAH 58] Is a description of some people, or another, destined to be principal instruments in the hand of Providence, in the great work of the re-settlement of the Jews in the Holy Land; a description of that people, by characters by which they will be evidently known, when the time arrives ... the time of the completion of the prophecy was very remote, when it was delivered, and is yet future [these words were written in 1799], being indeed the season of the Second Advent of our Lord.” ¶ This chapter is about the assistance that would come from a faraway nation who would help restore the Jews to the Holy Land. ISAIAH 18 forms a chiasmus, with news about the rescue of Israel at the ends of the chapter, and its scattering in the middle. Some Jewish Rabbis also correctly understand this chapter as being a restoration of the Jewish people to the land of Israel. These words are intimately related to ISAIAH 27, where some of the very same allusions about the restoration are utilized.

vv. 1–7. Samuel Horsley understood this prophecy was about a faraway nation that would help restore the Jews¹ (and obviously the rest of Israel should be included). Modern-day prophets have spoken of ISAIAH 18 with much power, especially Apostle Hyrum Smith and his grandson, President Joseph Fielding Smith. The latter asserted: “This chapter is clearly a reference to the sending forth of the missionaries to the nations of the earth to gather again this people who are scattered and peeled. The ensign has been lifted upon the mountains, and the work of gathering has been going on for over one hundred years.”² Elder Bruce R. McConkie had this to say: “And who shall carry the message to the world? Those to whom it is first revealed and those who first believe its doctrines and obey its ordinances. To them Isaiah’s word is: ‘Go, ye swift messengers,’ go ye elders of Israel, go ye messengers of the kingdom, ‘to a nation scattered and peeled, to a people terrible from

their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden down, whose land the rivers have spoiled!’ Let the word go forth! And what counsel hath Isaiah for those who hear the word? ‘All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he [Israel’s God] lifteth an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye.’ (ISAIAH 18:2–3.) That ensign, the fulness of the everlasting gospel, has now been raised; and that trumpet, the gospel trumpet, is now sounding its clarion call.”³

1 ¶ WOE to the land shadowing with wings, which [is] beyond the rivers of Ethiopia:

WOE to the land shadowing with wings. Not woe, but rather, hail, greetings, take heed, or pay attention, from the Hebrew **הוֹי**. The other chapters to the distant nations begin with the word **בְּשָׁא**, or **burden**. A complete misunderstanding of this chapter has led not a few to assume that **הוֹי** is also a burden, prophecy of doom, lament, or warning as it is in ISAIAH 1:4; 5:8 and many others. In this verse **הוֹי** is rather a *greeting*, or a call to pay careful heed or attention. President Joseph

¹ Horsley, Samuel (1733–1806). *Critical Disquisitions on the Eighteenth Chapter of Isaiah*. In a Letter to Edward King, Esq. F.R.S. A.S. by Samuel Lord Bishop of Rochester, F.R.S. A.S. Published by London: Printed by J. Nichols for J. Robson, 1799, 108 pages. I now own an electronic copy of this book, based on the 1800 copy made in Philadelphia. In the first 22 pages, Horsley politely sets out the purpose for his treatise, and begins his exposition on p. 22.

² Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Signs of the Times*. “Restoration of Israel and Judah.” Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News Press, 1952. Talk delivered October 28, 1942, Barratt Hall, pp. 50–57. The first part of the talk is included here and the second in the notes on ISAIAH 49.

³ McConkie, Bruce R. *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1985. p. 536.

Fielding Smith⁴ explained: “The chapter shows clearly that no woe was intended, but rather a greeting ... A correct translation would be, ‘**Hail** to the land in the shape of wings.’” Henderson says: “One of the grand sources of the misinterpretation of this chapter has been the false idea which many have attached to the interjection **הוֹי**. Instead of rendering it *ho!* as a call, summoning attention, which the context requires, most translators have improperly [translated it as a threatening term]. Gesenius gives this verse along with two others (Zechariah 2:10; ISAIAH 55:1) as an example of an *admonition* rather than a lamentation or a woe. Barnes suggests that **הוֹי** “may be a mere interjection or *salutation*, and would be appropriately rendered by ‘**Ho!**’” (emphasis added). Skinner, likewise says, “The word rendered *Ah*⁵ is here neither a ‘cry of pity’ nor (as usually in Isaiah) of indignation. It is simply a *particle of salutation*.” Horsley has, “**הוֹי אֶרֶץ** (**Ho** [to the **Land**]), Sometimes it is an exclamation of surprise; and very often it is simply compellative⁶ of persons at a distance.” Young also has, regarding **הוֹי**, “... it may simply be designed to point out the *great distance* of the people of whom he is about to speak. At any rate, the language is arresting, and prepares the hearer for a description of the nation to be addressed” (emphasis added). And indeed, this is what we are speaking off: a people at a great distance, even in the American continent, that are being prepared to assist the nation referred to in this prophecy. Ironside has: “The word here translated ‘woe’ is the same as that rendered ‘**Ho**’ in ISAIAH 55:1. It is a call to attention. Jehovah is summoning this great power lying beyond the rivers of Ethiopia to come to the aid of His people [Israel]. Elder Hyrum Smith, the Prophet’s brother, explained that North and South America where the symbols of the wings (HC, 6:322–323). Continuing with Joseph Fielding Smith’s explanation we have: “Now, do you know of any land in the shape of wings? Think of your map. About twenty-five years ago one of the current magazines printed on the cover the American continents in the shape of wings, with the body of the bird between. I have always regretted that I did not preserve this magazine. Does not this hemisphere take the shape of wings; the spread out wings of a bird?” ¶ *In the*

shape of wings has also been variously translated.⁷ For instance, the Targum (**ע**)⁸ has, “... to the land wither they come in ships from a far country.” Or, to quote the translation used by Gill and many others, “... to the land to which they come in ships from a far country, whose sails are stretched out, as an eagle that flies with its wings.” ¶ *Which [is] beyond the rivers of Ethiopia.*

The key word here is *beyond* (**עֵבֶר**). Henderson explains that such Hebrew expression “always signifies what lies *beyond* some sea, river &c. which is supposed to be between it and the person speaking ... Hence **עֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן**,⁹ and **עֵבֶר הַנָּהָר**,¹⁰ uniformly signify the *opposite*, i.e., the *east side* of the **Jordan** and the **Euphrates**,¹¹ when used by a writer or speaker living to the west of these rivers. The instances in which it marks the countries to the west of them, either contain some qualifying term, or place the speaker on the east side.” As we shall see, the body of water spoken off here is the Atlantic Ocean, and the land is the American Continent on the other side of it. Calvin says, “These voyages, there is reason to believe, were not made to any place near at hand, but to a distant country.” The Hebrew (**מ**) uses beyond **Cush**, **כוּשׁ**, that is, beyond the rivers or waters of Cush. Gill says, “It is very difficult to determine what land is here meant.” Henry says: “Interpreters are very much at a loss where to find this land that lies beyond the rivers of Cush.” Henry further explains that one idea is that of a nation that attempts to protect the Jews ‘under *the shadow of his wings*.’” Horsley provides for several possibilities of a land or lands that are beyond Cush, but does not settle upon one of them: “Not more to any part of Europe, or Africa, than to the whole eastern coast of North and South America ... Yet the people of the country are marked, as will appear, by characters, by which they will be distinguished from all other people of the earth, when the time comes.” ¶ In Conference, President Joseph Fielding Smith said, “[America] is the land ‘shadowing

⁴ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Signs of the Times*. “Restoration of Israel and Judah.” Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News Press, 1952. Talk delivered October 28, 1942, Barratt Hall, pp. 50–57. The first part of the talk is included here and the second in the notes on ISAIAH 49.

⁵ Quoting from the Revised Version.

⁶ *Compellative* perhaps means, “to draw attention of,” from the word *compel*.

⁷ “Horsley suggests that **צִלְצֵל** may well stand for shelter rather than shadows, and that would certainly fit well, also. The land that provides *shelter* or *refuge*. Horsley feels that by the repetition of the root **צִל** that the word takes upon itself a stronger meaning. And certainly it can be said that the American continent has been a *land of shelter* to the oppressed as “the shadow of wings is a very usual image in the prophetic language, for protection afforded by the stronger to the weak. God’s protection to his servants is described by their being safe under the shadow of his wings. And in this passage, the broad shadowing wings may be intended to characterize some great people, who should be famous for the protection they should give to those whom they received into their alliance; and I cannot but think this the most simple and natural exposition of the expression” (Horsley).

⁸ Stenning.

⁹ Beyond the Jordan.

¹⁰ Beyond the river.

¹¹ Once again, for Euphrates **הַנָּהָר**, here, *the river* **הַנָּהָר**.

with wings' spoken of by Isaiah that today is sending ambassadors by the sea to a nation scattered and peeled, which at one time was terrible in the beginning (ISAIAH 18:1–2). Now that nation is being gathered, and once again they shall be in favor with the Lord.”¹² A very interesting comment comes from Ironside, especially in reference to *the land shadowing with wings*: “Many have taken it for granted that the land shadowing with wings is Egypt, because of the winged solar disk which appears upon so many of its monuments and was really a symbol of its power and greatness. But it could be hardly be of Egypt that it lay beyond the rivers of Ethiopia when the Nile descended from Ethiopia, passed through the midst of Egypt, and emptied itself into the Mediterranean Sea in the north. Since the revival of interest in prophetic study during the last century and a half,¹³ some have thought that the symbol refers to the United States, because of the fact that on our Great Seal an eagle is represented with outstretched wings. Other nations have used the eagle upon their ensigns and coats-of-arms, but not with overshadowing wings, as it is officially used in America. Many others have assumed that, inasmuch as the reference is undoubtedly to some great maritime power, it was a prophecy of Great Britain who of old gloried in ruling the waves ... Perhaps, indeed, it might include both, and with them other nations linked together in the last great confederacy.”

2 That sendeth ambassadors by the sea,
even in vessels of bulrushes upon the
waters, [saying], Go, ye swift messengers,
to a nation scattered and peeled, ✓ to a
people terrible from their beginning
hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden
down, ✓ ✓ whose land the rivers have
spoiled! ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ or, outspread and polished

✓ ✓ or, that meteth out, and treadeth down

✓ ✓ ✓ or, despise

That sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters [saying]. Instead of bulrushes, President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “The meaning is vessels of *speed*.” In Hebrew the word is נָמָא, and we must remember that the word can be pointed more than one way. The Masoretic text (מסורה), pointed centuries after the Holy Scriptures were written,

points the word נָמָא, and is translated as *papyrus* (used to make paper and floating objects) because it absorbs water (Gesenius). But there is another word, upon which this is based, and it is נָמָא. Gesenius explains that it means “*to absorb, to drink up, to swallow*” as it is “*poetically applied to a horse as it were swallowing the ground in his rapid course*. Job 39:24, נָמָא-אָרָץ ‘he swallows the ground,’ i.e., he runs away with it.” BDB say, “Figurative of a horse in swift gallop.” May I suggest, then, that the Hebrew text (מסורה) fully supports Joseph Fielding Smith’s translation, *a vessel of speed*—either seagoing or airplane. So fast that it seems to swallowing the *ocean* יָם with its magnificent *speed*.

¶ These fast vessels, then, would come from North and South America with ambassadors of truth. Faussett suggests these ambassadors would be sent to Jerusalem.

¶ *Upon the waters*, literally, *upon the face of the waters* עַל-פְּנֵי-מַיִם, that is, on the waters’ surface.

¶ *Go, ye swift* [קָדִיִּים] *messengers*. The word *saying* is not in the Hebrew text (מסורה), but rather, it is an exhortation or command. The Vulgate (V) calls the messengers *swift angels*: “*Ite, angeli veloces ... &c.*” Horsley has, “First, the prophet calls upon these people [referred to in the first verse]; he summons them to attend to him; then he declares, for what immediate purpose they are summoned; viz. to be the carriers of a message.” Horsley goes on to explain that these are very particular people, not just any people, *for God has commissioned them with this mighty message*. One might well add that they were sent with “authority and commission” (Acts 26:12). Henderson correctly says, “The prophet calls upon these to go with all celerity ... to announce the wonderful interposition of Jehovah for the deliverance of the Jews.” Who can these be save those ordained and commissioned and entrusted to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world? All of these thoughts remind us of the words of John: “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” (Revelation 14:6–7). ¶ *To a nation scattered and peeled*. Kay has, “‘To a nation scattered’ Literally, dragged; dragged away in the net of many conqueror (Psalm 28:3).” Calvin has, “By ‘a plundered nation’ he means the Jews who were to be grievously harassed and scattered, so that no part of them escaped injury.” Ibn Ezra has, “The Israelites are meant, that have been dragged from their homes like sheep, until they were flayed from the dragging.” Rosenberg, also leaning on the Rabbis,

¹² President Joseph Fielding Smith. General Conference Reports. 1 April 1966, p. 14.

¹³ H. A. Ironside published his book on Isaiah in 1952, based on a series of lectures he gave just before his death.

explains: “They are instructed to go to Israel, which is heretofore a nation pulled by the gentile nations from all sides, and torn.” Horsley likewise explains that this refers “to a people forcibly torn from their country, and carried into captivity ... a people plundered of their wealth, and stripped of their power ... Thus both of these participles may more naturally be applied to the Jews, in their present condition, than to any other nation of any other time.” ¶ Brigham Young uses these Isaianic words “scattered and peeled” as a warning to Latter-day Saints: “You inquire if we shall stay in these [Rocky] mountains. I answer yes, as long as we please to do the will of God our Father in Heaven. If we are pleased to turn away from the holy commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ, as ancient Israel did, every man turning to his own way, we shall be scattered and peeled, driven before our enemies and persecuted, until we learn to remember the Lord our God and are willing to walk in his ways (JD 11:274).”¹⁴ ¶ *To a people terrible from their beginning hitherto.* The word *terrible* in the Hebrew (אָרָא) is: נִרְאָה, from the root יָרָא.

According to Gesenius, נִרְאָה rather means *to be feared*. Other related words include *terrible*, *dreadful*, *venerable*, and *admirable*, to name a few. It implies, then, that the people of Israel in the beginning were admired and feared. Or, as in the Targum (ܬ), “Unto a people *that was* mighty in times past, *and shall be so* in time to come.” The scriptures speak of Israel, as a chosen people, becoming a *terror*, *fear* and a *dread* upon the surrounding nations: Exodus 15:16; 23:27; Deuteronomy 2:25; 11:25; Moses 7:17; Joshua 2:9; ISAIAH 19:17; Jeremiah 32:21; and Zechariah 12:2–3. All of these promises were—and will continue to be contingent—on obedience and understanding of the very source of this power: “Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread” (ISAIAH 8:13). For a better understanding, see *Rain in Due Season*. Regarding terror, Horsley clarifies, “The word, if I mistake not, is applicable to *whatever* excites admiration, or awe, with or without any mixture of terror. There is no word in the English language which will render it universally. It must be rendered differently in different places, according to its connection. Majestic, sublime, grand, awful, and sometimes terrible ... And the sense it gives, applies more aptly to the Jews, than to any other people. They have been a people awfully remarkable, not only in the part of the world where they were settled, but, since their dispersion particularly, to the uttermost corners of the earth.” So also Ironside, who has: “They have been ‘terrible,’ or ‘dreadful,’ from their very beginning, for when they went forth as directed by the Lord, the fear

of them fell upon all nations that confronted them and their power seemed unlimited, but when they became disobedient, then disaster followed.” ¶ *A nation meted out and trodden down, whose land the rivers have spoiled!* The Targum (ܬ) renders it, “A people oppressed and robbed, whose land the nations have spoiled.” The Rabbis, explain, regarding this mighty or awesome nation, that קָוֶה can mean, among other significations, “a line for a line” or progressively punished, rather than castigated all at once (Rosenberg, leaning on Kimhi). Many translators think it should read, “whose land the rivers divide.” Certainly Israel is divided by the Jordan. Horsley has, for *meted out*, the idea of waiting expectantly for the Messiah: “It is probable, that the true reading of the Vulgate may be *ad gentem expectantem, expectactem, et conculcatem*.¹⁵ For we find the word *expectante* thus doubled, in strict conformity to the original, in the repetition of this description of the people intended, in the 7th verse.” Regarding *rivers*, however, most exegetes are of the agreement that some invading force is meant (see ISAIAH 8:7–8). So it is that Horsley has, “‘Rivers,’ i.e., the armies of conquerors, which long since have spoiled the land of the Jews ... The inundation of rivers is a frequent image in the prophetic stile, for the ravages of armies of foreign invaders.” President Joseph Fielding Smith spoke at length of the deforestation that affected the Holy Land, “Do you know of any land like that? Terrible in the beginning and later meted out and scattered, peeled and a curse upon the land? That land is Palestine ... Palestine became denuded of its forests... We read in the Scriptures of the great cedars of Lebanon, and the trees upon the mountains. These were swept off when the curse came upon the land, and the rains have washed down the soil into the valleys where the rivers have spoiled the land as Isaiah predicted.”¹⁶

3 All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye.

The Targum (ܬ) has, “All ye inhabitants of the world, and ye dwellers on the earth, when the standard is lifted up on the mountains, ye shall see the standard, and the trumpet (שׁוֹפָרָא)¹⁷ shall sound, ye shall hear of

¹⁴ Young, Brigham. *Discourses of Brigham Young*. Compiled by John A. Widtsoe. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978, p. 483.

¹⁵ Douay translation of Vulgate (V): “To a nation expecting and trodden underfoot.”

¹⁶ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Signs of the Times*. “Restoration of Israel and Judah.” Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News Press, 1952. Talk given October 28, 1942.

¹⁷ Targum (ܬ) in Mikraoth Gedoloth.

redemption.”¹⁸ Alexander also feels the verse has a future tense: “All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, shall see as it were the raising of a standard on the mountains, and shall hear as it were the blowing of a trumpet.” The horn that shall sound is the *shofar*, שופר. Kimhi explains: “So will the Israelites be gathered from all countries at the time of the salvation, and the nations will bring them and gather them as though the standard was raised and the *shofar* sounded.” Barnes has, “These are to be regarded as the words of the prophet summoning all nations to attend to that which was about to occur.” Gill writes in part, “All the men of the world are here called upon, either by the Lord, or rather by the prophet, to be eye and ear witnesses ... the news of it should ring through the earth, and be as plainly heard as when a trumpet is blown.” Horsley correctly has, “We have now heard messengers summoned. We have heard a command given to them, to go swiftly with the message. We have heard the people described to whom the message was to be carried. It might be expected, we should next hear the message given to the messengers in precise terms ... An ensign, or standard, is lifted up on the mountains—a trumpet is blown on the hills—... the trumpet of the Gospel. ... the effect of the summons, in the end, will be universal.” Elder Orson Pratt said, “The Lord, then, was to lift the ensign on a land that was far off from where the Prophet lived; and that ensign, we are told, should be set up on the mountains, and that, too, on a land shadowing with wings.”¹⁹ And also these beautiful words from Elder Orson Pratt: “... we have cause to rejoice that the Lord has lifted up His hand, and set up His standard, and raised His ensign, and called upon us to bear this ensign—this standard, to the nations of the earth, and to proclaim it in the ears of the Gentiles first; what for? That the times of the Gentiles may be fulfilled, that the fulness may come in, and then all Israel are to be saved, as it is written, ‘There shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.’ Therefore, we are the people identified with the Gentiles, to whom this standard has been raised; and it has been raised too on the mountains, for the Prophet Isaiah has told us that it should be

accomplished on the mountains. We refer you to the 18th chapter of his prophecy. In it is a proclamation to all the world. They are commanded in that day to both see and hear—‘All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye.’”²⁰ Horsley adds, “The prophecy announces the display of God’s power and providence, which should be notorious to the whole world; and particularly, I think, alludes to a renewed preaching of the Gospel, with great power and effect in the latter ages.” That is, the good news or gospel of Jesus Christ, and the restoration of His Church upon the earth.

4 For so the LORD said unto me, I will take my rest, and I will consider in my dwelling place ✓ like a clear heat upon herbs, ✓ [and] like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.

✓ or, regard my set dwelling

✓ ✓ or, after rain

For so the LORD said unto me, I will take my rest, and I will consider in my dwelling place like a clear heat upon herbs. The Targum (ܬ) has, “For thus hath the Lord said unto me: I will give rest to my people²¹, yea, I will make them to rest, and I will delight in my holy habitation to do them good.” It is nice that the Targum Jonathan (ܬ) is so specific about the fact that these verses are about Israel. It is an allusion to the fact that Israel and Judah were about to be harvested and her branches scattered to every corner of the globe and her fruit destroyed. The Lord was about to begin the pruning process: “And I will forsake the remnant of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies” (2 Kings 21:14). All of this has reference to the suffering that the house of Israel would be subjected to before her glorious redemption. At this place Horsley well observes, “This verse seems to describe a long suspension of the visible interpositions of Providence in the affairs of this world, and in favour of this people, under the image of that stillness and stagnation of the atmosphere, which takes place in the extreme heats of the latter end of summer ... The sentiment is that, notwithstanding the long cessation of extraordinary manifestations of God’s power, his providence is not asleep—he is all the while regarding the conduct, and the fortunes of his people; he is not

¹⁸ Stenning, *salvation*. See also, CAL Targum Lexicon.

¹⁹ Journal of Discourses. April 7, 1872, Elder Orson Pratt. Delivered in the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City. (Reported by David W. Evans.) The Latter-Day Kingdom—The Present Fulfillment of Ancient Prophecy, pp. 49–51. Also see, Journal of Discourses. Orson Pratt, June 15, 1873, Delivered in the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday afternoon. The rise of Zion in the last days, p. 85. Elder Orson Pratt, on another occasion, added: “Before Judah and the ten tribes of Israel could ever be gathered an ensign has to be lifted up for the nations. Not for Judah and Israel alone, but for the nations afar off, for the Gospel has been restored for the benefit of the Gentiles—every nations, kindred, tongue and people—as well as for the benefit of the dispersed tribes of Israel.” Journal of Discourses. Elder Orson Pratt, February 28, 1875, p. 322.

²⁰ Journal of Discourses, Orson Pratt, The Ancient Prophecies. A Discourse by Elder Orson Pratt, delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, January 7, 1855. Volume 2, p. 296.

²¹ לְעַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל, *to my people Israel* (CAL and Stenning).

forgetful of his promises to his chosen people, but, though often by a silent and secret operation, is at all times directing everything to their ultimate prosperity, and to the universal establishment of the true religion.” ¶ *[And] like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.* Cowles has, “Seems tacitly to imply that the Lord was even willing that his permissive agencies should for the time favor the progress of the Assyrian’s plans, even as the warm sun and the dew-clouds push forward the ripening of the grapes.” To the Assyrians we may well add the Babylonians and all those who would come after, through the centuries of the dispersion of the house of Israel.

5 For afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower, he shall both cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks, and take away [and] cut down the branches.

For afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Before the time of harvest cometh the tree is ready to bud, and the unripe grape (i.e., *the very first appearance of the grape, before it blossoms*) bursts forth into a flower.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Before the reaping time, when the flower has been completely formed, and the unripe grape has put forth its flower and blossomed.” The Douay, from the Vulgate (ⲱ), has, “For before the harvest it was all flourishing, and it shall bud without perfect ripeness.” Once again, the idea here is that all the signs of an impending harvest are beginning to show. The unripe grape (and that is why it may be called sour, with the low sugar or degrees Brix in the unripe grape) is beginning to ripen in the branches of the vine. Judah and Israel are almost ready to be harvested and scattered. Calvin has the people ripening in iniquity such that God “permits them to grow to a vast height, to swell and blossom, that they may afterwards fall by their own weight.” Kay writes, “The recurrence in ISAIAH 18:5 of the words ‘bud’ and ‘harvest,’ which have just been used in ISAIAH 17:11, where Israel was spoken of, is very noticeable.” ¶ *He shall both cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks, and take away [and] cut down the branches.* The Syriac (Ⲥ) has, “He shall both cut off the lean shoots with pruning hooks and take away and shake off the branches.” Horsley explains, “These words express, not simply sprigs and branches, but ‘useless shoots,’ ‘luxuriant branches,’ which bear no fruit, and weaken the plant; and properly such shoots and branches of a vine.” Judah and Israel are now ripened in iniquity and the pruning has begun in earnest, and the branches have been scattered throughout the world, as threatened in *Rain in*

Due Season. Note especially the language about *cutting* and *casting* in the Lord’s acceptance of the temple built by Solomon. “*But* if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments *and* my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them: Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight” (1 Kings 9:6–7a). So we have the reason for the impending scattering of Israel, and the scattering to the four corners of the world, and a long, long time being represented in the scattered condition, even all of summer and all of winter (representing the millennia involved since the scattering began, ISAIAH 18:6) to the day when the restoration of the gospel and subsequent gathering would begin.

6 They shall be left together unto the fowls of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth: and the fowls shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them.

They shall be left together unto the fowls of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And he shall leave them together to the birds of the sky, and to the wild beasts of the earth.” Here we have an allusion to the horrible sufferings that the house of Israel would be subjected to, trampled by the “beasts of the earth” or the wicked who pretend to love Christ yet hate His people Israel. ¶ *And the fowls shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “All the fowls of the heavens shall dwell upon them in the summer, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them.” The LXX (Ⲅ) has, “And the fowls of the sky shall be gathered upon them, and all the beasts of the land shall come upon him.” The Syriac (Ⲥ), “And the birds shall gather upon them, and all the wild beasts of the earth, shall devour them.” The suffering of the house of Israel would last a long time, with the summer and winter being an expression of time that would seem to never end. Yet after, the gathering would begin through missionaries—or *ambassadors of truth*.

7 In that time shall the present be brought unto the LORD of hosts of a people scattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the

place of the name of the LORD of hosts,
the mount Zion.

✓ or, outspread and polished

In that time shall the present be brought unto the LORD of hosts of a people scattered and peeled. Gill explains: “This explains what the present is, that shall be brought to the Lord; it is a people.” Ibn Ezra writes: “Israel, who has been dragged and flayed during the period of his captivity, will now be brought, to the honour of God, to His abode on Mount Zion.” Rabbi Rosenberg correctly explains: “The nations of the world will bring the Jewish people to God as a gift,” and then quotes ISAIAH 66:20: “And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the LORD out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the LORD, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD.” Kimhi believes that this chapter has reference to eschatological times, or the times of the Messiah (in Rosenberg). Ironside has, “God’s heart is ever toward Israel and while He has permitted them to pass through such terrible sufferings throughout the long centuries of their dispersion ... [yet] the day will surely come when, their transgressions forgiven and their hearts renewed, they will be restored to Himself and planted again in their own land—that land which so often the rivers have spoiled! This refers to a well-known symbol of the prophetic Scriptures [i.e., that of the invading armies].” Calvin suggests that the people who would be *brought* would make a sacrifice of themselves by becoming “wholly dedicated to God.” Horsley explains: “They [the Jews] shall be converted to the acknowledgment of the truth, and they shall be brought to the place of the name of Jehovah, to mount Zion: they shall be settled, in peace and prosperity, in the land of their original inheritance. This then is the sum of this prophecy, and the substance of the message, sent to the people dragged about and plucked ... The Jews, converted to the faith of Christ, will be unexpectedly restored to their ancient possessions. The swift messengers will certainly have a considerable share, as instruments in the hand of God, in the restoration of the chosen people. Otherwise, to what purpose are they called upon to receive their commission from the prophet? ... This character seems to describe some Christian country, where the prophecies relating to the latter ages will meet with particular attention; where the literal sense of those, which promise the restoration of the Jewish people, will be strenuously upheld; and where there will be so successfully expounded, as to be the principal means, by God’s blessing, of removing the veil from the hearts of the Israelites ... The full importance of this circumstance will not appear, till the completion of the

prophecy shall discover it.” These last words remind us of the words of Nephi concerning Isaiah: “Nevertheless, in the days that the prophecies of Isaiah shall be fulfilled men shall know of a surety, at the times when they shall come to pass” (2 Nephi 25:7b). Horsley brings our attention to an interesting scripture, “From beyond the rivers of Cush my suppliants, *even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering*” (Zephaniah 3:10, emphasis added). And who is the daughter of my dispersed? Or, who, among the dispersed, would help gather the dispersed? Ephraim and Manasseh, the horns of the bullock (Deuteronomy 33:17), would have the principal responsibility in this gathering. These are the peoples dispersed to the American continent who are themselves descendants of Israel. ¶ *And from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto.* The Targum (Ⲯ), “To a people that was mighty in times past, and shall be so in time to come.” ¶ *A nation meted out and trodden under foot.* The Vulgate (V), as already mentioned by Horsley in ISAIAH 18:2, has: “*A gente expectante, expectante et conculcata,*” or in the Douay, “From a nation expecting, expecting, and trodden under foot.” Gill writes, “These descriptive characters, with those in the preceding clauses, are retained, to show that the same people are here meant as in ISAIAH 18:2.” At one time Israel was set up as the light of the world. Today, members of the Lord’s Church must be bold in declaring in great love the restoration of the gospel: “For they were set to be a light unto the world, and to be the saviors of men; And inasmuch as they are not the saviors of men, they are as salt that has lost its savor, and is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men” (D&C 103: 9–10). ¶ *Whose land the rivers have spoiled.* The Targum (Ⲯ), “Whose land the nations spoiled.” Isaiah speaks as Israel as the land that is spoiled. “But this is a people robbed and spoiled” (ISAIAH 42:22). And why did this happen? “Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not the LORD, he against whom we have sinned? for they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law” (ISAIAH 42:24). ¶ *To the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, the mount Zion.* The Targum (Ⲯ) clarifies this passage with, “Unto the place which is called by the name of the Lord of hosts, whose Shekinah (שְׁכִינָה) is in the mountain of Zion.” And so it is, these missionaries and ambassadors of truth will bring back Israel unto the Lord of Hosts—to the House of the Lord. The Mount Zion, מֶלֶךְ-צִיּוֹן, or in other words, the Holy Temple (ISAIAH 66:20).

25 March 2004

Isaiah 19

Egypt, upon whom Israel had placed her trust, would fall. Eventually, Egypt would discover the true Gospel and worship the Lord, along with Assyria and other nations who would join Israel in worshipping the one and true Living God. There are a number of different explanations given by one or another of the exegetes of exactly how Egypt was brought down to her knees: outside forces, inside civil wars, despots who will lead the nation, and even the Lord Himself.

vv. 1–17. Egypt would become a broken reed upon which Judah could lean upon only to her hurt (ISAIAH 36:6). Isaiah and Jeremiah often accused Judah of yielding to her desire to trust on the arm of Egypt rather than upon the Lord. The day would come when the children of Jacob would stay on the Lord (ISAIAH 10:20).

1 ¶ THE burden of Egypt. Behold, the LORD rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it.

THE burden of Egypt מִשָּׂא מִצְרַיִם. The Targum (ת) reads, “The burden of the cup of cursing to make the Egyptians to drink.” The Syriac (ס) renders it, “The prophecy concerning the fall of Egypt.” Calvin well observes, “The Prophet here prophesies against Egypt, because it was a kind of refuge to the Jews, whenever they saw any danger approaching them; for when they had forsaken God, to whom they ought to have had recourse, they thought that they had no help left to them but in the Egyptians . . . because when they ought to have relied on God alone, they were puffed up with that vain confidence in Egypt.” Regarding Egypt we read in Barnes, “The word ‘Egypt’ in the original is מִצְרַיִם; and it was so called after Mizraim the second son of Ham, and grandson of Noah. Sometimes it is called Mazar (2 Kings 19:24; ISAIAH 19:6; ISAIAH 37:25; Micah 7:12).” ¶ *Behold, the LORD rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt.* This is a metaphoric expression of God’s power, that while men might have ridden upon swift horses, the Lord, in contrast, could ride the swift or speedy clouds. Delitzsch has, “Jehovah rides upon clouds when He is about to reveal Himself in His judicial majesty (Psalm 18:11); and in this instance He rides upon a light cloud, because it will take place rapidly. The word *kal* [קל] signifies both *light* and *swift*, because what is light moves swiftly; and even a light cloud, which is light because it is thin, is

comparatively עב, i.e., literally *dense, opaque, or obscure.*” ¶ *And the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it.* The Targum (ת) reads, “And the idols of the Egyptians shall be broken before His face, and the heart of the Egyptians shall be melted within them (Chaldee, *his bowels*)” This is an ironic comment about *idols*¹ that cannot move on their own power, and have no hearts, yet it is implied that the idols will fear and tremble. Or rather, that the people who lean on idols shall be the ones who shall move with fear and their hearts will tremble.

2 And I will set^v the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour; city against city, [and] kingdom against kingdom.

✓ mingle

And I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians. The horrors of civil war are announced. ¶ *And they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour; city against city, [and] kingdom against kingdom.* There are many examples in scripture that show that the enemy became so fearful and confused, that they began to kill each other rather than defend themselves against the people of God (e.g., see Judges 7:22a). Regarding the civil wars affecting Egypt, Gill shares: “For though Egypt was but originally one kingdom, yet upon the death of Sethon, one of its kings, who had been a priest of Vulcan, there being no successor, twelve of the nobility started up, and set up themselves as kings, and divided the kingdom into twelve parts, and reigned in confederacy, for the space of fifteen years; when, falling out among themselves, they excluded Psammiticus, one of the twelve, from any

¹ Cheyne explains that the term for idols, אֱלִילִי, is that of “no-gods.” In 2 Kings 19:18, the concept of no-gods is spelled out: לֹא אֱלֹהִים. The word אֱלִילִי means that which is *empty, vain, nothing* and used in the plural to signify idols (Gesenius).

share of government; who gathering an army together, fought with and conquered the other eleven, and seized the whole kingdom to himself, and who seems afterwards regarded in this prophecy; all this happened in the times of Manasseh king of Judah, and so in or quickly after Isaiah's time: though some understand this of the civil wars between Apries and Amasis, in the times of Nebuchadnezzar. The Septuagint version renders the phrase here, 'nome against nome'; for the whole land of Egypt, by Sesostris, one of its kings, was divided into thirty six nomes, districts, or provinces, whose names are given by Herodotus, Pliny, and others."

3 And the spirit of Egypt shall fail[✓] in the midst thereof; and I will destroy^{✓✓} the counsel thereof: and they shall seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards.

- ✓ be emptied
- ✓ ✓ swallow up

And the *spirit* of Egypt shall fail in the midst thereof; and I will destroy the counsel thereof. The LXX (Ⲅ) has, "And the spirit of the Egyptians shall be troubled within them; and I will frustrate their counsel." In ancient times, as is the case today, rulers surrounded themselves with the brightest minds from whom they could seek counsel (e.g., see the matter of Ahithophel and of Hushai in 2 Samuel 17). Calvin explains, "Now, the Egyptians had so high an opinion of their own wisdom, that they reckoned themselves superior to other nations ... they boasted that they were the inventors of learning." So, Calvin explains that רִנָּה here stands for "*understanding and sagacity*" rather than simply *spirit*. In ISAIAH 29:24, רִנָּה is used in the same sense (Gesenius, 3–d). And are there not new nations and philosophers that today have taken the place of Egypt in such boastfulness? The idea of *intellect that fails*, נִבְקָה, is well represented in the margin ||, as something being *emptied*. Likewise, אֶבְלַע is used for *destroy*, and also means, as mentioned in the margin ||, to *swallow up*² (Gesenius, HAL, BDB). Kay continues with this idea: "The word used of the rod of Aaron 'swallowing up' the rods of the Egyptian magicians (Exodus 7:12). With infinitely greater reason would the divine counsel 'swallow up' the cunningly devised

² Regarding this expression, Gesenius points to the "onomatopoetic from the sound of a bottle when emptied, like the Persian غلغله *gulghul*."

policy of Egypt." ¶ And they shall seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards. When Saul could no longer lean on the Lord for counsel, he turned to the dark side. Regarding the word *charmers*, Delitzsch has, "Then (and this is also part of the judgment) they turn for help, in counsel and action, where no help is to be found, viz., to their 'nothings' of gods, and the manifold demoniacal arts, of which Egypt could boast of being the primary seat. On the names of the practisers of the black art, see ISAIAH 8:19; 'ittim, the mutterers, is from 'âtat, to squeak (used of a camel-saddle, especially when new), or to rumble (used of an empty stomach): see Lane's *Lexicon*."

4 And the Egyptians will I give over[✓] into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall rule over them, saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts.

- ✓ or, shut up

And the Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel lord. Or rather, cruel *lords*, as the Hebrew (מֶלֶךְ) indicates the plural מְלָכִים. The LXX (Ⲅ) has, "And I will deliver Egypt into the hands of men, of cruel *lords*." The Syriac (ܣ) has *Medes* for lord. Barnes prefers to follow the KJV, and calls the plural "*pluralis excellentiae*—denoting majesty and dignity, and applicable to a 'single' monarch." Delitzsch and Gill suggest that Isaiah is not referring to a foreign force, but rather to the civil war mentioned in verse two that led to twelve smaller nations. ¶ And a fierce king shall rule over them, saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts. Barnes has, for a fierce king, "'A king of strength'—a description particularly applicable to one who, like Psammetichus, had subdued eleven rivals, and who had obtained the kingdom by conquest."

5 And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up.

And the waters shall fail from the sea. Barnes explains, "The parallelism here, as well as the whole scope of the passage, requires us to understand this of the Nile. The word יָם *yâm* is sometimes used to denote a large river The Nile is often called a sea. Thus Pliny ('Nat. Hist.' ii. 35) says, 'The water of the Nile resembles the sea.' Thus, Seneca ('Quaest. Nat.' v. 2) says, 'By continued accessions of water, it stagnates (stagnat) into the appearance of a broad and turbid sea.' Compare Herodot. ii. 97; Diod. i. 12, 96; 'To this day in Egypt, the Nile is el-Bahr, 'the sea,' as its most common

appellation.’ ‘Our Egyptian servant,’ says Dr. Robinson, ‘who spoke English, always called it ‘the sea.’ (*Bib. Researches*, 1:542).” Victor Ludlow suggests³ that the drying up and issues related to the problems with the Nile are explained by the building of the Aswan Dam, “an engineering wonder but ecological and social nightmare.” Despite what has happened in relation to the Aswan Dam, it would not be surprising if the future brings yet further fulfillment of this prophecy: changes so profound that will help the people of Egypt turn to the true Lord and God. ¶ *And the river shall be wasted and dried up.* Cowles says, “The life of Egypt is the river Nile.” Govett writes, “Almost the existence of Egypt depends upon its annual overflow, as it never rains there; hence the extent of the calamity may well be imagined, should such an event occur.”

6 And they shall turn the rivers far away; [and] the brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither.

And they shall turn the rivers far away; [and] the brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up. The RV, as do several other translations, has the idea of stagnant rivers or channels of water, “*And the rivers shall stink*,” for *וְהַנְּחָלִים יִתְּחַלְּוּ* from the root *נָחַ*.⁴ Gill has, “as the river of Nile and its streams were the defence of the land of Egypt, as well as made for the fruitfulness of it, for these must make it less accessible to a foreign enemy; and besides, here lay their shipping, which were their protection; and moreover, from hence brooks and courses of water might be derived and carried about their fortified cities, which added to the strength of them.” ¶ *The reeds and flags shall wither.* The Targum (T) reads, “The reeds and flags⁵ shall not grow.” For *flags* in the KJV, *סוּף*, translators and the lexicons often suggest either *rushes* or *sea weeds*. Gill comments, that if the reeds and flags, which grew right on or near the river would wither, how much more the crops that grew far away.

7 The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks, shall wither, be driven away, and be no [more]. ✓

✓ and shall not be

³ For more details see Ludlow (pp. 214–216) and the very interesting notes on this topic.

⁴ To stink or be rancid (Gesenius).

⁵ CAL, *וְהַנְּחָלִים*, and *papyrus reed*.

The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks, shall wither. The Syriac (S) renders it, “The rushes by the river, and by the mouth of the river, and everything sown by the river shall wither.” The mouth of the river is where the Nile *ends*, in Egypt. Not, as some suggest, its origin or fountain, which rather corresponds to Uganda. Gill explains: “Not at the fountain or origin of the Nile and its streams, but by the sides thereof; on the banks of which grew a reed or rush, called by the Greeks ‘papyrus’⁶ and ‘biblus’; from whence come the words ‘paper’ and ‘bible’, or book, of which paper was anciently made; even as early as the times of Isaiah.” ¶ *Be driven away, and be no [more].* The LXX (G) has, “Shall be blasted with the wind and dried up.” At any rate, the papyrus and crops would fail.

8 The fishers also shall mourn, and all they that cast angle into the brooks shall lament, and they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish.

The fishers also shall mourn, and all they that cast angle into the brooks shall lament. Not only would the disruptions in normal water flow affect the flora, but also the fish in the river, which would perish, causing a devastating famine. ¶ *And they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish.* That is, not only those who fish with hooks would be affected, but also those who fish with nets.

9 Moreover they that work in fine flax, and they that weave networks, ✓ shall be confounded.

✓ or, white works

The LXX (G) has, “And shame shall come upon them that work fine flax, and them that make [i.e., *work at*] fine linen.” For a man not to be able to work brings the shame of not being able to provide for the family.

Regarding the word *חֹרֵי* *white works* (margin || for networks, or *fine or white⁷ linen*), it seems to mean some other type of fine linen compared to *פְּשָׁתִּים שְׂרִיקוֹת*, *fine flax* or *combed flax*. Calvin says, “If we are to understand *שְׂרִיקוֹת* to mean certain very fine linens, it is probable that the latter clause [*חֹרֵי*]

⁶ See Pliny on papyrus, in Gill.

⁷ Gesenius explains that the singular *חֹרֵי* stands for *white linen*, based on the root for the word *white* *חָנָה* (Gesenius, HALOT).

relates to other productions of the loom, manufactured out of small fine thread, and of the most elegant workmanship.”

10 And they shall be broken in the purposes[✓] thereof, all that make sluices [and] ponds for fish.^{✓ ✓}

- ✓ foundations
- ✓ ✓ of living things

One possible interpretation is that we here have the conclusion of the list of destroyed livelihoods from the cessation of the strength of the Nile. Regarding the word שְׁתִּיתִיהָ pointed as שְׁתִּיתִיהָ in the Masoretic (מ) text (*purposes* or *foundations*), Gill has in part, “Kimhi observes, that the word in the Talmudic language signifies ‘nets’, as it does; and this seems to be most agreeable to the context; and then the words may be rendered, ‘and its nets shall be broken’; shall lie and rot for want of use.” Some other suggestions that have been tendered include weavers, pillars (nobles in contrast to the common people), something that is drunk (including beer, strong drink or other alcoholic beverage), or even some type of enclosure for holding water which is now broken.

11 Surely the princes of Zoan [are] fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish: how say ye unto Pharaoh, I [am] the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings?

Surely the princes of Zoan [are] fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish. For the Hebrew (מ) *Tzoan* זִעֵן, the Targum (ܬ) has טַאֲנִים, so also the Vulgate (V) *Taneos*, and the LXX (Ϛ) *Τάνεως*. According to Faussett, this was “a city of Lower Egypt, east of the Tanitic arms of the Nile, now San.” Several exegetes mention that this was the place where the Lord, through Moses, performed the miracles before Pharaoh (see Psalm 78:12, 43), also a town built after Hebron (Numbers 13:22). Gill has, “The princes of this place, the lords of this nome, though they had princely education, acted a foolish part, in flattering their sovereign, as afterwards mentioned, and in putting him upon doing things destructive to his kingdom and subjects.” ¶ *How say ye unto Pharaoh, I [am] the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings?* The Targum (ܬ) suggests that the ‘wise counselors’ say they are the son of the wise, but are speaking of Pharaoh as being the son of ancient Pharaohs—and thus even wiser. The LXX (Ϛ) and Syriac (ܣ), instead, have the ‘wise

counselors’ attributing to themselves both wisdom and descent from ancient kings. Ibn Ezra, likewise, has: “Each of [the wise counselors of Pharaoh] will praise himself: ‘my father was wise, my forefathers in days of old were also kings.’” Luther has, “Now there follows a mockery against the Egyptians’ boast of wisdom and antiquity.”

12 Where [are] they? where [are] thy wise [men]? and let them tell thee now, and let them know what the LORD of hosts hath purposed upon Egypt.

Where [are] they? where [are] thy wise [men]? and let them tell thee now. Now that things are going wrong, and all the prophesied evil has come to pass, where are the wise counselors who assured all was well? ¶ *And let them know what the LORD of hosts hath purposed upon Egypt.* The Syriac (ܣ) renders it, “And let them know what the Lord of hosts has purposed against Egypt.” The Lord has permitted men to speak, but now He will speak.

13 The princes of Zoan are become fools, the princes of Noph are deceived; they have also seduced Egypt, [even they that are] the stay[✓] of the tribes thereof.

- ✓ or, governors

The princes of Zoan are become fools, the princes of Noph are deceived. Gill has, regarding נֹפִי, “called Moph, in Hosea 9:6 where our translation renders it Memphis; and so do the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions here; the Arabic version has it Menphis; the Syriac version Mophis; and the Targum Mephes; the city of Memphis is no doubt intended, which was the chief of the first of the nomes or provinces of Egypt, from whence it was called Memphites: it was the metropolis of upper Egypt, and the seat of their kings and princes; it was built by their first king Menes, or Mizraim,⁸ and had in it the famous temple of Vulcan; it continues to this day, and goes by the name of Alkair, or Grand Cairo.” It is often from the great metropolis that the philosophies of men are promulgated. ¶ *They have also seduced Egypt, [even they that are] the stay of the tribes thereof.* Gill has, “[The nomes] are called tribes by the prophet, in the language of the Jews, which land were divided into tribes, as the land of Egypt was divided into nomes; and about this time it was divided into twelve kingdoms, as Israel was into twelve tribes.”

⁸ Egypt, מִצְרַיִם.

Those who leaned upon the great men of Μέμφεως now have found they have leaned on nothingness.

14 The LORD hath mingled a perverse spirit[✓] in the midst thereof: and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken [man] staggereth in his vomit.

✓ a spirit of perversities

The LORD hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof. Calvin has, “The expression is metaphorical, as if one were to mix wine in a cup, that the Lord thus intoxicates the wise men of this world so that they are stunned and amazed, and can neither think nor act aright.” Of course we understand that the Lord does not Himself bring an evil spirit upon men. The Prophet Joseph Smith, in the Inspired Version, corrected the Bible translation in numerous places to indicate this point.⁹ ¶ *And they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken [man] staggereth in his vomit.* The Targum (ⲉ) reads, “And they have caused the Egyptians to err in all their works, as a drunkard staggereth, and tramples in his own vomit.” So we similarly read in Jeremiah, “Therefore thou shalt speak unto them this word; Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Every bottle shall be filled with wine: and they shall say unto thee, Do we not certainly know that every bottle shall be filled with wine? Then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land, even the kings that sit upon David’s throne, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, with drunkenness ... Give glory to the LORD your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and, while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness” (Jeremiah 13:12–13, 16).

15 Neither shall there be [any] work for Egypt, which the head or tail, branch or rush, may do.

As happened to Israel (ISAIAH 9:14–15), Egypt would be left without prince or common person who can stand against the impending disaster. Gill has “Jarchi [i.e., Rashi] explains it of the magicians, astrologers, and stargazers of Egypt, who, with all their boasted

knowledge and wisdom, should not be able either to foresee or prevent the evil coming upon them.”

16 In that day shall Egypt be like unto women: and it shall be afraid and fear because of the shaking of the hand of the LORD of hosts, which he shaketh over it.

In that day shall Egypt be like unto women. Or, *as women* (ⲙⲓⲛⲓⲙⲉⲛ). The Targum (ⲉ) reads, “At that time the Egyptians shall be weak (Royal Polyglot, *like women*).” We see it elsewhere, “they became *as women*” (Jeremiah 51:30), and “Behold, thy people in the midst of thee are women” (Nahum 3:13). ¶ *And it shall be afraid and fear because of the shaking of the hand of the LORD of hosts, which he shaketh over it.* Gill observes, “Some think there is an allusion to Moses’s shaking his rod over the Red sea when the Egyptians were drowned, in which the hand or power of the Lord was so visibly seen, and which now might be called to mind.”

17 And the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt, every one that maketh mention thereof shall be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of the LORD of hosts, which he hath determined against it.

And the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt. Ludlow writes, “The low point of Egyptian military power in comparison to that of Israel was the Six Day War of June 1967. Dozens of books have been written and countless stories told of how, within hours of June 5, the Israeli air force devastated all Egyptian air bases and two-thirds of her air force. In four days of fighting, Israel destroyed the bulk of the Egyptian army and overran an area of Egyptian territory six times the area of the entire country of Israel.” ¶ *Every one that maketh mention thereof shall be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of the LORD of hosts, which he hath determined against it.* Most likely, against Egypt.

vv. 18–25. Here the conversation turns away from one of punishment, or consequences for sin, to that of latter-day Egypt turning her heart towards the Lord and being healed.

18 ¶ In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language[✓] of Canaan,

⁹ For instance, we incorrectly read, “But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him” (1 Samuel 16:14) which the Prophet corrected to read: “But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit which was not of the LORD troubled him.”

and swear to the LORD of hosts; one shall be called, The city of destruction. ✓ ✓

✓ the lip

✓ ✓ or, of Heres, or, of the sun

In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the LORD of hosts. Luther explains that by the language of Canaan, Hebrew and Syriac is meant. Barnes suggests that this probably signifies conversion: “A similar expression, to denote conversion to the true God, occurs in Zephaniah 3:9: ‘For there I will turn to the people a pure language, that they may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.’” Calvin has, “To vow and to swear are Hebrew ways of speaking and mean to bind oneself to God and have Him as one’s God and worship Him. This pertains properly to swearing. One who confesses God is called one who swears by God. The psalm says (Psalm 63:11): ‘All who swear by Him shall glory,’ that is, all who confess Him ... To ‘swear by the Lord’ often means to testify that he is the true God (Deuteronomy 6:13).” Cheyne observes, “Not ‘swearing by’ (as ISAIAH 65:16), but ‘swearing (fidelity to)’ (ISAIAH 45:23).” Besides the above mentioned Psalm, we have numerous admonitions to confess the Living God, and not to rely upon man or man-made idols (*see*, Deuteronomy 10:20; ISAIAH 45:23; 48:1; 65:16; Jeremiah 4:2; 12:16; Hosea 4:15). But also see Matthew 5:33–34. The number five may be put for part—either small or substantial. ¶ *One shall be called, The city of destruction.* The Targum (ⲓ) here seems to provide additional information: “The city of Beth-Shemesh (*Heliopolis*, Stenning, *the house of the Sun*), which is to be destroyed, shall be called one of them.” The Talmud tradition (Seder Kodoshim, Menachoth 110a), referring to the Targum, has: “What is meant by The city of Heres? — As Rabbi Joseph rendered it in Aramaic: The city of Beth Shemesh [the sun], which is destined to destruction” (Talmud, Soncino). The LXX (Ⲙ) has, “One city shall be called the city of Asedec Ἀσεδεκ [city of destruction].” The Syriac (Ⲥ) renders it, “One of them shall be called Haris, the city of destruction.” The Douay renders it, “One shall be called the city of the sun.” Exegetes explain that there seems to be a play of word, then, replacing “House of the son” for “House of destruction.” Kay also has noticed the LXX (Ⲙ) use of the words *city of righteousness*, πολις ἀσεδεκ (compare with Melchizedek, King of Righteousness). Kay says, “Implying that the effectual overthrow of paganism could only be attained through the establishment of the kingdom of God, which is righteousness.” Delitzsch explains that out of the ruins “something new” would come forth: “Jehovah had proved Himself, to Egypt’s salvation, to be the God of the gods of Egypt. And now, if they who erected this place of worship and this

monument cried to Jehovah, He would show Himself ready to help them; and they would no longer cry in vain, as they had formerly done to their own idols (ISAIAH 19:3). Consequently it is the approaching conversion of the native Egyptians that is here spoken of.”

19 In that day shall there be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the LORD.

In that day shall there be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt. There are those who incorrectly believe there can be only one Temple, and that in Jerusalem, and do not understand that the earth will be dotted with Temples built to our Lord. Temples were constructed in the Americas before the coming of our Savior to the earth in the meridian of times. No man, however, has the right to build a Temple to Our Lord without the express authority to do so.¹⁰ Ludlow adds these interesting comments, “Most historians believed that ‘true’ Jews would build a temple only in Jerusalem. After all, they did not build one in Babylon during their captivity, so why should they build one anywhere else ... Following the discovery of the Elephantine Papyri in 1893 and recent Israeli archeological findings in the Holy Land, however, many scholars now acknowledge the legitimate existence of many other Israelite temples. (For example, see ‘Hebrew sanctuaries and temples—those beside Jerusalem,’ IDB 4:566–68.) Now, some Israeli archeologists will assert that if a group of ancient religious, practicing Jews were to be isolated from Jerusalem, one would expect them to build their own temple.” ¶ Young writes, “The language reflects the period of the patriarchs. As Abraham had gone through the land erecting altars to the Lord, so in Egypt there will be such an altar. This altar will not be memorial in nature, like that which the two and a half tribes built by the Jordan (Joshua 22:9ff.), although it does remind of that altar. Nevertheless, it will have religious significance, and upon it legitimate sacrifices to God will be offered. The prophecy does not conflict with Exodus 20:24, which permitted the building of altars in all places in which the Lord would record His Name. The altar upon which the sacrifices are offered simply stands as a representative for the entire cult as such. It is a case of *pars pro toto*.¹¹ An altar dedicated to the Lord means that sacrifices offered to the Lord will be offered thereupon. In other words, the true religion will be found in Egypt; the true God will be worshipped there

¹⁰ Onias built an unsanctioned temple in Egypt (*see* Josephus, Ant. 13:3:1).

¹¹ *Pars pro toto* is Latin to mean the part standing for the whole.

... To say that there will be an altar to the true God in the midst of the land simply means that the revealed religion will be found in the land.” ¶ *And a pillar at the border thereof to the LORD.* Gill writes, “The phrase denotes a public profession of Christ, and a setting up of his worship; it is used in allusion to the patriarchs, who, wherever they came, set up an altar to the Lord, and worshipped him.”

20 And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto the LORD because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them.

And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt. Gill writes, “This refers either to what goes before, that the altar and pillar were signs and witnesses that the Lord was believed in, professed, and worshipped there; or to what follows after, that the Lord’s hearing the cries of men, and answering them, by sending a great Saviour to them, is a token and testimony for him of his great love unto them.” ¶ *For they shall cry unto the LORD because of the oppressors.* The Targum (Ⓣ) reads, “When they shall pray before the Lord because of their oppressors.” At some point, Egypt will turn to the Lord God for help. Young writes, “The Egyptians had been the oppressors of God’s helpless people. Now, however, the Egyptians have turned to the Lord; and hence they themselves will know what all God’s people know, that in this world they will have tribulation. The Egyptians will be no exception; they, too, will face oppression. Whenever there is a true conversion, there will in the nature of the case be oppressors, and from these God will send deliverance.” ¶ *And he shall send them a saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And He shall send unto them a Saviour, and a Judge, and He shall deliver them.” The LXX (Ⓛ) has, “And he shall send them a man who shall save them; he shall judge and save them.” The Syriac (Ⓢ) renders it, “And he shall send them a saviour and a judge, and he shall deliver them.” The Douay reads, “And he shall send them a Saviour and a defender, to deliver them.” The Dead Sea Scrolls (Ⓢ), “He will send them a savior and he will go down and will rescue them.” It is through our intercessor with the Father, even Messiah—Jesus the Christ—that we may be saved. Kay says, “The prophet himself supplies a commentary on this expression in ISAIAH 63:1; where Messiah is introduced saying of Himself, ‘I speak in righteousness, mighty to save.’”

21 And the LORD shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the LORD in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the LORD, and perform [it].

And the LORD shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the LORD in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation. Naegelsbach makes this astute observation, “The expression ‘shall be known,’ etc., recalls the celebrated passage Exodus 6:3. ‘But by my name Jehovah, was I not known to them.’¹² There the Lord reveals Himself to those that were held in bondage by the Egyptians; here is seen the remarkable advance that the Lord reveals Himself to the Egyptians themselves as Jehovah, that they, too, really know Him as such” ¶ *Yea, they shall vow a vow unto the LORD, and perform [it].* This shows the sincerity of the conversion.

22 And the LORD shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal [it]: and they shall return [even] to the LORD, and he shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them.

And the LORD shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal [it]. The LXX (Ⓛ) has, “And the Lord shall smite the Egyptians with a stroke, and shall completely heal them.” The Syriac (Ⓢ) renders it, “And the Lord shall smite the Egyptians; he shall smite and heal them.” The book of Proverbs speaks very much to this topic, that is, that the man of God will accept correction and when smitten will repent and become healed. The word *smite* here represents the loving correction of the LORD. It is an invitation to *return* unto God. Thus we read: “The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise” (Proverbs 12:15). Delitzsch has, “In the act of smiting the intention of healing prevails; and healing follows the smiting, since the chastisement of Jehovah leads it to repentance. Thus Egypt is now under the same plan of salvation as Israel (e.g., Leviticus 26:44; Deuteronomy 32:36).” ¶ *And they shall return [even] to the LORD, and he shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them.* The Syriac (Ⓢ) renders it, “And they shall return to the Lord, and he shall answer them and shall heal them.” Calvin would translate: “For they shall &c.,” and explains, “The copulative ו signifies *for*.” They shall *turn* or *return* **שׁוּבוּ** to the Lord, then. When it says that the Lord will

¹² “And was not my name known unto them?” Inspired Version.

hear them, it is this signification which Zechariah 1:3 has for me, that when we **turn** or **return** (שׁוּבוּ, *repent*) to the Lord, the Savior will **turn** (*not* repent, but *turn the ear to hear* and turn the arm to bless) to us: “Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the LORD of hosts.”

23 In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.

In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria. Calvin has, “Now, when he says, in consequence of a *highway* having been opened up, there will be mutual access that they may visit each other, he describes brotherly intercourse. We know that the Egyptians carried on almost incessant wars with the Assyrians, and cherished an inveterate hatred towards each other. He now foretells that the Lord will change their dispositions, and will reconcile them to each other, so that they will have mutual communications, mutual coming in and going out, in consequence of laying open the *highways* which were formerly shut.” The Geneva footnote has, “By these two nations, which were then chief enemies of the Church, he shows that the Gentiles and the Jews would be joined together in one faith and religion, and would all be one fold under Christ their shepherd.” ¶ *And the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria.* Barnes, regarding a former fulfillment, has, “There shall be an alliance between Egypt and Assyria, as constituting parts of one empire, and as united in the service of the true God. The same figure of a ‘highway’ is found in ISAIAH 11:16. The truth was, that Alexander, by his conquests, subjected Assyria and Egypt, and they constituted parts of his empire, and were united under him. It was true, also, that there were large numbers of Jews in both these countries, and that they were united in the service of the true God. They worshipped him in those countries; and they met at Jerusalem at the great feasts, and thus Judah, Assyria, and Egypt, were united in his worship.” Most likely, once again, these refer to a latter-day fulfillment of the scriptures. ¶ *And the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.* That is, the Egyptians and Assyrians, together, shall serve the Lord. Here is yet another example of where the KJV was produced with inspiration—despite the reading of the ancient versions (𐤀, 𐤅, 𐤆). The predecessors of the KJV, such as the Bishops Bible correctly has: “so that the Egyptians and the Assyrians shall serve the Lord together,” as do many of the modern versions (e.g.,

ASV, Amplified, ESV, HCSB, JPS, LITV, NASB, RV, WEB, Webster, and YLT). To give the English speaker an idea of how this verse is rendered, it may read as follows: “וְעָבְדוּ (And shall serve) מִצְרַיִם (Egypt) אֶת-אַשּׁוּר (Asshur).” It is therefore easy to see why so many would make the mistake of thinking that it reads that Egypt shall serve Assyria. But the words *LORD* and *with* are implied in the ellipsis, so that it should read, “And the Egyptians with the Assyrians shall serve the LORD,” or “And the Egyptians shall serve the LORD with the Assyrians,” along the lines of the Bishops Bible.¹³ Gill writes, “that is, the Lord, as Kimhi and Ben Melech interpret it; they shall both serve the Lord with one shoulder and consent, unite in prayer to the Lord, in hearing the word, and attending on other ordinances.” Cheyne explains, “The Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians: The sense of the word rendered ‘serve’ is clear from ISAIAH 19:21. No Israelite could misunderstand the phrase any more than the term ‘knowledge’ for ‘knowledge of Jehovah’ in Hosea 4:6.¹⁴” Rawlinson has, “The more complete fulfillment was doubtless after Pentecost, when Christianity was preached and established in Egypt and Libya on the one hand, in Parthia, and Media, and Elam and Mesopotamia on the other (Acts 2:9–10).” We will also see a latter-day fulfillment of this prophecy, as the Gospel shall be preached in every continent and every tongue.

24 In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, [even] a blessing in the midst of the land:

Or rather, Israel shall be a third, along with Egypt and Assyria which shall each constitute a third, all united to worship the Lord. Delitzsch correctly says, “Israel has now reached the great end of its calling—to be a blessing in “the midst of the earth” (בְּקֶרֶב הָאֲדָמָה, in the whole circuit of the earth), all nations being here represented by Egypt and Assyria.” Israel was placed in

¹³ Alexander has, “The last clause admits two constructions, one of which regards אֶת as the objective particle, and understands the clause to mean that the *Egyptians shall serve the Assyrians*: the other makes אֶת a preposition, and explains the clause to mean that *the Egyptians shall serve* (God) *with the Assyrians*. In favour of the first is the constant usage of עָבַד with אֶת (Genesis 14:4; 27:40; 31:6; Exodus 14:12, &c.), and the unanimous agreement of the ancient versions. But the sense thus yielded is at variance with the context, what precedes and follows being clearly expressive of a union so complete and equal as to exclude the idea of subjection or superiority.

¹⁴ “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children” (Hosea 4:6).

the center of the known world to be an influence for good.

25 Whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed [be] Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.

Calvin has, “Though these titles belonged exclusively to Israel, they shall likewise be conferred on other nations, which the Lord hath adopted to be his own ... By calling the Egyptians ‘the people of God,’ he means that they will share in the honour which God deigned to bestow in a peculiar manner on the Jews alone. When he calls [the] Assyrians *the work of his hands*, he distinguishes them by the title peculiar to his Church ... When he comes to Israel, he invests him with his prerogative, which is, that he is *the inheritance of God*, so that among the new brethren he still holds the rank and honour of the first-born.” Delitzsch correctly speaks of the eschatological basis of the prophecy, “The culminating point in ISAIAH 19:25 answers to the lowest point in ISAIAH 19:15. Every step in the ascending half is indicated by the expression ‘in that day.’ Six times do we find this sign-post to the future within the limits of ISAIAH 19:16–25. This expression is almost as characteristic of Isaiah as the corresponding expression, ‘Behold, the days come’ (הִנֵּה יָמַי), is of Jeremiah (compare, for example, ISAIAH 7:18–25). And it is more

particularly in the promising or Messianic portions of the prophecy that it is so favourite an introduction (ISAIAH 11:10–11; 12:1; compare Zechariah) ... For ISAIAH chapter 19 predicts the saving effect that will be produced upon Egypt by the destruction of Assyria. And ISAIAH 19:23. announces what will become of Assyria. Assyria will also pass through judgment to salvation. This eschatological conclusion to ISAIAH 19, in which Egypt and Assyria are raised above themselves into representatives of the two halves of the heathen world, is the golden clasp which connects ISAIAH 19 and ISAIAH 20:1–6.” Naegelsbach writes, “Egypt is called עַמִּי ‘my people,’ Assyria מַעֲשֵׂה יָדַי ‘work of my hands,’ but Israel retains the name of honor נַחֲלָתִי, ‘mine inheritance,’ for thereby it is characterized as the actual son of the house and head of the family.” Alexander opines, “In order to express once more and in the most emphatic manner the admission of Egypt and Assyria to the privileges of the chosen people, he selects three titles commonly bestowed upon the latter exclusively, to wit, *God’s people*, *the work of his hands*, and his *inheritance*, and these three he distributes to the three united powers without discrimination or invidious distinction.”

1 June 2004

Isaiah 20

The inhabitants of Ashdod had rebelled against Assyria and the latter sieged the place and recovered it. The people had thought to obtain protection against Assyria from Egypt and Cush. Instead, they ought to have leaned upon the Lord. To show the useless idea of leaning on Egypt and Cush, the Prophet Isaiah is asked to go barefoot and in his undergarments for three years, as a sign that Egypt would soon be devastated by Assyria and be reduced to complete humiliation. Even that Egypt upon whom Judah was so apt to lean on despite the Lord's warnings. Nägelsbach summarizes: "In the year when the Tartan, i.e. commander-in-chief of king Sargon of Assyria, came against Ashdod to besiege the city ... Isaiah received commandment from the Lord to take off his garment made of bad sack linen and his sandals, and to go about naked and barefoot. For the incredible thing shall happen that the Egyptians and Ethiopians, shall be compelled to go into captivity naked and barefoot, like Isaiah goes about. Thereupon all inhabitants of the sea-board of Palestine [AMP explains, "the inhabitants of this coastland {the Israelites and their neighbors}"], will, with terror and shame, be sensible how wrong they were to confide in the power and glory of Ethiopia and Egypt. They will say: Thus it has gone with the power from whom we expected protection; how now shall it go with us?"

vv. 1–6. The people ask, if Egypt will be so punished, what will happen to us who have leaned on her for support? Only when we lean on the Lord can we be safe.

1 ¶ In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod, (when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him,) and fought against Ashdod, and took it;

In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod. Of Ashdod, we know it was one of the five principal cities governed by the Philistines, and at one time assigned to Judah (ISBE). *Tartan* [תַּרְתָּן] was a high military office, such as commander or general. ¶ (*When Sargon the king of Assyria sent him, and fought against Ashdod, and took it.* Barnes has, "Ashdod, called by the Greeks Azotus, was a seaport on the Mediterranean, between Askelon and Ekron, and not far from Gaza (Reland's *Palestine*, iii.) It was one of the five cities of the Philistines, assigned to the tribe of Judah, but never conquered by them (Joshua 13:8; Joshua 15:46–47). The temple of Dagon stood here; and here the ark of God was brought after the fatal battle of Eben-ezer (1 Samuel 5:1 ff.) It sustained many sieges, and was regarded as an important place in respect to Palestine,¹ and also to Egypt." ¶ Rawlinson explains: "Egypt and Ethiopia were at the time united under one head, Shabak, or Shabatak; and the inhabitants of Ashdod looked to this quarter for deliverance from the Assyrian power. Shortly after the first capture, they revolted, deposed the

king whom Sargon had set over them, appointed another, and then proceeded, in conjunction with Philistia, Judah, Edom, and Moab, to call in the aid of the Egyptians and Ethiopians. Isaiah's mission on this occasion was to discourage Judaea from joining Ashdod and her allies in this appeal. He was instructed to prophesy that Assyria would shortly inflict a severe defeat on the two African powers, and carry into captivity large numbers of both nations. The prophecy seems to have had its accomplishment about twelve years later, when Sennacherib defeated the combined forces of Egypt and Ethiopia at Eltekeh, near Ekron (G. Smith, *Eponym Canon*, p. 133)."

2 At the same time spake the LORD by ¶ Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, Go and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoe from thy foot. And he did so, walking naked and barefoot.

✓ by the hand of

At the same time spake the LORD by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, Go and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoe from thy foot. The LXX (6) translates it as, "Loose thy sandals from off thy feet."

¶ The Lord frequently used this teaching method of giving a "sign and a wonder," by asking His prophets to dress or appear, or act or behave in certain ways, as an object lesson. For instance, Jeremiah was commanded to take off his belt or girdle, and to place it in a hole wherein he had to dig, only to find it completely decomposed when he came back for it, "Thus saith the LORD, After this manner will I mar the pride of Judah, and the great pride of Jerusalem. This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, which walk in the imagination of their heart, and walk after other gods, to

¹ Speaking of the region between the Mediterranean and the Jordan, which I prefer to call the Holy Land.

serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing” (Jeremiah 13:9–10, see ISAIAH 13:1–15). Young says, “Isaiah recounts the revelation by saying that ‘The Lord spake through the hand of Isaiah.’ As in the seventh chapter so here the prophet objectifies himself. The expression ‘hand of Isaiah’ simply indicates the person, or instrumentality, or power of Isaiah. God had once spoken to Pharaoh through the hand of Moses (Exodus 9:35b) ... The word ‘hand’ thus designates the revelation of God as it is delivered by the prophet.” ¶ *And he did so, walking naked and barefoot.* The LXX (6) has, “And do thus, going naked and barefoot,” and adds, “having the shame of Egypt exposed.” The Talmud tradition (Seder Mo’ed, Shabbath 114a) explains it: “‘Naked’ means in worn-out garments; ‘barefoot’ in patched shoes” (Talmud, Soncino). Rotherham, pointing to the word naked as a state of not being fully dressed rather than having absolutely no clothes on, has, “And he did so, walking disrobed and barefoot.” SOT reads, “And he did so, walking dismantled and barefoot.” AMP explains, “And he had done so, walking around stripped [to his loincloth] and barefoot.” ¶ Thus it is that we may say to someone, “I am not dressed,” but not necessarily mean we have nothing on, but rather, that we do not feel we can be seen in public. Young writes, “Isaiah need not be thought of as having gone about completely naked. This is shown by the addition of the word ‘barefoot.’ Had he been completely naked, there would be no need for this additional description.” Delitzsch explains, “What Isaiah was directed to do, therefore, was simply opposed to common custom, and not to moral decency. He was to lay aside the dress of a mourner and preacher of repentance, and to have nothing on but his tunic (cetoneh); and in this, as well as barefooted, he was to show himself in public. This was the costume of a man who had been robbed and disgraced, or else of a beggar or prisoner of war.”

3 And the LORD said, Like as my servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years [for] a sign and wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia;

And the LORD said, Like as my servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years. Isaiah has been honored, here, with the title, עֶבְדִּי יֵשַׁעְיָהוּ, “my servant Yeshayahu.” ¶ [For] a sign and wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia. The LXX (6) has, “There shall be three years for signs and wonders to the Egyptians and Ethiopians.” The Syriac (5) has: “So shall there be signs and wonders for three years upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia.” Or more properly, as the NAS (and NIV, SOT) has it, “Three years as a sign and

token against Egypt and Cush.” Henry writes, “It was intended to signify that the Egyptians and the Ethiopians should be led away captive by the king of Assyria, thus stripped, or in rags, and very shabby clothing, as Isaiah was.” Delitzsch has, “The strange and unseemly dress of the prophet, whenever he appeared in his official capacity for three whole years, was a prediction of the fall of the Egypto-Ethiopian kingdom, which was to take place at the end of these three years... Egypt and Ethiopia are as closely connected here as Israel [Ephraim] and Judah in ISAIAH 11:12. They were at that time one kingdom, so that the shame of Egypt was the shame of Ethiopia.” A number of scholars have alternatively argued that perhaps Isaiah walked for three days, or time periods, symbolic of three years, and that the three years represent the period of captivity that Egypt and Ethiopia would be submitted to. The one thing that is certain is that this event must have really been imprinted in the minds of all who saw it. ¶ עַל-מִצְרַיִם וְעַל-כּוּשׁ, upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia. Just as in English we know Mitzraim as Egypt, so Cush is known as Ethiopia.

4 So shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, even with [their] buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt.

✓ the captivity of Egypt

✓ ✓ nakedness

So shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives. Both of these sister nations would be carried away captives by Assyria. ¶ *Young and old, naked and barefoot, even with [their] buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt.* Henderson writes, “On the royal tombs at Thebes are representations of captives led away in triumph, either in a state of complete nudity, or with a small scarf suspended round their loins, and hanging down in front.” This was one of the ways prisoners were often humiliated by their captors.

5 And they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory.

The LXX (6) explains this verse thus, “And the Egyptians being defeated shall be ashamed of the Ethiopians, in whom they had trusted; for they were their glory.” The Syriac (5) has, “And they shall be defeated and ashamed of Ethiopia their trust, and of Egypt their glory.” I rather think, as it further developed in ISAIAH 20:6, that Israel shall be ashamed for having

once put her trust on Egypt and on Cush. When it says *they shall be afraid* we have an elliptical expression missing, they day will come when Israel will be afraid because their expectation of safety to be provided by Egypt and Ethiopia will fail. They will be afraid with no one to turn to, with no human arm to turn to. Rotherham translates both adjectives as those of fear: “Thus shall they be confounded and turn pale,—For Ethiopia, their expectation, and For Egypt their boast.”

6 And the inhabitant of this isle[✓] shall say in that day, Behold, such [is] our expectation, whither we flee for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria: and how shall we escape?

✓ or, country

And the inhabitant of this isle shall say in that day. Many versions use the word coastland for *isle* giving the idea of Israel. Delitzsch has, “~~N~~”, which signifies both an *island* and a *coast-land*, is used as the name of Philistia (Zephaniah 2:5), and as the name of Phoenicia in ISAIAH 23:2, 6; and for this reason Knobel and others understand it here as denoting the former with the inclusion of the latter. But as the Assyrians had already attacked both Phoenicians and Philistines at the time when they marched against Egypt, there can be no doubt that Isaiah had chiefly the Judaeans in his mind. This was the interpretation given by Jerome (‘*Judah trusted in the Egyptians, and Egypt will be destroyed*’), and it has been adopted by Ewald, Drechsler, Luzzatto,

and Meier. The expressions are the same as those in which a little further on we find Isaiah reproving the Egyptian tendencies of Judah’s policy. At the same time, by ‘the inhabitant of this coast-land’ we are not to understand Judah exclusively, but the inhabitants of Palestine generally, with whom Judah was mixed up to its shame, because it had denied its character as the nation of Jehovah in a manner so thoroughly opposed to its theocratic standing.” ¶ *Behold, such [is] our expectation, whither we flee for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria: and how shall we escape?* The Targum (Ⲛ) reads, “To which we were hoping to flee for help to be delivered from before the king of Assyria, if hitherto they could not deliver themselves, how shall we be delivered?” The LXX (ϸ) has, “Behold, we trusted to flee to them for help, who could not save themselves from the king of the Assyrians: and how shall we be saved?” The Syriac (ܣ) renders it, “Behold, here is our trust, to whom we fled for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria; and how shall we escape?” The Douay version has, “Lo, this was our hope, to whom we fled for help, to deliver us from the face of the king of the Assyrians. And how shall we be able to escape?” Fausset explains the question: “If Egypt, in which we trusted, was overcome, how shall we, a small weak state, escape?” Gladly, there is *always* an escape. We must pray the Father in the name of the Holy One of Israel, even Jesus the Christ.

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Isaiah 21

We turn to prophecies against Babylon, Edom and Arabia. There are spiritual and temporal elements implied in these revelations. We have been commanded to leave spiritual Babylon and turn to the Lord. Likewise, for LDS, Idumea, or Edom, has similar connotations. Some of the prophecies began their fulfillment during the time of the Assyrian invasion, others during the Babylonian period. We must be ever vigilant as we live in a period of increasing spiritual darkness.

v. 1–10. Isaiah is permitted to see the fall of Babylon.

1 ¶ THE burden of the desert of the sea.
As whirlwinds in the south pass through;
[so] it cometh from the desert, from a the
terrible land.

THE burden of the desert of the sea. The LXX (6) has, “The vision of the desert.” Most exegetes feel the

מִדְבָּרָא (midbar) refers to Babylon. It has been suggested that *sea* is an appropriate term because Babylon was in the middle of the Euphrates and its frequent overflows. Nägelsbach explains that “Babylonia is on the Assyrian monuments often designated simply as ‘sea, sea-country.’” Lowth explains that these overflowing were a serious matter, that for some time dams were built (by the Assyrian queen, Semiramis) to protect against these overflows, but that at the end the dams were destroyed and flooding became normal one more time.

Nägelsbach suggests a similarity with Revelation 17: “Babylon, the great whore, sits on many waters (ver. 1) and at the same time is the desert (ver. 3). The waters, however, are (ver. 15) interpreted ‘peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.’” Delitzsch points us to Jeremiah, who uses the expression “O thou that dwellest upon many waters” (Jeremiah 51:13) in speaking of Babylon. ¶ *As whirlwinds in the south pass through; so it cometh from the desert, from the terrible land.* The Targum (7) has, “As the waters of the sea, rushing along as the tempests: yea, they are coming by the way of the south, hurrying along; yea, they are coming from the wilderness, from the land, in which terrible things are done.” The LXX (6) has, “As though a whirlwind should pass through the desert, coming from the desert, *even* from such a land.” The Syriac (5) reads, “As a whirlwind from the south, sweeping through from the wilderness; so it comes from a far off land.” The Dead Sea Scrolls (8) has “from a distant land.” The key word here is *as*, אֲשֶׁר, comparing the forces of the Persians and the Medes to the devastating whirlwinds from the south. The destructive force of the whirlwinds from the south are well known to Judah (Job

37:9; Zechariah 9:14). Whirlwinds are also an expression of military might (Jeremiah 4:13; Daniel 11:40) and often of the Lord’s punishment (Jeremiah 30:23; Amos 1:14; Zechariah 7:14). The word *south* or *Negev*, נֶגֶב, is used. ¶ *Terrible land.* Calvin here suggests that Babylon’s punishment would come through the *terrible land*, meaning *Judea* (see ISAIAH 18). “Although therefore Babylon was taken and plundered by the Persians and Medes, Isaiah declares that its destruction will come from Judea; because in this manner God will revenge the injuries done to that nation of which he had promised to be the guardian.”

2 A grievous vision is declared unto me;
the treacherous dealer dealeth
treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth. Go
up, O Elam: besiege, O Media; all the
sighing thereof have I made to cease.

✓ hard

A grievous vision is declared unto me; the treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth. The Targum (7) has, “The prophet said: A dreadful grievous &c.” giving us the distinct ideas that it is Isaiah who is speaking here. The word בִּגְדָן, can mean *treacherous*, or *unfaithful* (BDB, TWOT). The idea is here similar to the warning of Jesus that “all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword” (Matthew 26:52). So, as Babylon had been unrighteous, treacherous, and unfaithful, she would fall from the hands of a neighboring power, being made to feel what she had made others feel. ¶ *Go up, O Elam: besiege, O Media; all the sighing thereof have I made to cease.* Rawlinson explains: “The discovery that Cyrus, at the time of his conquest of Babylon, bore the title of ‘King of Ansan,’ not ‘King of Persia,’ coupled with the probability that ‘Ansan’ was a part of Elam, lends a peculiar interest to these words. Isaiah could not describe Cyrus as ‘King of Persia,’ and at the same time be intelligible to his contemporaries, since Persia was a country utterly unknown to them. In using the term ‘Elam’ instead, he uses that of a country known to the Hebrews (Genesis 14:1), adjoining Persia, and, at the

time of his expedition against Babylon, subject to Cyrus.” Rawlinson continues: “Having given ‘Elam’ the first place, the prophet assigns to Media the second. Eleven years before he attacked Babylon, Cyrus had made war upon Astyages (Istuvegu), King of the Medes, had captured him, and become king of the nation, with scarcely any opposition (see the ‘Cylinder of Nabonidus’). Hence the Medes would naturally form an important portion of the force which he led against Babylon.”

3 Therefore are my loins filled with pain: pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth: I was bowed down at the hearing [of it]; I was dismayed at the seeing [of it].

Therefore are my loins filled with pain: pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth. The Targum (ⲧ), instead, has the Prophet speaking about the fear to be experienced by Babylon: “Therefore their loins shall be full of terror: behold, fear shall seize them, like the pangs of a woman that travaileth.” ¶ *I was bowed down at the hearing [of it]; I was dismayed at the seeing [of it].* The Targum (ⲧ), once again transferring the sentiments to Babylon, has: “They are become foolish, so that they cannot hear; they have erred, so that they cannot see (Chaldee, *not to see*).” A woman in travail is one in the process of giving birth.

4 My heart panted, ~ fearfulness affrighted me: the night of my pleasure hath he turned ~ ~ into fear unto me.

- ✓ or, mind wandered
- ✓ ✓ put

My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me. The Targum (ⲧ) reads, “Their heart is bewildered; distress and terrors have seized them.” The LXX (Ⲅ) has, “My heart wanders, and transgression overwhelms (literally, *baptizes*¹) me.” The Syriac (Ⲫ) reads, “My heart failed, pangs made me quake.” The Douay has “My heart failed, darkness amazed me.” With Gill and a few others, I think these words represent the sentiments of the Babylonians. My reasoning is that the following expression, “the night of my pleasure” most likely refers to the sentiments of Babylon. ¶ *The night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me.* The Targum

¹ That is, envelopes or surrounds. This is what happened the first time the Spirit testified to me of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. I was completely enveloped or baptized by the Spirit.

(ⲧ) reads, “Because the place of their confidence hath become destruction unto them.” The LXX (Ⲅ) has, “My soul is occupied with fear.” The Syriac (Ⲫ) has, “The beauty of my pleasures has been turned into terror to me.” The Douay has “Babylon, my beloved, is become a wonder to me.” If the Targum (ⲧ) is correct in its rendering of these last few verses, then “the night of my pleasure” in ISAIAH 21:4 probably represents the vain confidence felt by Babylon.

5 Prepare the table, watch in the watchtower, eat, drink: arise, ye princes, [and] anoint the shield.

Prepare the table, watch in the watchtower, eat, drink. The Targum (ⲧ) reads, “Set in order the tables, set the watchmen, eat *and* drink.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Prepare the table (literally, *set in order*), place the watchmen, eat ye, drink ye” The Syriac (Ⲫ) has plural for tables and watchtowers. The Douay has “behold in the watch-tower them that eat and drink.” The Dead Sea Scrolls (Ⲛ) has “They set the tables, they prepare the rugs, they eat, they drink!” ¶ Daniel 5 opens with a banquet in which King Belshazzar and his courtiers defamed the sacred vessels that his father, King Nebuchadnezzar, had removed from the temple in Jerusalem, by drinking wine from them while idolizing their false gods. Ibn Ezra suggests that Daniel 5 is the fulfillment of this Isaianic prophecy. Indeed, “In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain” (Daniel 5:30). We read in *Cyropaed*² (quoted in Henderson), that Gobrias, one of Belshazzar’s generals, said of the occasion, “the city seems tonight to be in general revel...” Kay well says that if the Lord was willing to chastise the arrogance of Babylon, how much more would He punish Jerusalem, too: “Jerusalem has become assimilated to Babel. Must not, then, the decree soon go forth, ‘Fallen, fallen, is Jerusalem’? Indeed, it had already been published in ISAIAH 3:8.” Depressing indeed, but for the wonderful promises made to the children of Israel in Deuteronomy 30 and elsewhere. ¶ *Arise, ye princes, [and] anoint the shield.* The Targum (ⲧ) reads, “Rise, ye princes, polish, and make bright the arms!” The LXX (Ⲅ) has, “Arise, ye princes, and prepare *your* shields.” The Douay has “take up the shield.” Continuing from Daniel 5, it is clear that among those invited to the great feast were the princes (Daniel 5:3). Henderson suggests that rather than those inside rising up to defend themselves, this was once again, a command uttered to the attacking forces to “calling upon them to seize the favorable moment of attack.” The idea of anointing the shields, was to make them

² *Cyropaedia*, by Xenophon.

oily and slippery to the weapons of the enemy (Henderson leaning on Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians I, p. 298; also Gill, leaning on Rashi). Barnes explains that many shields were made with an outer frame of metal or wood, covered with a thick hide of such animals as elephants, rhinoceros, hippopotamus, or some other animal. These needed to be kept supple with oil, lest they become brittle and tear easily in war.

6 For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth.

The LXX (6) has, "For thus said the Lord to me, Go and station a watchman for thyself, and declare whatever thou shalt see." The watchman here mentioned is probably Isaiah himself, who is permitted to see of the impending fall of Babylon in some detail, or rather the Lord who reveals all things to Isaiah. The Syriac (5) implies the latter: "I the Lord stand continually in the daytime, and I stand upon my watchtower every night" (v. 8). Habakkuk was another Prophet of God who stood as a watchman on a tower (Habakkuk 2:1).

7 And he saw a chariot [with] a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, [and] a chariot of camels; and he hearkened diligently with much heed:

And he saw a chariot [with] a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, [and] a chariot of camels. The Targum (7) reads, "And he saw a chariot, a man, and with him a couple of horsemen: a rider on an ass, a rider on a camel." The LXX (6) has, "And I saw two mounted horsemen, and a rider on an ass, and a rider on a camel." The Syriac (5) and Douay (based on Vulgate) also makes it riders on an ass and on a camel. The Dead Sea Scrolls (8) has "When he sees chariots, each man with a pair of horses, riders on donkeys or riders on camels." Skinner explains that both asses and camels were used by the Persians in combat. Rawlinson, has this: "...rather a troop of horsemen riding two and two. This is exactly how a cavalry force was ordinarily represented by the Assyrians. Chariots are not intended either here or in ISAIAH 21:9. They were not employed by the Persians until a late period of their history (see *Ancient Monarchies* 4:113, 122)." Similarly, Rawlinson explains that it was "men mounted on asses and on camels." The Hebrew word, רֶכֶב, presents some confusion, as it can stand for either *riders* or *drivers of chariots*, or *chariots* (Gesenius, BDB, HAL). TWOT makes an interesting observation, that רֶכֶב was

particularly used for the riding of other animals—not just horses—such as asses and mules, which fits well with our context here. The ASV thus reads, "And when he seeth a troop, horsemen in pairs, a troop of asses, a troop of camels, he shall hearken diligently with much heed." NASB has: "When he sees riders, horsemen in pairs, A train of donkeys, a train of camels, Let him pay close attention, very close attention." ¶ *And he hearkened diligently with much heed.* The Targum (7) puts the Prophet in the watchtower, "The prophet said, I listened diligently, and, behold, I saw mighty armies (Royal Polyglot, *great armies are coming*)!" The LXX (6) seems to mix parts of this verse with the next, "Hearken with great attention, and call thou Urias to the watch-tower."

8 And he cried, A lion: My lord, I stand continually upon the watchtower in the daytime, and I am set in my ward whole nights:

- ✓ or, cried as a lion
- ✓ ✓ or, every night

And he cried, A lion. The Targum (7) has, "The prophet said, the voice or armies, coming with coats of mail, is as a lion." Note the margin ||, "*As a lion.*" The Douay has "And a lion cried out." The Dead Sea Scrolls (8) has "The lookout shouted." Ibn Ezra, as with the margin ||, suggests that the watchman cried out with the voice and strength of a lion. This fits in well with ISAIAH 31:4, "For thus hath the LORD spoken unto me, Like as the lion and the young lion roaring..." Barnes well points out that other instances exist of the prefix *as*, אֲשֶׁר, being *left out*, and gives ISAIAH 62:5 as an example: "For *as* a young man marryeth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and *as* the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." A few other examples include ISAIAH 22:23; 47:8; and 66:3. Faussett, leaning on Horsley, suggests that it was not so much the roaring voice of a lion that was involved here, but rather, his watchfulness. Gill suggests that Cyrus, a type of Christ in the destruction of Babylon, was meant here as the lion: "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, by whom antichrist, or mystical Babylon, will be destroyed." ¶ *My lord, I stand continually upon the watchtower in the daytime, and I am set in my ward whole nights.* The Targum (7) reads, "And I stand continually upon the watchtower before the Lord in the day, and as a guard I stand all night." The LXX (6) has, "The Lord has spoken. I stood continually during the day, and I stood in the camp all the night." The Syriac (5), as we have already noted in verse six, has: "Then the watchman cried into my ears, saying, I the LORD stand continually in the daytime, and I stand upon my

watchtower every night.” The Douay has “I am upon the watch-tower of the Lord, standing continually by day: and I am upon my ward, standing whole nights.” Calvin explains that the expression refers to the certainty with which these things will come to pass: “...for they whom God has appointed to keep watch are neither drowsy nor dim-sighted.” Alexander suggests that the Masoretic pointing is important and explains that instead of אֲדֹנָי, often used to denote “my lord” or “sir,” we have אֲדֹנִי, “one of the divine names.”

9 And, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, [with] a couple of horsemen. And he answered and said, Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.

And, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, [with] a couple of horsemen. The Targum (Ⲯ)³ reads, “And behold this came, a cavalcade of men and with them a pair of horsemen.” Henderson points to the unexpectedness of the attack, and quotes Herodotus (lib. 1:191). Alexander explains that רָכַב אִישׁ means “mounted men.” ¶ *And he answered and said, Babylon is fallen, is fallen.* The LXX (Ⲅ) has, “And he answered and said, Babylon is fallen, is fallen.” The same expression is found in the book of Revelations, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen” (18:2). Most exegetes point out that the expression אָמַן, *and he answered*, is used in the Hebrew to mean that the interlocutor has resumed speaking. Gesenius rather explains that אָמַן “...is applied to anyone who pronounces anything solemnly and with a loud voice” and is also used when “uttering an oracle.” So a better translation might be: “And he declared &c.” CEV uses the word *shouted*. ¶ *And all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.* The Targum (Ⲯ) renders it, “And all the images of her idols shall be dashed to pieces to the ground.” The LXX (Ⲅ) has, “And all her images and her idols have been crushed to the ground.” The Dead Sea Scrolls (Ⲕ) has “They have shattered all the images of her gods.” Henderson quotes Josephus and the low regard that the Persians had for images of gods (lib. 1:131), and thus Henderson concludes, “They would, therefore, naturally break them in pieces, whenever they fell in their way.” Rawlinson has, “No doubt there was also, in the sack of the city, much damage done to many of the idols by a greedy soldiery, who may have carried off many images of gold or silver, and broken up others that were not

portable, and stripped off the plates of precious metal from the idols of ‘brass, and iron, and wood, and stone’ (Daniel 5:6).” Rawlinson and a number of the exegetes contend, however, that to a great degree the Persians tolerated the false idols of the Babylonians even though they were given no importance, so that the idols had no respect from the conquering forces. Either way, the idols were impotent and shattered. Young points to several scriptures that show the fall of Babylon and the impotence of her idols to stop it: “Therefore, behold, the days come, that I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon: and her whole land shall be confounded, and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her” (Jeremiah 51:47, see also Jeremiah 51:52).

10 O my threshing, and the corn of my floor: that which I have heard of the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you.

✓ son

O my threshing, and the corn of my floor. The Douay has “O the threshing, and the children of my floor.” Skinner explains: “The application of Israel, addressed as **my threshing** (i.e., threshed one) and **my child of the threshing-floor**—forcible figurative epithets of Israel as a nation crushed and down-trodden by the brutal tyranny of Babylon.” Nägelsbach well says, regarding the expression וְכִנְיָן-וְזֵרֵי, “and son of my threshing floor⁴,” that this is a forceful way to say “A son of the threshing-floor is one who lies on it, and is threshed, and that not merely briefly and accidentally, but for a long time, as it were habitually.” Indeed, Babylon had threshed Israel and the people of the Lord, but now it was her turn to be threshed: “The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing-floor, it is time to thresh her” (Jeremiah 51:33). Rawlinson provides this beautiful image: “Her chastisements have long been ‘threshing’ Israel, separating the grain from the chaff, and will do so still more as time goes on. The prophet’s message is for the comfort of those who shall have gone through the process and become the true ‘children of the threshing-floor’—pure wheat, fit to be gathered into the garner of God (Matthew 3:12).” ¶ *That which I have heard of the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you.* The Targum (Ⲯ) puts these words as coming from the prophet, אֲמַר נְבִיא, “The Prophet said.” The LXX (Ⲅ) has, “Hear what things I have heard of the Lord of hosts which the God of Israel has declared to us.” The Syriac (Ⲫ) reads, “That which I

³ Stenning.

⁴ Not maize, but rather *grains* (see ISAIAH 17:5).

⁵ Often translated as “corn of my floor” as in the AV.

have heard of the LORD God of Israel, I have declared to you.” Indeed, this is the job of a prophet, to declare the words of life, as received from the Lord, to the people.

vv. 11–12. Henderson explains that exegetes are in disagreement as to whether Syrian Dumah is meant, “so called from being situated on the confines of Arabia Petrea and the Syrian desert” or whether it is meant as “merely an abbreviation of **דְּמוּם**, Edom.” Most all of the exegetical works I consulted strongly prefer to follow the LXX (6), and the view that Edom is meant. Most exegetes also feel that the night is an allusion to the end of the Babylonian captivity, with a new night referring to future troubles that would affect Edom while for Judah there would be a morning of deliverance. Just as Babylon had both physical and spiritual representations, here also **Dumah** has both. According to the ISBE, the word **דְּמוּם**, among its various significations, may be understood as “the land of **silence** or **death**, the grave (Psalm 94:17; 115:17).” In scripture, death has a number of interesting allusions that fit well with these verses. Ludlow does well in turning our attention to D&C: “For I am no respecter of persons, and will that all men shall know that the day speedily cometh; the hour is not yet, but is nigh at hand, when peace shall be taken from the earth, and the devil shall have power over his own dominion. And also the Lord shall have power over his saints, and shall reign in their midst, and shall come down in judgment upon *Idumea*, or *the world*” (D&C 1:35–36, emphasis added). Then Elder Harold B. Lee warned that the dangers from the unseen world, here represented by the night, were even greater than those from the world we do perceive. There also are allusions to the Second Coming. As there are possible representations of the states of apostasy and restoration.

11 ¶ The burden of **Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?**

*The burden of **Dumah**.* The Targum (7) has, “The burden of the cup of cursing to give **Dumah** (**דְּמוּם**) to drink.” The Dead Sea Scrolls (8) also has **Dumah**. The LXX (6), on the other hand, has *The Vision of Idumea* (Edom), *Τὸ ὄραμα τῆς Ἰδουμαίας*. Indeed, in Genesis 32:3, we read “...the land of Seir, the country of Edom.” Calvin has, “Mount Seir, as we learn from the book of Genesis, was a mountain of the Edomites.” D&C, once again, represents Edom as the world, very similarly as the term Babylon. ¶ *He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of*

the night? The Targum (7) has, “He thundered unto me from the heavens, Prophet! explain unto them what shall hereafter come to pass.” The LXX (6) has for the complete verse only these words, “Call to me out of Seir; guard ye the bulwarks.” The Syriac (S) reads as the Masoretic text (M), “He called me from Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?” Exegetes suggest that the question is being asked of the prophet, along the lines of how much time is left of the night. When will the morning come? ¶ In *Rain in Due Season* we have: “And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind: And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life: In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see” (Deuteronomy 28:65–67). ¶ The idea of the night is interpreted by a time of stress. Then Elder Harold B. Lee of the Quorum of the Twelve explained in General Conference, “In a revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith the Lord said that Satan drew after him a third part of the spirits whom God created, and that they with Satan became the force in the world to try to destroy the work of righteousness.” Here, Elder Lee compares this Isaianic verse with the role of the watchman on the tower at Mount Seir: “‘Watchman, what of the night,’ suggesting that, more to be feared than the enemies that could be perceived with the physical senses or could be seen by physical eyes were the powers of darkness that came unseen by physical eyes. That same thought was in the mind of the Master, no doubt, when he said: ‘And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell’ (Matthew 10:28). The Apostle Paul seemed to understand very clearly this same power when he declared: ‘For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places’ (Ephesians 6: 12).”⁶ President Ezra Taft Benson also quoted this scripture, and explaining it as *not all being right with Zion and the tactics of the adversary*: “*Watchmen—what of the night?* We must respond by saying that all is not well in Zion. As Moroni counseled, we must cleanse the inner vessel beginning first with ourselves, then with our families, and finally with the

⁶ General Conference, October 1949, Elder Harold B. Lee, of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, pp. 55–58. Suggested reading, also, is Chapter 34, ‘Your Coat of Armor’ in *Stand Ye In Holy Places: Selected Sermons and Writings of President Harold B. Lee*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1988, pp. 327–339.

Church . . . the Book of Mormon warns us of the tactics of the adversary in the last days: ‘And others will he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well—and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell’ (2 Nephi 28:21). There are many ‘awake’ passages in the Book of Mormon, such as: ‘O that ye would awake; awake from a deep sleep, yea, even from the sleep of hell . . . awake . . . [and] put on the armor of righteousness. Shake off the chains with which ye are bound, and come forth out of obscurity, and arise from the dust’ (2 Nephi 1:13, 23). As a people, it seems we can survive persecution easier and better than we can peace and prosperity. The plaguing sin of this generation is sexual immorality. This, the Prophet Joseph said, would be the source of more temptations, more buffetings, and more difficulties for the elders of Israel than any other (see *Journal of Discourses* 8:55). President Joseph F. Smith said that sexual impurity would be one of the three dangers that would threaten the Church within—and so it does (see *Gospel Doctrine*, pp. 312–13). It permeates our society.”⁷ Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone alluded to this verse in Isaiah twice—once in terms of defending the youth from darkness and the other of defending the Constitution of the United States: “My testimony to all of you wonderful brethren who preside over and lead the Aaronic Priesthood is that you are more important to the Church than you would ever dare to suppose. In Isaiah, the prophet asks, ‘Watchman, what of the night?’ This generation of youth will be the torchbearers in the future, possibly in the darkest period of the world”⁸; and “We are the nation’s watchmen—no other people collectively love the Constitution and honor it and hold it as a divinely inspired document as do the Latter-day Saints. The duty of the watchman is to watch over and safeguard his people. And remember the thought-provoking question by President Harold B. Lee, ‘But watchman, what of the night?’ As a generation of those who love this glorious country, we must ask ourselves, ‘But watchman, what of the night?’ Have our youth enough of the fires of freedom kindled in them to withstand the darkness? We must teach them in our homes, churches, and schools. The sound must go across this land from one end to the other.”⁹

12 The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come.

The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night. This is the other half of the Scripture we have already cited above, from *Rain in Due Season* (Deuteronomy 28:65–67). The Targum (ⲧ) here is, once again, drastically different: “The prophet said, there is a reward to the righteous, and there is punishment to the wicked.” In other words, for Edom or the world, there is a time of comfort coming after one of stress and anxiety, but this will be fleeting. Barnes well points out how Edom would be glad to see the overthrow of Jerusalem: “Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof” (Psalm 137:7). To Judah—or to the righteous—there would come a more enduring period of comfort. It is pointed out, for instance, that Edom may have for a while lived periods of day and night. Delitzsch writes: “...even if the morning dawns, it will be swallowed up again directly by night. And the history was quite in accordance with such an answer. The Assyrian period of judgment was followed by the Chaldean, and the Chaldean by the Persian, and the Persian by the Grecian, and the Grecian by the Roman. Again and again there was a glimmer of morning dawn for Edom (and what a glimmer in the Herodian age!¹⁰), but it was swallowed up directly by another night, until Edom became an utter דומה,¹¹ and disappeared from the history of the nations. ” The exegetes explain that in contrast Judah would find relief. With Victor Ludlow, I feel that the morning represents the Second Coming and the Millennial Reign of the Lord, as this will truly mark a period of relief and salvation. There is much yet that Israel and Judah will suffer before that day. The night well represents the rule of Satan over the world, and the allusion fits well for the Millennial period as the righteous will come forth in the morning of the resurrection while the unrighteous will suffer in the Spirit World until they are ready for the resurrection.¹²

¹⁰ The Herodian family was Idumean.

¹¹ Recall the meaning, *silence* or *death*.

¹² This is not the place for an extensive treatise of the suffering of the unrighteous in the Spirit World, but I wish to say a few things about my understanding of this suffering. “Therefore I command you to repent—” the Savior said. “Repent, lest I smite you by the rod of my mouth, and by my wrath, and by my anger, and your sufferings be sore—how sore you know not, how exquisite you know not, yea, how hard to bear you know not. For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I; Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—

⁷ Benson, President Ezra Taft. Cleansing the Inner Vessel. April 1986 General Conference.

⁸ Featherstone, Elder Vaughn J. “Called As If He Heard a Voice from Heaven.” October 1983 General Conference.

⁹ Featherstone, Elder Vaughn J. But Watchman, What of the Night? October 1975 General Conference.

¶ When Isaiah says that “the morning cometh, and also the night,” yet another glorious interpretation comes to mind. Isaiah may well be referring to the First Coming of the Lord, when the long night of darkness of apostasy would be shaken, such that “The people that walked in darkness [would come to see] a great light” (ISAIAH 9:2). But another night is spoken off, that is an even longer night of apostasy that would envelope the world until that glorious morning in the Sacred Grove, when the Father and the Son would appear to Joseph Smith, the boy prophet, and dispel the darkness of ignorance and prejudice. Notice carefully John 9:5, when the Savior says, “As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” When we remember that latter-day revelation has put Edom for the world, or worldly things, we then see clearly that the world is full of darkness without Jesus Christ. When the Savior makes himself manifest, He brings us light and truth. This issue of apostasy and restoration or turning unto Christ also fits well with the next expression, “*return, come*” שָׁבוּ אֵתָּי. The invitation “*turn ye*” שָׁבוּ, or שָׁבוּ, is found throughout the Old Testament, as a tender invitation to follow the Lord. ¶ *If ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come.* Nägelsbach suggests: “The words for ‘come’ and ‘inquire’ belong rather to the Aramean than to the Hebrew dialect, the word for ‘inquire’ occurs farther in this sense, only in Daniel, and in the prophecy of Obadiah, of which Edom is the subject. Further, the singular verbal ending, which Isaiah here multiplies, making a sort of rhyme out of it, was probably current in the Idumean idiom. He mocks the inquirers, therefore, with Idumean sounds, ‘Return, come,’ is a pleonasm employed for the sake of the rhyme in Hebrew.” One alternative, then, is that the Edomites were being taunted. Another that has been offered is that the Edomites were taunting the Prophet by their question and suggestion that he should prophecy. C. J. Vaughan (in Butler Bible Work) writes regarding this verse: “How often, in these times, do we

and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink— Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men” (D&C 19:15–19). These are sobering words indeed. It is my understanding that in the Spirit World we will come to know how our actions, if we have not done right, pained and affected others. I saw a wonderful movie that has given me much to reflect upon, “The Last Emperor” (1987), directed by Bernardo Bertolucci. We see the difficult transformation through which the last Emperor of China, Pu Yi (1906–1967), had to evolve and mature. As a youth Pu Yi had so many servants and was so spoiled he did not even have to get up to go to the bathroom. Pu Yi’s life of comfort and luxury came to an abrupt end as he had to begin a normal, unpampered existence. It was excruciatingly difficult for him to adjust. The movie takes us through the long and painful process that it took for Yi to finally find joy and peace through service to others and tending the Peking Botanical Gardens. It is my feeling that we will, in the Spirit World, likewise have to face our weaknesses. We have been taught that making these changes here on earth is easier than doing so in the Spirit World.

find persons utterly irreligious and worldly, entering into questions concerning God and His truth, concerning revelation, inspiration, miracle and prophecy, as though they had a right to all the enlightenment and comfort and assurance which the saints of God have for their guidance and upholding... To the careless questioner all truth is an enigma.”

President Kimball¹³ wrote with much strength to those who might enter into day and leave darkness behind: “If men are really humble, they will realize that they discover, but do not create, truth. ... [Man] may acquire knowledge in any field, though it requires much thought and effort ... Why, oh, why do people think they can fathom the most complex spiritual depths without the necessary experimental and laboratory work accompanied by compliance with the laws that govern it? ... With preconceived religious notions stubbornly held, one is not teachable. The Lord has promised repeatedly that he will give you a knowledge of spiritual things when you have placed yourself in a proper frame of mind. He has counseled us to seek, ask, and search diligently. These innumerable promises are epitomized by Moroni in the following: ‘And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things’ (Moroni 10:5). What a promise! How extravagant! How wonderful!... The time will come when there will be a surrender of every person who has ever lived on this earth ... it will be an unforced surrender, an unconditional surrender. When will it be for you? ... I send to you a solemn warning; and when you stand before the judgment bar in the not-too-distant future, you will know then that I spoke the truth with your eternal welfare in mind. Please remember that I have tried to bring this matter to your attention with such force that it would impress you... I promise you faithfully that if you will study and pray, keeping your mind open, you will receive the light, and it will be to you as the dawning of a new day after having gone through the night of darkness.” ¶ Alexander suggests that rather than a taunt, this expression from Isaiah is “an expression of anxiety arising from a personal concern for the result.” In summary, let us look at this expression “*return, come*” שָׁבוּ אֵתָּי as an invitation.

We find full support for this interpretation in the Targum (T). “If ye will repent, repent ye, whilst ye are able to repent.” This reminds us of Alma 34:33, “And now, as I said unto you before, as ye have had so many witnesses, therefore, I beseech of you that ye do not procrastinate the day of your repentance until the end; for after this day of life, which is given us to prepare for eternity, behold, if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein

¹³ President Spencer W. Kimball, “Absolute Truth,” Ensign, September 1978, p. 3

there can be no labor performed.” This, indeed, is the mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to invite all to come unto Christ.

vv. 13–17. Even Arabia would be caught up in the powerful southern incursions beginning with Assyrian forces and continuing with those of Babylonia.

13 ¶ The burden upon Arabia. In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companies of Dedanim.

The burden upon Arabia. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The burden of the cup of cursing to give the Arabians to drink.” Henderson suggests that it probably refers to “*Arabia Deserta*, or the northern, being that which the Hebrews were most familiar. It is peopled by Bedouins, i.e., *inhabitants of the desert*, who have no fixed habitation, but live in tents, and move from place to place [in caravans, אֲרָחוֹת or *travelling companies*], according as they require pasturage for their flocks.” Cheyne explains regarding the word *forest*, “The caravans had had to leave the beaten track, and take refuge in a less exposed part of the desert, where shrubs and thorn-bushes secured them to some extent from observation.” Barnes suggest that the word *forest*, יַעַר, means something different in Hebrew than “a tract of land covered with trees” and instead may well mean a place that is *inaccessible*, with few roads. ¶ *In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companies of Dedanim.* Delitzsch suggests: “Just as אֲדוֹם [Edom, Idumea] becomes דִּימָה [Dumah, silence, death], inasmuch as a night without morning dawn falls upon the mountain of Seir, so will בִּיעָרָב (in Arabia) soon be בִּיעָרָב (in the evening), inasmuch as the sun of Arabia is setting.” Evening is also used in the LXX (Θ) (ἑσπέρας), Targum (Ⲯ), Syriac (Ⲫ) and Vulgate (V). Rawlinson says, “The Dedanim, or Dedanites, were among the chief traders of the Arabian peninsula. They had commercial dealings with Tyre, which they supplied with ivory, ebony, and ‘precious clothes for chariots’ (Ezekiel 27:15, 20).” Dedan was the grandson of Abraham and Keturah (see Genesis 25:1–3).

14 The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented with their bread him that fled.

The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty. The Targum (Ⲯ), LXX (Θ), and Syriac (Ⲫ) (as well as numerous moderns) put this forth

as a command to the people of Tema to go out and bring water to the thirsty fugitives. The Syriac (Ⲫ) reads, “Meet the thirsty, bring water, O you inhabitants of the land of the south!” Ibn Ezra writes, “The prophet tells them to be kind to the caravans, and to give them water, for Moab was rebuked for not having done so (Deuteronomy 23:5).” Alexander, almost alone, argues that the KJV descriptive approach is correct here, “The context makes it far more natural to understand the Prophet as describing an act than as exhorting to it.” Tema is mentioned as one of the descendants of Ishmael, in Genesis 25:15. There is some disagreement between the exegetes as to whether the Tema spoken off is located in “the Hauran, on the caravan route between Palmyra and Petra (Rawlinson) or “the Tema on the pilgrim road from Damascus to Mecca, between *Tebuk* and *Wadi el-Kora*” (Delitzsch). Young, who also leans on the latter, that is on the northwestern Arabian Peninsula suggests: “The mention of Teima shows how far into the desert the scourge of Assyria had reached... Teima is in the northern Hedjaz, a large oasis, with abundant water supply. Tiglath-Pileser III also mentions it. (Cf. ANTET, pp. 283f., 306, 313).” We are unsure, however, if the devastation meant was to come from the Assyrian or Babylonian invasions—or both. ¶ *They prevented with their bread him that fled.* קָדְמוֹ, for the somewhat archaic ‘prevented,’ from the root קָדַם, means to *anticipate the needs* or *to go before* (“to be in readiness for; to meet or satisfy in advance; to act ahead of; to go or arrive before” *Merriam-Webster*, I., 2003), in this case, of the hungry fugitives. So the ASV has, “the inhabitants of the land of Tema did meet the fugitives with their bread.” Many moderns follow the Targum (Ⲯ), LXX (Θ) and Syriac (Ⲫ) to make this an order to go out and be ready to assist the fugitives. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Bring bottles (or, *rivers, abundance*) of water before (literally, *to the face*) the thirsty, who dwell in the land of the south; prepare for the fugitives the daily food (Royal Polyglot, *bread*) which ye eat.” Ye that dwell in the land of the south, prepare ye of that which ye are eating for the fugitives.” The LXX (Θ) has, “Meet the fugitives with bread, because of the multitude of the slain, and because of the multitude of them that lose their way.” The Syriac (Ⲫ) reads, “Meet those who are fleeing with your bread.” The Douay has “meet with bread him that fleeth.” The Dead Sea Scrolls (Q) has “meet the fugitive with bread.”

15 For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, and from the bent bow, and from the grievousness of war.

For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Because, on account of the

slaughter they have fled: from the face of the drawn sword.” For they have fled from before the slaughter, from before the drawn sword.” The LXX (⚡) has, “And because of the multitude of swords.” The Dead Sea Scrolls (⚡) has “For he has fled from the swords.” ¶ *And from the bent bow, and from the grievousness of war.* The Targum (⚡) has, “And from the face of the bent bow; and from the face of the strength of the battle.” The LXX (⚡) has, “And because of the multitude of bent bows, and because of the multitude of them that have fallen in war.” Fausset suggests that these things are said of: “the fugitive Dedanites and other Arabs.”

16 For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Within a year, according to the years of an hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail:

For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Within a year, according to the years of an hireling. The Dead Sea Scrolls (⚡) has “Within three years.” A hireling counts the days of his bondage and freedom. So the implication, is that it is an exact time. ¶ *And all the glory of Kedar shall fail.* The Targum (⚡) has Arabians instead of Kedar. The LXX (⚡) has “sons of Kedar.” The Dead Sea Scrolls (⚡) has “The pomp of Kedar will come to an end.” Nägelsbach explains: “Kedar is, first of all, according to Genesis 25:13, a son of Ishmael. But the name stands here, as very frequently in the later rabbinical usage, for the Arabs, i.e., for the inhabitants of Western Arabia, who alone were known to the Jews.” Delitzsch agrees: “The name *Kedar* is here the collective name of the Arabic tribes generally.” Gill considers Kedar as being just a specific tribe: “these were another sort of Arabians, as the Targum calls them: they descended from Kedar, a son of Ishmael, Genesis 25:13 their ‘glory’ were their multitude, their riches and substance, and which chiefly lay in their flocks; for the sake of which they moved from place to place for pasture, and dwelled in tents, which they

carried with them, and pitched where it was most convenient for them.”

17 And the residue of the number of archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished: for the LORD God of Israel hath spoken [it].

✓ bows

And the residue of the number of archers. The Targum (⚡) has, “And the strength of the warriors (literally, *servants of war*).” Delitzsch writes: “They are numbered here by their bows (in distinction from the numbering by heads), showing that the fighting men are referred to,—a mode of numbering which is customary among the Indian tribes of America, for example (see the work of v. Marius on the Indians of Brazil, i. 395, 411, etc.).” Once again, we have possible fulfillments in both the Assyrian epoch and Babylonian. ¶ *The mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished: for the LORD God of Israel hath spoken [it].* The Targum (⚡) has, “The mighty, the sons of the Arabians, shall be lessened, because by the Word of the Lord (בְּמִקְרָא), the God of Israel, it is thus decreed.” The LXX (⚡) has, “And the remnant of the strong bows of the sons of Kedar shall be small: for the Lord God of Israel has spoken it.” These words בְּיָהוָה אֱלֹהֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל דִּבֶּר, *for the Lord God of Israel hath spoken* give much power to the prophecy and it assures us that it will certainly come to pass. Whenever the Lord God speaks, we can take comfort in His words. I wish to testify that no matter how dark the situation seems at the moment, when the Lord speaks reassurance, it is because He will certainly deliver us. Let us then put our trust in Him who is able to save (see Hebrews 7:25).

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Isaiah 22

This prophecy contains two main sections: verses 1 through 14, and 15 through 25. In the first, the Prophet Isaiah laments the state of Jerusalem and Judah during a siege—perhaps the Babylonian siege during the time of Zedekiah. The second half of the prophecy deals with two of King Hezekiah’s high powered servants, and has important Messianic allusions. Eliakim is given as a type of Christ.

vv. 1–7. A number of exegetes feel that it was the siege that took place during the time of Hezekiah. Delitzsch subscribes to this view as opposed to the failed Assyrian siege: “So far as the prophecy threatened the destruction of Jerusalem by Assyria, it was never actually fulfilled; but the very opposite occurred. Asshur itself met with destruction in front of Jerusalem.” Wordsworth suggests the telescoping of multiple sieges, leaning on Jerome and Lapidé, including the Roman siege, in 70 AD. Skinner says: “In a time of universal mirth and festivity [Isaiah] alone is overwhelmed with grief and refuses to be comforted. In the rejoicings of the populace he reads the evidence of their hopeless impenitence and insensibility... The circumstances recall our Lord’s lamentation over Jerusalem on the day of His triumphal entry (Luke 19:41 ff.).” Instead of being moved to repentance, the inhabitants of Jerusalem seem to take the impending troubles as a reason to indulge in earthly pleasures. The people had put their trust in their walls and defenses, rather than in the Lord.

1 ¶ THE burden of the valley of vision.
What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the housetops?

THE burden of the valley of vision. The LXX (6) has, “The word of the valley of Sion.” The Targum (7) has, “The burden of the prophecy concerning the city that dwelleth in the valley, of which the prophets prophesied.” Ibn Ezra explains this is “Jerusalem, the center of all prophecies.” Lowth explains that Jerusalem “was the seat of divine revelation, the place where chiefly prophetic vision was given, and where God manifested himself visibly in the holy place.” Wade writes, “The designation of it as the *valley of vision* perhaps comes from the traditional association of a site in it with a vision of God: cf. the local name Jehovah-jireh (יהוה יראה) or Jehovah jeraeh (Genesis 22:14 and margin ||) and 2 Chronicles 3:1 (mount Moriah where the Lord appeared unto David).” These locations are believed to be one and the same, the very place where the Temple in Jerusalem would be built. יראה

has been variously translated as *holy fear* or *reverence* (Gesenius), *to see* (KJV), or *to provide* (NAS).

Gesenius translates a similar word יראה, “whom Jehovah looks on.” Regarding the expression *valley of vision*, יראה, a number of exegetes question the use of the word *valley*, נחל, as a description of Jerusalem. Luther feels the word *valley* is an antiphrasis, or an expression meaning the very opposite. From an exalted hill, it would now be brought low to a valley. Cheyne, Henderson and Barnes, however, point to others instances in Holy Writ where Jerusalem is likewise called a valley (Psalm 21:13; 125:2; and Jeremiah 21:13). Barnes writes: “Phocas says, ‘The holy city is placed in the midst of various valleys and hills, and this is wonderful (Θαυμαστόν) in it, that at the same time the city seems to be elevated and depressed, for it is elevated in respect to the region of Judea, and depressed in respect to the hills around it.’ —(Reland’s *Palestine*, iii. 802, in Ugolini’s *Thesaurus*, vi.)” Wordsworth suggests, “Jerusalem is also here described as a valley, because she is to be laid low by afflictions consequent on her sins ... and so this prophecy is contrasted with those other predictions where she is displayed as glorified in Christ, by whom the mountain of the Lord’s house will be established on the top of the mountains.” ¶ *What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the housetops?* The LXX (6) adds after housetops, “which help you not.” The Syriac (5) has, “What do you see here, that &c.” Lowth has an interesting explanation: “The houses in the East were in ancient times, as they are still generally, built in one and the same uniform manner. The roof or top of the house is always flat, covered with broad stones, or a strong plaster of terrace, and guarded on every side with a low parapet wall (see Deuteronomy 22:8). The terrace is frequented as much as any part of the house. On this, as the season favours, they walk, they eat, they sleep, they transact business (1 Samuel 9:25, see also the LXX in that place), they perform their devotions (Acts 10: 9). The house is built with a court within, into which chiefly the windows open; those that open to the street are so obstructed with lattice-work, that no one either without or within can see through them. Whenever therefore any thing is to be seen or heard in the streets,

any public spectacle, any alarm of a public nature, every one immediately goes up to the house top to satisfy his curiosity. In the same manner, when any one had occasion to make anything public, the readiest and most effectual way of doing it was to proclaim it from the house-tops to the people in the streets: ‘What ye hear in the ear, that publish ye on the house-top,’ saith our Saviour, Matthew 10:27. The people s running all to the tops of their houses gives a lively image of a sudden general alarm.” By *wholly gone up*, as Young explains, the idea is that all of the people are moved to the housetops in masse. Why did they do so? Ibn Ezra suggests that it was to get a better view of the besieged city. Cheyne feels that the clue is given in ISAIAH 22:13, as the flat housetops are “places of concourse at festivals (Judges 16:27; Nehemiah 8:16).” Although the situation is far from clear, I lean toward Delitzsch, who writes: “From the flat house-tops they all look out together at the approaching army of the foe, longing for battle, and sure of victory.” I have seen the bravado of men before war.¹ I have never understood it. It is ugly. And often it turns into embarrassment.² Yet another possibility is that the people momentarily rejoiced when they thought the Egyptian armies, at the time of Zedekiah, had come to their rescue. Wordsworth gives us this tender sentiment, that the people went to the housetops “instead of going, as Hezekiah did, to the Temple to pray, when Jerusalem was in danger.” The Talmud tradition rather has this verse as an allusion to the fact that the priests were unfaithful to the keys they had been entrusted to.³

2 Thou that art full of stirs, a tumultuous city, a joyous city: thy slain [men are] not slain with the sword, nor dead in battle.

Thou that art full of stirs, a tumultuous city, a joyous city: The LXX (Θ) has, “The city is filled with shouting

¹ Henderson, regarding ISAIAH 22:13 says, “Nothing more strikingly evinces the strength of human depravity than trifling and reckless bravery when men are on the brink of destruction.”

² I love the reproaching words King Ahab of Israel—despite his own wickedness—spoke against prideful King Benhadad of Syria: “Tell him, Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off” (1 Kings 20:11b).

³ “Our Rabbis have taught: When the First Temple was about to be destroyed bands upon bands of young priests with the keys of the Temple in their hands assembled and mounted the roof of the Temple and exclaimed, ‘Master of the Universe, as we did not have the merit to be faithful treasurers these keys are handed back into Thy keeping’. They then threw the keys up towards heaven. And there emerged the figure of a hand and received the keys from them. Whereupon they jumped and fell into the fire. It is in allusion to them that the prophet Isaiah laments: The burden concerning the Valley of Vision. What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the house tops &c” (Seder Mo’ed, Ta’anith 29a, Talmud, Soncino).

men.” The Syriac (ܣ) has, “The city is full of tumult, the mighty city is full of noise.” As noted in Strong, TWOT, and by Delitzsch, the word עֲלִיָּזָה, often translated as *rejoice*, is sometimes used to describe *unrighteous elation* (compare also with Psalm 94:3; Jeremiah 50:11; Zephaniah 2:15). Young, along the same lines, says, “Zephaniah, in describing Nineveh, uses the same term [הֶעֱלִיזָה]; and his usage is enlightening. ‘This is the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I am, and there is none beside me.’” ¶ *Thy slain [men are] not slain with the sword, nor dead in battle.* In ISAIAH 22: 3, we see that they either tried to escape or went into captivity. Skinner, Barnes and others explain that rather than the honorable death in battle, the mighty face death by being taken as prisoners. Kimhi suggests that they have died through famine as a result of the siege (Rosenberg). Such a famine was predicted in *Rain in Due Season* (Leviticus 26:26–29, 33; Deuteronomy 28:48–50, 52–57).

3 All thy rulers are fled together, they are bound by the archers: ~ all that are found in thee are bound together, [which] have fled from far.

✓ of the bow

All thy rulers are fled together, they are bound by the archers: The Targum (ܬ) has “All thy rulers have been led forth; from before the bent bow, they are gone into captivity together.” The Targum (ܬ) translations by both Stenning and Chilton have *exile* for captivity. The Dead Sea Scrolls (Q) has these rulers captured without the archers having to use their bows. Henderson correctly explains that the expression “*they are bound*” (אֲסָרָה),⁴ can also be used “to denote one who is in a state of captivity.” ¶ *All that are found in thee are bound together, [which] have fled from far.* The Targum (ܬ), “All that were found in thee have been slain, together they have fled afar.” Stenning and Chilton’s ܬ translations both imply that despite the fact these individuals had fled far away, they were nevertheless captured and slain. The Syriac (ܣ) has, “all that were found in you are bound together; they have fled to far off places.” How can they flee if they are dead (ܬ) or bound as in the ܣ and Douay (after the Vulgate, ܕ)? The LXX (Θ) has “the mighty *men* in thee have fled far away,” and contrast these to princes and captives who suffered other fates. My mind is immediately transported to the time of King Zedekiah, when Jerusalem suffered one of the most devastating

⁴ Based on the root אֲסָרָה, see also Gesenius, BDB, HAL.

sieges of its history under the forces of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Judah's king and mighty ones had fled only to be brought back and severely punished. Zedekiah and many men of war who surrounded him fled from Jerusalem into the plains where they were captured and either killed or taken into exile. Zedekiah was captured in the plains of Jericho and brought before Nebuchadnezzar. He was subjected to the unspeakable pain of having to witness the brutal murder of his children. Zedekiah was then deprived of his eyes and carried away into the Babylonian exile with his feet bound in brass chains. The defeated king remained in prison until he died (2 Kings 25⁵; Jeremiah 52:11). Had he hearkened to Jeremiah, his fate would have been quite different. Rashi also believes this to be of Zedekiah (Rosenberg, Slotki-Rosenberg). Young has: "The verb⁶ that Isaiah here applies to the princes was later used of the 'binding' of King Zedekiah (2 Kings 25:7)."

4 Therefore said I, Look away from me; I will weep bitterly, [✓] labour not to comfort me, because of the spoiling of the daughter of my people.

✓ be bitter in weeping

Therefore said I, Look away from me; I will weep bitterly. Ibn Ezra suggests that person referred to here by the expression, "said I" (אֶמְרָתִי) is Isaiah. Rashi rather thinks it of the Lord. The one does not rule out the other. ¶ *Labour not to comfort me, because of the spoiling of the daughter of my people.* The LXX (6) has the prophet lamenting "for the breach of the daughter of my people." The English word *breach* is an interesting one, such as "failure to keep faith; breaking of a promise" (Webster's New World Dictionary). A *breach* may also refer to a break in the wall of defense, through

⁵ Note that specific mention is also made of the two walls in this scripture, as is in ISAIAH 22:11. "And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about. And the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. And on the ninth day of the fourth month the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land. And the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between two walls, which is by the king's garden: (now the Chaldees were against the city round about:) and the king went the way toward the plain. And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from him. So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him. And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon" (2 Kings 25:1–7, *emphasis added*).

⁶ אֶמְרָתִי / אֶמְרָתִי


which the enemy can come in. In looking at the Greek text (6) directly, it is clear that the meaning of σύντριμμα⁷ is rather to be in ruins or destroyed, "or being broken" (an alternate definition, Webster's New World Dictionary). The NETS LXX (6) translation uses *ruin* (but I could certainly imagine the Prophet weeping bitterly because the daughter of Zion had abandoned the faith). Calvin is reminded by Jeremiah's lamentation: "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" (Jeremiah 9:1). "שָׁעוּ מִנִּי". Leave me alone. So says the Holy One, blessed be He, to the ministering angels" (Rashi in Rosenberg). The expression שָׁעוּ מִנִּי, literally means *look away from me*, as in the KJV.

5 For [it is] a day of trouble, and of treading down, and of perplexity by the Lord GOD of hosts in the valley of vision, breaking down the walls, and of crying to the mountains.

For [it is] a day of trouble, and of treading down, and of perplexity by the Lord GOD of hosts in the valley of vision. The LXX (6) has, "they wander in the valley of Sion." The Douay, after the 9, has "day of slaughter and treading down." As Henderson points out, the words that follow "For [it is a] day" כִּי יוֹם, that is "of trouble, and of treading down, and of perplexity"

מְהוֹמָה וּמְבוֹסָה וּמְבוֹכָה, "form at once a paronomasia and a climax." Each of these respectively ends with the sounds *uma, usa, uja* (Spanish sounding j, or German sounding ch, *ucha*). Barnes says, "When our enemies trample on everything sacred and dear to us ... (see Psalm 44:6; Luke 21:24)." Indeed, the temple would be desecrated completely, and much of the people trampled and removed to Babylon. ¶ *Breaking down the walls, and of crying to the mountains.* The Targum (7), "[They] search the houses, they encompass the towers which are on the tops of the mountains." Ibn Ezra offers two alternatives: (1) that people cry but there is no one to save; and (2) that the cry will be loud enough to reach the mountains. The LXX (6) has, "they wander from the least to the greatest on the mountains." Alexander thinks, "The meaning is not that the people are heard crying on the way to the mountain, but rather that their cries are reverberated from it. The whole verse is a vivid poetical description of the confusion of a siege." Jenour, instead, suggests that as "the enemy

⁷ σύντριμμα, according to the various Lexicons, seems to mean destruction, ruin, fracture (BDAG, DBL, Liddell-Scott, Newman).

hourly expected to storm the city, there would be a general cry among the inhabitants; ‘*Let us flee to the mountains.*’” Kimhi has: “Here the prophet predicts the destruction of the wall of Jerusalem by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar” (in Rosenberg, who also gives 2 Kings 25:4 as a suggested reference). Nägelsbach says, “It seems to me to suit the context better, if we (with Ewald, Drechsler) under  understand not the neighboring mountain sides, but *the mountain* on which the Lord dwells, whence He, according to Joel 3:16 sq., roars and utters His judgment, and to which the prayers of the suppliants are directed (Psalm 2:6; 3:5; 99:9; 121:1; ISAIAH 2:3; 8:18; 10:12, 32; 11:9, etc.).” Wordsworth has an interesting thought here: “This phrase is taken up by our Blessed Lord in the Gospel, where He exhorts His disciples to flee betimes from Jerusalem (Matthew 24:16; Luke 21:21); but they who despised His warnings cry in vain to the mountains to cover them (Luke 23:30); and in the Apocalypse the phrase is extended to describe the awful circumstances of the Last Day (Revelation 6:16).”

6 And Elam bare the quiver with chariots of men [and] horsemen, and Kir uncovered ✓ the shield.

✓ made naked


And Elam bare the quiver with chariots of men [and] horsemen. The Targum (ⲧ) has “a couple of horsemen.” Ibn Ezra explains that even Elam and Kir would take advantage of the coming weakness that Jerusalem would suffer to attack her. *Smith’s Bible Dictionary* has, for Elam, “The Elam of Scripture appears to be the province lying south of Assyria and east of Persia.” Alexander writes, “Elam was a province of Persia, often put for the whole country.” Whitehouse has, “Elam, we know, was celebrated for its bowmen in the days of Jeremiah (49:35) ... In *Assyrian* chariots there were as a rule *two* occupants, the driver, and, on his right, the Bowman. We find, however, in nearly every instance that the quiver was not carried on the back of the archer, but the arrows (accompanied often by a battle-axe) were conveyed in a receptacle on the outer edge of the chariot, which stood conveniently on the right side of the archer (see article ‘Chariot’ in *Encyclopedia Bibl.*). Occasionally, however, we have a single-horse chariot carrying two archers with *quiver on the back* (British Museum, Nimrud gallery, No. 45) ... [and] ‘from the close of the eighth century onwards the archers became dissociated from the chariots’ (*Encyclopedia Bibl.*, *ibid.*, col. 729).” Regarding Elam and Kir, Wordsworth writes: “The southern and northern constituent forces of the Chaldean army against Jerusalem are represented by the southern Elam (Susiana) ... and by the northern Kir,

the river Cyrus which rises to the north of Armenia, and flows into the Caspian. Cp. 2 Kings 16:9; Jeremiah 1:15; Amos 1:5; 9:7. Nebuchadnezzar planted colonies of captives in Armenia (see Euseb. *Praep. Evang.* 9:41. Euseb. *Chron. Can.* 1:10). Sargon had penetrated into Armenia and subdued it (*Inscr. Assy.* p. 26). We need not be surprised that Nebuchadnezzar should have allies from it. Indeed, it is distinctly said by Jeremiah 25:9–11, that Nebuchadnezzar would be brought by God with all the families of the north, against Jerusalem. Cp. Jeremiah 1:15. Elam is here represented as subject to Babylon: afterwards it was used by God as an instrument against it (see ISAIAH 21:2).” ¶ *And Kir uncovered the shield.* The Targum (ⲧ) has “And on the wall they hang the shields.” Ibn Ezra explains that Kir was quite far from Jerusalem but would be among those to attack her. The LXX (Ⲅ) says nothing about Kir, but rather has, “and *there was* a gathering for battle.” Gill explains, that Kir “was a city in Media, and signifies the Medes, who were in subjection to the Assyrians.” Alexander says, “[Kir] may here be put for Media, as Elam is for Persia.” ¶ Slotki (leaning on Rashi and Ibn Ezra) explains that “shields were kept in leather coverings when not in use.” Thus Cowles writes: “‘Uncovering the shield,’ is taking it out from its case or covering, to have it in readiness for use.”

7 And it shall come to pass, [that] thy choicest valleys ✓ shall be full of chariots, and the horsemen shall set themselves in array at ✓ the gate.

✓ the choice of thy valleys

✓ ✓ or, toward

And it shall come to pass, [that] thy choicest valleys shall be full of chariots. Ibn Ezra suggests that the attack whose description begins in this verse came from Nebuchadnezzar and once again, the valleys point to Jerusalem. Cheyne explains that Jerusalem was surrounded by such choice valleys as Kidron, Gihon, Rephaim, and Hinnom. The common Book of Mormon expression, , *and it came to pass*, here stands for a future event (see Delitzsch). ¶ *And the horsemen shall set themselves in array at the gate.* The Targum (ⲧ) ends with “and the horsemen shall be set against the gates.” The LXX (Ⲅ) has, “and horsemen shall block up thy gates.” Rashi explains that “They laid siege to the gates. There is a similar expression in Kings (2 Kings 20:12) in the war with Benhadad, ‘Lay on!’ And they laid siege to the city” (Rashi in Rosenberg).

vv. 8–14. Once again, these verses continue speaking about the Chaldean siege. In this latter siege, just as in the former Assyrian one, the people of Jerusalem attempted to make use of the waterworks and walls

originally built and fortified by Hezekiah. While Hezekiah had worked hard to do what he could to protect Jerusalem from Sennacherib, yet Hezekiah leaned on the Lord for protection. Zedekiah—in contrast—feared men more than God and would not listen to Jeremiah, with predictable disastrous results. The Lord makes it clear that this time Jerusalem would not be saved by a miracle—as what happened when Assyria invaded—but instead would be utterly destroyed along with her people.

8 ¶ And he discovered the covering of Judah, and thou didst look in that day to the armour of the house of the forest.

And he discovered the covering of Judah. The LXX (Ⓢ) has, “And they shall uncover the gates of Judah.” Whitehouse would render the expression: “Then did he withdraw the covering of Judah.” The covering (מָסְכָּה) of Judah is an allusion to the LORD, and to the veil that separated the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle. By her apostasy, Judah had permitted this protection to be removed, and she was left exposed to her enemies. Kimhi explains that they lost the Temple to the enemy, and thus were left without protection (in Rosenberg). Wordsworth writes: “The Chaldean army took away the covering of Judah; they exposed it to shame, as a woman is exposed to insult when her veil is taken from her.” Also, scripture often uses immodesty to depict apostasy and the subsequent embarrassment: “Lest I strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was born” (Hosea 2:3a). The word *discovered* or *uncovered*, from נָלָה, is rendered in Ezekiel 16:37, “*and will discover thy nakedness*” (וְגִלִּיתִי עֲרֹתָהּ). Gesenius explains: “Judah shall be exposed to shame; an image taken from a virgin, whose veil has been taken away by outrageous and violent men.” The Syriac (Ⓢ) has, “And the defenses of Judah shall be laid bare.” The Vulgate (Ⓥ), *Et revelabitur operimentum Judæ*, “And revealed the covering of Judah.” Or, as the Douay, “And the covering of Judah shall be discovered.” Indeed, her pride and strength was brought down. ¶ *And thou didst look in that day to the armour of the house of the forest.* The Targum (Ⓣ) reads: “And he shall look at that time upon the arms of the house of the treasury of the sanctuary.” The Syriac (Ⓢ) renders it, “And you shall see on that day the armour of the house of the forest.” The *house of the forest* is a reference to one of Solomon’s construction projects: “the house of the forest of Lebanon” (1 Kings 7:2 ff.; 1 Kings 10:17 ff.). It was so named because it was constructed out of cedars (1 Kings 7:3). Gill suggests that the building may have been situated in the midst of a grove of trees. My grandmother’s farmstead in San Javier, Chile, was

so surrounded, and people would call the complex, *el bosque*, “the forest.” In 1 Kings 10:17 we also see that it was used, among other things, to store weaponry. Delitzsch explains that the edifice “is called in the Arabic the ‘house of his arms.’”

9 Ye have seen also the breaches of the city of David, that they are many: and ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool.

Ye have seen also the breaches of the city of David, that they are many: Both Chilton and Stenning’s Targum (Ⓣ) translations speak of the breach as being great. The Syriac (Ⓢ) reads as the KJV, “that they are many.” The LXX (Ⓢ) has a different exposition, “And they shall uncover the secret places of the houses of the citadel of David: and they saw that they were many.” Regarding *the city of David*, Calvin explains that this was a more fortified section including the spot where the Temple was located: “Isaiah means that the Jews had nearly despaired as to the safety of the whole city, when they withdrew to the inmost and best fortified part of it.” Alexander suggests, “The breaches meant are not those made by the enemy in the siege here described, but those caused by previous neglect and decay.” A breach, once again, is a break in a wall of defense. ¶ *And ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool.* The Targum (Ⓣ)⁸ has, “And ye gathered my people to the waters of the lower pool.” The LXX (Ⓢ) has, “and that one *had* turned the water of the old pool into the city.” Lowth explains: “There were two pools in or near Jerusalem, supplied by springs: **the upper pool**, or the old pool, supplied by the spring called Gihon (2 Chronicles 32:3), towards the higher part of the city, near Sion or the city of David; and **the lower pool**, probably supplied by Siloam, towards the lower part. When Hezekiah was threatened with a siege by Sennacherib, he stopped up all the waters of the fountains without the city, and brought them into the city by a conduit, or subterraneous passage⁹ cut through the rock; those of the old pool, to the place where he made a double wall, so that the pool was between the two walls. This he did in order to distress the enemy,

⁸ Stenning. Not “the people” as Pauli, but rather, “my people,” עַמִּי. See Stenning and Sperber for the Aramaic text of the Targum (Ⓣ). Chilton also, correctly translates Ⓣ as “my people.”

⁹ In our trip to the Holy Land, Linda & I had the opportunity to walk into one end of Hezekiah’s Tunnel and come out at the other end after about 20 minutes. We needed head lamps to do so. I used to think the tunnel was straight, but it makes numerous turns, making its construction all the more amazing. Especially when we understand that the excavators began at opposite ends and met in the middle, and did so without modern technology to guide them. Waters still runs in the tunnel and comes up to different heights along the trail.

and to supply the city during the siege.” Rawlinson explains in detail, regarding the original construction: “[Hezekiah] found on the north of the city, where the Assyrian attack was certain to be delivered, in the vicinity of the Damascus gate, a pool or reservoir (ISAIAH 7:3), fed by a conduit from some natural source, which lay open and patent to view. The superfluous [i.e., running on the surface, visibly] water ran off from it by a ‘brook’ (2 Chronicles 32:4), which passed down the Tyropoeon valley, and joined the Kedron to the south-east of Ophel. His first step was to cover over and conceal the open reservoir, and also the ‘brook’ which ran from it, at least as far as the northern city wall, to prevent their use by the Assyrians. He further made a conduit underground (2 Chronicles 32:30) within the city, along the Tyropoeon depression, to a second reservoir, or ‘pool,’ also within the city, which could be freely used by the inhabitants (see ISAIAH 22:11; and compare Ecclesiasticus 48:17¹⁰. Further, it is probable that he carried a conduit from this second pool, under the temple area, to the ‘fount of the Virgin’ on the eastern side of Ophel, and thence further conveyed the water by a tunnel through Ophel to the ‘pool of Siloam.’ (This last may be the work here alluded to.) The inscription¹¹ recently discovered at this pool is probably of Hezekiah’s time (see ‘Quarterly Statement’ of Palestinian Expedition Fund for April, 1881, p. 70.).”

10 And ye have numbered the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses have ye broken down to fortify the wall.

¹⁰ Ecclesiasticus, or commonly known as Sirach: “Ezekias fortified his city, and brought in water into the midst thereof: he digged the hard rock with iron, and made wells for waters” (Sirach 48:17, Authorized Version with Apocrypha).

¹¹ The inscription reads: “Here is the mouth of the conduit and this is the history of the digging: when the pickaxes were against each other and when there were only three cubits more to cut through, the men were heard cutting from one side to the other, for there was zedah in the rock, on the right and on the left and on the day of the piercing the workmen struck each to meet the other, pickax against pickax, and there flowed the waters from the spring [of Gihon] to the pool [of Siloam] for the space of 2,100 [rather, 1,200] cubits and 100 cubits was the highest over the heads of the workmen” (*The Pittsburg Press*, Sunday, June 25, 1911, p. 4). Regarding the *cubits*: “According to W. F. Albright, 1200 cubits, ‘The Siloam Inscription,’ in James B. Pritchard (editor), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton, 1950), p. 321. Also, according to King, Philip J. and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, p. 220. According to Nicholas Van Cleve], the length, 1,200 cubits translates to 1,750 feet. Not only did they meet each other, but they maintained a steady 7% slope throughout (An Ancient Architectural Feat & Biblical Verification), p. 1. For yet another interesting source and translation, see pp. 69, 141, and 282 ff. of the July 1881 *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly*.

And ye have numbered the houses of Jerusalem. The Syriac (S) has, “And you have supplied the houses of Jerusalem with water.” ¶ *And the houses have ye broken down to fortify the wall.* The LXX (G) has the same idea for this verse, “and that they *had* pulled down the houses of Jerusalem, to fortify the wall of the city. Cheyne has: “To withstand the shocks of the battering-rams. So 2 Chronicles 32:5, ‘and he built up all the wall that was broken, and raised thereupon towers,’ and Jeremiah 33:4, ‘the houses... which are thrown because of (i.e., to resist) the mounds and because of the engines of war.’” Barnes explains: “The houses in Jerusalem were built of stone, and therefore they would furnish appropriate materials for repairing the walls of the city.”

11 Ye made also a ditch between the two walls for the water of the old pool: but ye have not looked unto the maker thereof, neither had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago.

Ye made also a ditch between the two walls¹² for the water of the old pool: At the time of Hezekiah, water was stored under the Temple in the city of Jerusalem. Regarding this clause, Cheyne has, “**Between the walls**, i.e., between that of Ophel on the east, and that of the High Tower on the west, where the Tyropaeon valley is particularly narrow. **The old pool**, i.e. probably the ‘Pool of Siloam’ (called ‘The Pool’ *par excellence* in the Hebrew inscription in the rock-tunnel leading to Siloam.” Perhaps the expression *old pool* is in reference to the work carried out by Hezekiah to bring the water into the city. ¶ *But ye have not looked unto the maker thereof, neither had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago.* This is a stinging accusation. The people had done much to defend themselves, but had not leaned on the Lord. They forgot that it was the Holy One of Israel who commanded Hezekiah to take this precaution and are now putting their trust in the fountain of water rather than in the Lord. Rashi does well in contrasting the faith of Hezekiah—a contemporary of Isaiah—with that of future rulers of Judah (such as Jehoiakim and Zedekiah) who would live in the time of Jeremiah (in Rosenberg). How many times did Israel fail to put her trust in the Lord and how many times do we, likewise, neglect to do the same?¹³

¹² See verse ISAIAH 22:3.

¹³ A couple of months after my daughter Andrea was born, I recorded one such experience in my journal: “A few days later Andrea had a choking accident and turned purple. Linda moved her around and she recovered color. Meanwhile, I ran out to the corridor and screamed for a nurse or a doctor—My baby is not breathing! Andrea was kept in intensive care for monitoring for a few more days. There was nothing wrong with her. As I drove home that night of the choking, *feeling*

We must ever keep present to: “Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them” (2 Kings 6:16b).

12 And in that day did the Lord GOD of hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth:

And in that day did the Lord GOD of hosts call to weeping, and to mourning. The Targum (Ⓣ)¹⁴ has “the prophet of the LORD God.” Ibn Ezra has this referring to both the Lord, as well as to the Prophet. I like the LXX (Ⓛ) here, that indeed the Lord had called the people to repent. The people did not show the usual tokens of turning to God for help by mourning and the wearing of sackcloth. Although not explicitly mentioned, such tokens of repentance and of seeking heavenly favor also included fasting. For instance, “there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes” (Esther 4:3b); and “And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments: Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.” (Daniel 9:3–6). Of course, the Lord desired true repentance, not outer show: “And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and *repenteth*¹⁵ him of the evil” (Joel 2:13). ¶ *And to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth.* Each of these are the tokens of captivity and slavery (ISAIAH 3:24), but they are also the tokens of repentance, as we have seen. Cheyne points out, however, that baldness is prohibited in the Mosaic Law (Leviticus 21:5; and Deuteronomy 14:1). If we do not humble ourselves, we become enslaved to our passions.

good about all the monitors that would keep my precious daughter safe, I was chastised by the Spirit of the Holy Ghost: ‘Do not put your trust in the arm of flesh, but rather, in God. Your child will live.’”

¹⁴ Chilton.

¹⁵ In the KJV the word *repent* [נָחַם] is only used for the Lord, and it means *tender, benevolent, and compassionate*, for He is ever ready to forgive when we turn and follow Him.

13 And behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine: let us eat and drink; for to morrow we shall die.

And behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine: The LXX (Ⓛ) seems to give the clearest explanation. While the Lord had called for mourning, the people instead had decided to feast and get drunk: “But they engaged in joy and gladness slaying calves, and killing sheep, so as to eat flesh, and drink wine” (Ⓛ). Skinner’s comments: “Instead [of repenting] the people rush to down reflexion in riotous festivities. The immediate occasion of the revelry was not doubt a great sacrifice of thanksgiving to Jehovah for their unexpected deliverance, but this only rendered their irreligious spirit more detestable to Him.” This momentary joy is exactly what happened during the Babylonian siege, when the people of Jerusalem thought they had triumphed over the Babylonian forces thanks to the Egyptians. “Then Pharaoh’s army was come forth out of Egypt: and when the Chaldeans that besieged Jerusalem heard tidings of them, they departed from Jerusalem” (Jeremiah 37:5, also see ISAIAH 37:9–10, 17, 19; 39:1–7). ¶ *Let us eat and drink; for to morrow we shall die.* Ibn Ezra says: “The prophet foretells what people will say in the days of the siege.” Instead of repenting, the people feasted in drunken revelry with the excuse that life was short and surely there was no hereafter (see also, 1 Corinthians 15:32). Barnes has: “The same sentiments prevailed among the [ungodly]¹⁶ Jews in the time of the author of the Book of Wisdom (Wisdom 2:1–9): ‘Our life is short and tedious, and in the death of a man there is no remedy: neither was there any man known to have returned from the grave. For we are born at all adventure; and we shall be hereafter as though we had never been, for the breath in our nostrils is as smoke, and a little spark in the moving of our heart. Come on, therefore, let us enjoy the good things that are present; let us fill ourselves with costly wine and ointments, and let no flower of the spring pass by us; let us crown ourselves with rose buds before they be withered; let none of us go without his part of our voluptuousness; let us leave tokens of our joyfulness in every place.’”

14 And it was revealed in mine ears by the LORD of hosts, Surely this iniquity shall

¹⁶ The quote begins with “For the ungodly said, reasoning with themselves, but not aright, our life is short &c.” The reference continues past verse 9. See *King James Apocrypha*.

not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.

*And it was revealed in mine ears*¹⁷ by the LORD of hosts. Actually, the Masoretic text (מ) might well be mistranslated here, in an attempt to remove what many would consider an offensive anthropomorphic mention of the ear of the Lord of Hosts,

וְנִגְלָה בְּאָזְנֵי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת. Originally, in the 1500s, this verse was translated in both the Bishops¹⁸ (the predecessor of the KJV) and Geneva¹⁹ Bibles as: “And it was revealed [came, declared] in the ears of the Lord of hosts.” So also the LXX (Θ) has, “And these things are revealed in the ears of the Lord of hosts.” In the Targum (ܬ), where the scribes went to untold lengths to remove any possibilities of anthropomorphic interpretation, the text was changed to: “The prophet said, with mine ears I was hearing when this was decreed from before the LORD of hosts, namely, that this your iniquity shall not be forgiven you till you die the second death, said the Lord, the God, the God of hosts.” Rabbi Ibn Ezra also explains that indeed it was the ears of the Lord: “In mine ears, the ears of the Lord.” Jenour also defends (see also his critical note) the translation wherein it is the Lord who is listening: “And it was heard in the ears of Jehovah God of Hosts.”

Furthermore, we have another instance in Isaiah where exactly the same expression is used by the Lord,

בְּאָזְנֵי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת (in my ears the Lord of Hosts, ISAIAH 5:9). Henderson explains that אָזַן literally means to uncover the ear. The Peshitta (ܣ) and the Vulgate (V) follow the Authorized Version. I prefer the earlier rendition—those of the Bishops’ and Geneva

¹⁷ Randy Homrig was my friend who gave me a copy of the Book of Mormon while I attended the University of California. He had taught the gospel to someone else, who had not remained active. Randy himself had audibly heard an angel testify of the divinity of the work. So it was that Randy wanted to know if my testimony was based on hearing an audible voice. The Lord, however, imparts to each individual a testimony according to his or her need. The Spirit of the Holy Ghost had spoken into my bosom and covered my whole body from the crown of my head to my feet, and I did not need to hear an audible voice to know that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was the Lord’s restored and true Church upon the earth. As someone once said, on occasion the strength of the still, small voice is neither still, nor small. The Lord has spoken to his servants in a number of ways, audibly, in dreams, through the voice of another person who delivers a message, through angels, and even face to face—as He did on occasion with Moses, Joseph Smith, Lorenzo Snow, and Isaiah.

¹⁸ “And it came to the eares of the Lorde of hoastes, This iniquitie shall not be purged from you tyll ye dye, saith the Lorde God of hoastes” (Bishops’ Bible, 1568).

¹⁹ “And it was declared in ye eares of the Lorde of hostes. Surely this iniquitie shall not be purged from you, til ye die, saith the Lord God of hostes” (Geneva Bible, 1587).

Bibles. The verse seems to say that the Lord of Hosts is aware, that He is well acquainted with the iniquity of the people. Nothing is hidden from the Lord. ¶ *Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.* The Masoretic text (מ) rather reads, the Lord LORD of Hosts, that is, the Lord Jehovah of Hosts (אֲדֹנֵי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת). The Targum (ܬ) reads LORD God of Hosts, that is, Jehovah Elohim of Hosts (יהוה אלהים צבאות). ¶ The expression אִם-יִכָּפֵר, is *surely not purged*. Alexander and Henderson see an oath formula in the expression אִם, *surely* or *surely not*. אִם can stand for the full oath formula (Gesenius²⁰, also see ISAIAH 5:9, *if not*) *God do so to thee, and more also* (1 Samuel 3:17):

כֹּה יַעֲשֶׂה-לְךָ אֱלֹהִים וְכֹה יוֹסִיף יִכָּפֵר. The word יִכָּפֵר comes from the root כָּפַר (kipper) or כִּפּוּר (kipur, as in Yom Kipurim, יוֹם כִּפּוּרִים). Whitehouse with the margin || prefers, “expiated by you.” Delitzsch, here explains that this *covering over* or *expiation* takes place “either by the justice of God, as in the present instance [i.e., ISAIAH 22:14], or by the mercy of God (ISAIAH 6:7), or by both justice and mercy combined (as in ISAIAH 27:9). In all three cases the *expiation* is demanded by the divine holiness, which requires a *covering* between itself and sin, by which sin becomes as though it were not. In this instance the *expunging* act consists in punishment. The sin of Jerusalem is expiated by the giving up of the sinners themselves to death.” This notion—of the need to cover for sins through mercy or justice—is exquisitely explained by the Savior Himself in D&C 19:4, 15–20. Thompson says, “Their catchword of a sensual materialism, ‘tomorrow we die,’ evokes the stern and final response, ‘For this sin ye shall surely die.’” Keith well says: “So deep-rooted is this defiance of the Divine judgments, that it is said, that nothing but the destruction of the nation would overcome it. This cannot, however, imply the extinction of the nation. Its perpetuity is guaranteed by the covenant of God: ‘As the new heavens and the new earth shall remain before me, so shall your seed and your name remain,’ ISAIAH 66:22.”

vv. 15–25. We are here transported back to the time of Hezekiah, probably at some time before the Assyrian siege, as Shebna and Eliakim seemed to be holding different positions at that time, than what they held when this prophecy was uttered. Shebna had not completely disgraced himself yet, but soon would do

²⁰ For more on such oath formulas, see Gesenius, אִם. Also see notes in ISAIAH 5:9.

just that. Some exegetes suggest that Isaiah's prophecy helped Shebna repent.

15 ¶ Thus saith the Lord GOD of hosts, Go, get thee unto this treasurer, [even] unto Shebna, which [is] over the house, [and say],

Thus saith the Lord GOD of hosts, Go, get thee unto this treasurer, [even] unto Shebna. Once again, the Masoretic text (מ) rather has אֶדְנִי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת while the Targum (ܬ) has יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת. The LXX (Θ) has, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Go into the chamber, to Somnas the treasurer." NETS LXX (Θ) suggests it is the *priestly chamber*. The Vulgate (V) is interesting in that it suggests the tabernacle in the temple, "qui habitat in tabernaculo ad Sobnam praepositum temple."²¹ Many of the Rabbis would agree, as they think Shebna was the High Priest (see Rosenberg, note on v. 18). Most exegetes feel Shebna was a vizier or majordomo over the affairs of the King. It is quite likely that this Shebna is the same as the one mentioned in ISAIAH 37:2. Barnes explains that "Go, get thee," required Isaiah to deliver the prophecy in person, possibly at the risk of his life. Rawlinson and Henderson explain that the word *this*, הַזֶּה, was uttered with disdain toward Shebna. Jenour tells us that the name Shebna means "Depart now, recede from thy place." Delitzsch has, "We feel at once, as we read this introduction to the divine address, that insatiable ambition was one of the leading traits in Shebna's character." Kay feels that even the word *treasurer* may here be meant "contemptuously, the meaning would appear to be 'profit seeker.'" Regarding Shebna, the Talmud tradition (Seder Nezikin, Sanhedrin 26a) has Shebna firing a traitorous arrow toward Sennacherib's enemy camp during the siege—with a note enclosed—suggesting that he, Shebna, alongside his followers, was ready to surrender and sue for peace while King Hezekiah was not (Talmud, Soncino). It is possible that Isaiah has first spoken of the whole nation as being rejected and now specifically focuses on Shebna, her unfaithful High Priest. This indeed would make much sense, as the keys to open and close are those of the sealing power of the Priesthood. This would particularly explain the wrath that Shebna was exposed to in these verses. Also, it makes sense that Shebna, the false High Priest, would be replaced by the true High Priest, even our Lord and Savior, of whom Eliakim was simply a type and a shadow. The Keys of the Priesthood are

²¹ The Douay translation of the Vulgate is "... to him that dwelleth in the tabernacle, to Sobna who is over the temple."

indeed the power of God delegated to man. Indeed, these keys²² are given to the Prophet and the Apostles by the Savior. Keith writes: "but [the government] will be one of 'righteousness and faithfulness.' The government of the new kingdom, the kingdom of righteousness, 'will be upon his shoulders.' Eliakim might be the father of his country for a little, but he shall be called 'the Everlasting Father.'" All of these things will Christ do for the glory of His Father's house. ¶ Which [is] over the house, [and say]. The Syriac (ܣ) has, "Who is over the household, and say to him." The ellipsis "and say to him אֶלְיוֹ אָמַרְתָּ" is supplied, according to a couple of manuscripts compiled by Kennicott (see Henderson).

16 What hast thou here? and whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre here, [as] he[✓] that heweth him out a sepulchre on high, [and] that graveth an habitation for himself in a rock?

✓ or, O he

What hast thou here? and whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre here. This is equivalent to "What do you think you are up to, here?" The Douay based on V has, "What dost thou here, or as if thou wert somebody here?" Exegetes variously accuse Shebna of conspiring with one or another of the major foreign powers of the time—but this is mere conjecture. Likewise, some assume Shebna is a foreigner (e.g., Ewald, Young and most exegetes) but this is not proven (Nägelsbach, Gray)²³. Cheyne tells us that "the brother of the famous Rabbi Hillel was also called Shebna." Barnes has: "It is probable that Isaiah

²² Elder Whiting, a visiting authority, explained that in his present assignment as a Seventy, while he does not hold keys, he may 'carry' these keys temporarily as he fulfills an assignment from the Twelve. As soon as these assignments are fulfilled these keys return to the Twelve. Stake Conference, Modesto California Stake, January 30–31, 2010. An example of this type of delegation may be the calling and setting apart of a new Stake President, for instance.

²³ George Buchanan Gray (*A critical and exegetical commentary on the book of Isaiah*) explains, contrary to other exegetes, "The ending 𐤑—(so also ISAIAH 36:3, 11, but 𐤑—, 2 Kings 18:18, 26) does not prove that Shebna was a Syrian (or North Arabian: Cheyne *EBi.*). Hebrew hypocoristica [i.e., diminutive of a name as a term of endearment—Webster] also end in 𐤑." Gray shows how *Uzzah's* name in 2 Samuel 6:6, is given as 𐤏𐤕, and yet in 2 Samuel 6:8 it is spelled 𐤏𐤕𐤔. For additional examples, consult Gray, p. 382. Gray goes on to assume Shebna is a *parvenu* [i.e., a *nouveau riche*] just because his parents are not mentioned. This assumption seems unwarranted. Nägelsbach for his part, among several arguments, suggests that had Shebna been a foreigner and that Isaiah would surely had played on this theme as part of his comments against this prideful man.

met him when he was at the sepulchre which he had made, and addressed this language to him there: ‘What hast thou here? What right to expect that thou wilt be buried here, or why do you erect this splendid sepulchre, as if you were a holy man, and God would allow you to lie here?’” Most exegetes suggest that Sheba had no relation buried in this place, and thus the idea was presumptuous. ¶ [As] *he that heweth him out a sepulchre on high, [and] that graveth an habitation for himself in a rock?* Regarding *dwelling place* or *habitation* (מִשְׁכָּן), Alexander has, “The מִשְׁכָּן is supposed by some to have allusion to the oriental practice of making tombs in shape (frequently in size) like houses, by others more poetically to the idea of the grave, as a *long home*,²⁴ (בֵּית עוֹלָם), the very name applied to it by Solomon (Ecclesiastes 12:5).” Henderson has, “The Phoenicians also called the sepulchre, חדר בית עולם the *chamber* of the *eternal house*.” Barnes suggests that many men wished to make their sepulcher grandiose in order to assure their immortality, such as the ones found on the side of the rocks at Petra.

17 Behold, the LORD will carry thee away with a mighty captivity, ✓ and will surely cover thee. ✓

- ✓ or, the captivity of a man
- ✓ ✓ or, who covered thee with an excellent covering, and clothed thee gorgeously (v. 18) shall surely &c.

Behold, the LORD will carry thee away with a mighty captivity. The Targum (ܬ) has, “The Lord will cast thee out with a mighty casting out (or, *removing of a man*).” The LXX (Θ) has, “Behold now, the Lord of hosts casts forth and will utterly destroy *such* a man.” The Syriac (ܣ) has, “Behold, o man, the Lord will surely cast you away.” Kay explains, “The verb [מִטְּלֵהָ] is used of the ejection of Israel in Jeremiah 16:13²⁶ (cp. Jeremiah 22:26, 28).” The deportation to Babylon was threatened repeatedly by the prophets of God. ¶ *And will surely cover thee.* The Targum (ܬ) has, “And confusion²⁷ shall cover thee.” The Syriac (ܣ) has, “And will surely forsake you.” As in the margin||, the LXX (Θ) has, “and will take away thy robe and thy glorious crown.” The Syriac (ܣ) has, “and will surely forsake you.”

²⁴ Literally, *eternal abode* or *everlasting home*, בֵּית עוֹלָמוֹ.

²⁵ Root טוּל, hurl, cast (BDB).

²⁶ “Therefore will I *cast you out* [וְהִטְלֵהָ] of this land into a land that ye know not...” (emphasis added).

²⁷ Chilton and Stenning translate as *shame*.

18 He will surely violently turn and toss thee [like] a ball into a large country: ✓ there shalt thou die, and there the chariots of thy glory [shall be] the shame of thy lord's house.

- ✓ large of spaces

He will surely violently turn and toss thee [like] a ball into a large country: The Targum (ܬ) paraphrase is altogether different here: “He shall take away from thee thy tiara,²⁸ and the enemies shall enclose thee, like a surrounding wall, and they shall lead thee into captivity into a spacious country (or, *broad of lands*).” The Syriac (ܣ) renders it, “And he shall afflict you like the affliction of a company of soldiers besieged in a fortress from which there is no escape.” The LXX (Θ) has, “and will cast thee into a great and unmeasured land.” The Syriac (ܣ) has, “And he shall afflict you like the affliction of a company of soldiers besieged in a fortress from which there is no escape.” Henderson says: “The original is here peculiarly impassioned, and possesses a graphic power, to which no translation can pretend. Not only are there two instances of the repetition of the same word, to which the Hebrew writers are extremely partial, but immediately following these, we have the three different forms צָנַף, יִצְנֹף, יִצְנֹף.” LITV renders it: “Whirling, He will whirl you *like* a ball.” The first two words in the expression come from the root צָנַף which means to wind, throw or kick.²⁹ The third expression יִצְנֹף, from the same root צָנַף, means to bundle or crush.³⁰ The next word, ball, כִּדְוֶה, completes the expression. So in this illustration we have the force of Shebna crushed into a ball and tossed with might. Lowth translates this verse as: “He will whirl thee round and round, and cast thee away, like a ball [from a sling] &c.” Cheyne suggests that this broad country might well be “the plains of Mesopotamia,” and other locations such as Syria and Assyria have been suggested by other exegetes. Gray does well in here pointing us to Jeremiah 22:26: “And I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bare thee, into another country, where ye were not born; and there shall ye die.” The Prophet Jeremiah has used a similar expression than the one we find here in Isaiah against one of the

²⁸ In Zechariah 3:5, the headdress of the high priest, but also mentioned as part of the dress of priests (also see Exodus 28:4).

²⁹ See Gesenius, BDB, HAL.

³⁰ See DBL, HAL.

grandsons³¹ of King Josiah. The Lord is always willing to forgive the truly repentant who loves Him and comes to realize that joy comes through doing good (Alma 41). ¶ *There shalt thou die, and there the chariots of thy glory [shall be] the shame of thy lord's house.* The Targum (T), “there thou shalt die, and thither the chariots of thy glory shall return in disgrace, because thou hast not preserved the honour (or, *glory*) of thy master's house.” The LXX (G) has, “and he will bring thy fair chariot to shame, and the house of thy prince to be trodden down.” The Talmud tradition (Seder Nezikin, Sanhedrin 26a–26b) has: “He will violently roll and toss thee like a ball into a large country. It has been taught: He [Shebna] sought the shame of his master's house: therefore his own glory was turned to shame. [For] when he went out [on his way to surrender to Sennacherib], Gabriel came and shut the city gate in the face of his servants [who were following him].’ On being asked, ‘Where are your followers’ he answered, ‘They have deserted me.’ ‘Then you were merely ridiculing us’ they (the Assyrians) exclaimed. So they bored holes through his heels, tied him to the tails of their horses, and dragged him over thorns and thistles” (Talmud, Soncino). According to Rosenberg: “The Midrash explains that, according to the Sages who hold that Shebna was the High Priest, we are to explain these words as: the shame of the House of your Lord, meaning the Temple, the house of God, which he disgraced by using the sacrificial flesh for his own benefit.” Young says, regarding the chariots, “It is also possible, however, to translate, *thither will be thy chariots*. All that in which Shebna gloried would go with him into banishment.”

19 And I will drive thee from thy station, and from thy state shall he pull thee down.

The LXX (G) renders it, “And thou shalt be removed from thy stewardship, and from thy place.” The Syriac (S) has, “And I will take away your glory, and will cast you down from your position.” Cheyne has, “We have only evidence of a partial fulfillment of Isaiah's authoritative word. Eliakim was house-steward, and Shebna merely secretary, when the Rab-shakeh came to Jerusalem (ISAIAH 36:3).” Rashi (in Rosenberg) continues with the rabbinic view, suggesting that

³¹ Goes by various names including Jehoiachin, but here in Jeremiah is called **יְהוֹיָכִן**. His very name implied that Jehovah would establish him, but the principle of agency always exists. At the beginning of Jeremiah 22, the Lord explains what it would take to become truly repentant: “Thus saith the LORD; Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place” (v. 3).

Shebna would be pulled down from his station or where he would stand when carrying out the Temple services. Birks, with some others, believes that Shebna repents: “The only mention of Shebna in the history is fourteen years later, when he was the royal scribe, and was sent in sackcloth by Hezekiah, along with Eliakim, to ask the prayers of Isaiah himself. Their united message had then a signal and gracious answer. It is very natural to conclude that the sentence here pronounced against him had been already fulfilled, and that one clause was repealed through his repentance; rather than that all was unfulfilled, and impending over him, when he took part in that message of earnest faith and piety.” While this repentance is possible and encouraging, and indeed other examples of similar repentance exist in the Scriptures, it is also possible that Shebna fell after the scenes described at the time of the Assyrian siege. Birks makes this astute observation: “The fall of Shebna is a picture of the judgment on those Jewish rulers and builders, who rejected the true Cornerstone, and received a sentence of degradation and lasting exile ... [yet] after long and sore affliction, Judah, so long outcast, shall be restored to the favour of God.”

20 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah:

The Syriac (S) adds “says the Lord,” after *in that day*, to make sure it is understood that it is the Lord that is still speaking. The epithet *my servant* is a great honor bestowed on Eliakim. Kay also speaks of the compelling Messianic tones: “1 Samuel 2:35 is the key to the interpretation of ... ISAIAH 22:15–25: — ‘*And I will raise Me up a faithful priest ... and I will build him a sure house.*’ For (1) *Eliakim* means ‘God will raise up’; (2) the garments mentioned in ISAIAH 22:21 are those of the high-priest; and (3) the promise to Eliakim is that he shall be fixed ‘in a sure place.’” Kay continues: “This is the first appearance of ‘the Servant of the Lord,’ who occupies so prominent a place in Part II.” Keith well says, “While, therefore, on this occasion, Isaiah may be regarded as predicting the succession of a good to an unfaithful ruler, he does so in language which is also calculated to lead their thoughts to the Mightier One who was to come. In this view of it, the passage is the parallel of many others. Thus, in ISAIAH 9:5, referring to the final destruction of Israel's enemies, there is predicted first the removal of the Shebna of Israel, ‘Thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor;’ and then the reign of her Eliakim, ‘Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.’” Cheyne also admits of the Messianic tone, “Isaiah evidently predicts a complete change of system, which would consist in

the total abstinence from a policy of expediency and worldly alliances. Hence the strong language, almost Messianic in its tone, with which Isaiah hails in spirit the elevation of his disciple Eliakim.”

21 And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah.

And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: The LXX (Θ) has, “and I will put on him thy robe, and I will grant him thy crown with power, and I will give thy stewardship into his hands.” The Syriac (Ⲥ) has, “And I will clothe him with your robe and will gird him with your girdle, &c.” The Douay, based on the Vulgate (V) has “And I will clothe him with thy robe, and will strengthen him with thy girdle, and will give thy power into his hand.” Skinner suggests: “The palace officials seem to have worn distinctive liveries (1 Kings 10:5); the uniform of the vizier was apparently a tunic and a girdle of special pattern.” Several exegetes have pointed to the similarity of these items of clothing to those of the officiating High Priest (e.g., Kay). I found the following, from Whitehouse, of particular interest: “The word in Hebrew [for *robe*, כְּתֹנֶת] is properly used of a linen undergarment ... and also used of *priestly attire*.” Indeed, the former כְּתֹנֶת was an “an inner garment next the skin” worn by both men and women (Gesenius, also see BDB and HALOT). ¶ *And he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah.* The LXX (Θ) has ὡς πατήρ, “as a father,” as does the Vulgate (V), *quasi pater*. Kay has, “After its long course of discipline Judah will confess; ‘Thou, O Lord, art our Father (ISAIAH 63:16; 64:8).” Young writes, “Implied in the word [father] is all that tenderness and love that a father shows to his own children. ‘I was a father to the poor’ (Job 29:16a).”

22 And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.

And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder. The Targum (ⲡ) has, “And I will place the key of the house of the sanctuary, and the government of the house of David, in his hand.” The LXX (Θ) similarly has, “and I will give him the key of the house of David *upon* his shoulder.” The Syriac (Ⲥ) also retains

the word *keys*. Eliakim is indeed given as a type of Christ. In Revelation 3:7b Christ applies these words to Himself: “These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth.” Nägelsbach reminds us of ISAIAH 9:6, “and the government shall be upon his shoulder.” Lowth explains that there was a time when keys were actually carried on the shoulder: “To comprehend how the key could be borne on the shoulder, it will be necessary to say somewhat of the form of it: but without entering into a long disquisition, and a great deal of obscure learning, concerning the locks and keys of the ancients, it will be sufficient to observe, that one sort of keys, and that probably the most ancient, was of considerable magnitude, and as to the shape very much bent and crooked.” Whether literally, or figuratively, the power given to Eliakim was extensive. Kimhi (in Rosenberg) thinks it possible that Eliakim was a Priest (possibly the same individual called Azariah in 2 Chronicles 31:13) and that he carried much weight of responsibility in Hezekiah’s court. Nägelsbach also argues that Eliakim “was in in all probability of the priestly race. For Hilkiah, as his father was called, was a common name of priests. At all events, all persons called Hilkiah mentioned in the O. T. are, with a single doubtful exception (Jeremiah 29:3) of priestly, or at least of Levitical origin, Jeremiah 1:1; 2 Kings 22:4 sqq.; 1 Chronicles 5:39; 6:30; 26:11; Ezra 7:1; Nehemiah 8:4; 11:11; 12:7. It seems to follow from ISAIAH 22:21, that the steward of the house had an official dress, with the putting on of which his installation was connected. The כְּתֹנֶת, *tunic* was one of the principal parts of the dress of the priests. (Exodus 28:40; 29:5, 8, etc.) The girdle (אַבְנֵט) also belonged to the dress of the priests (Exodus 28:29; Leviticus 8³²).” Kay explains, “The ‘house of David’ after the flesh was about to fall. But in Eliakim (‘God will raise up’) it should be built again,—and in such a way as at last to fulfill the promise, that it should *be established for ever* (2 Samuel 7:25–26).” So much of the high priest’s dress was similar to that of the priest, that it would not be totally surprising if Eliakim had been made the new high priest. Peterson and Tate state, “Given the importance of the keys of the priesthood to the functioning of the kingdom of God, it is a matter of some interest how sparingly they are referred to in ancient scripture. There are no references to ‘keys’ in the Book of Mormon and only a single verse in the Old Testament. Isaiah spoke of the ‘key of the house of David’ being placed upon the shoulder of the Messiah and of his having the power to open that which no one else could open and to shut that which no one else could shut (ISAIAH 22:22). In the New

³² For example Leviticus 8:7, 13.

Testament, we have record of Christ giving that same authority to Peter and the Twelve (Matthew 16:19; John 20:22–23).³³ ¶ *So he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.* Interestingly, the word *key* מפתח, in Hebrew has the same root as the word *open*, פתח. Fausset reflects: “It rests with Christ to open or shut the heavenly palace, deciding who is, and who is not, to be admitted: as He also opens, or shuts, the prison, *having the keys of hell (the grave) and death* (Revelations 1:18).”

23 And I will fasten him [as] a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house.

And I will fasten him [as] a nail in a sure place. The Syriac (ܣ) follows the Masoretic text (מ) in this verse. The Targum (ܬ) has, “And I will appoint him a faithful chief-governor, an officer in a firm place.” The word nail is used twice as a Messianic figure: In Ezra 9:8 we read: “to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place.” And Zechariah 10:4, “Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail.” The Targum (ܬ) is explicit about the Messianic meaning: “משיחיה,” or “*their anointed one*.” Many exegetes speak about houses in the east built with pre-formed protrusions—or nails—as the hardness or softness of the building materials would not permit the adding of nails after its completion. These nails were thus made sure. Lowth has, “We see, therefore, that these nails were of necessary and common use, and of no small importance, in all their apartments; conspicuous, and much exposed to observation: and if they seem to us mean³⁴ and insignificant, it is because we are not acquainted with the thing itself, and have no name to express it by, but what conveys to us a low and contemptible idea. ‘Grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God, (saith Ezra 9:8), to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place :’ that is, as the margin || of our Bible explains it, ‘a constant and sure abode.’” While all of these certainly make for additional and valid allusions to their Messianic nature, Elder Bruce R. McConkie³⁵ explains: “Old Testament prophecies about the crucifixion, as that volume of Holy Writ now stands, do not use the word crucify, but notwithstanding this, in some respects they are even

more pointed and express than their Book of Mormon counterparts ... Ezra even speaks of ‘a nail in his holy place’ (Ezra 9:8), and Isaiah of ‘the nail that is fastened in the sure place,’ having reference to the nails driven in the Crucified One ... As to these prophecies, whoso readeth let him understand.” ¶ *And he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house.* Regarding the word *throne*, Fausset has, “in the strict sense, as applied to Messiah, the antitype.” Gill well says, “Christ is the brightness of his Father’s glory; and, to them that believe, he is an honour; he is on a glorious throne himself, and he will bring all his Father’s family to sit with him on the same throne (see 1 Samuel 2:8).” Rawlinson, making this a type of the Messiah has, “So shall all members of the family of God, made sons of God by adoption in Christ, participate in the final glory of Christ in his eternal kingdom.” Simeon has, “Was Eliakim ‘a glorious throne to his father’s house?’ Jesus also, by his righteous administration, advances the glory of his heavenly Father.”

24 And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, √ from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons.

✓ or, instruments of viols

And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house. The Targum (ܬ) has “And all the nobles of his father’s house shall rest themselves upon him.” The LXX (Ϟ) renders it, “And every one that is glorious in the house of his father shall trust in him.” Kay explains: “The glorious promises made to David ... shall be suspended upon him. *Men*, indeed, have turned the glory of the Davidic covenant into shame (cp. Psalm 4:2); and the house of David has fallen. But He whom ‘God will raise up’ shall ‘build the temple of the Lord, and *He shall bear the glory* (Zechariah 6:13); having first born ‘the shame’ (Hebrews 12:2) ... for He would ‘*bear the iniquities of all*’ (ISAIAH 53:6, 11).” David, here, is in reference to the Savior. ¶ *The offspring and the issue.* The Targum (ܬ) has, “children, and children’s children.” The LXX (Ϟ) has, “from the least to the greatest.” The Syriac (ܣ) has, “Both the honorable men and the glorious men.” Henderson explains: “Both מִצְאָצָאִים and זִפְעוֹת are botanical terms,—the former descriptive of what comes out of the earth generally, and applied figuratively to children, Job 5:25; 21:8; ISAIAH 48:19; 61:9; the latter, of the worthless shoots of trees.” ¶ *All vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons.* The Targum (ܬ) has, “From young men to little ones, from the priests clothed with the ephod to the Levites that are

³³ Peterson, H. Donl, and Charles D. Tate, Jr., eds. *The Pearl of Great Price: Revelations from God*. Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, 1989. pp. 77–78.

³⁴ Ordinary, of little importance, small.

³⁵ Bruce R. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ*, p.529

holding lyres³⁶.” Rashi (in Rosenberg) explains: “Accordingly, it is an expression of the ministration vessels with which the priests perform the service in the Temple.” The LXX (Ⲭ) adds, “And they shall depend upon him in that day.” The Syriac (Ⲫ) has, “And all small vessels, from instrument of music to the harp.” Calvin well says, regarding כָּל כֵּלֵי הַקֶּטָן, *all vessels of small quantity*, “When he speaks of musical vessels, he follows out what he had said in a single word; for it serves to explain the word קֶטָן, *little*; as if he had said that that there would be nothing so small, or minute, or insignificant, that he would not take charge of it.” Simeon beautifully has, “Jesus is indeed ‘a nail fastened in a sure place;’ and able to bear the weight of the whole universe. He is exalted by the hand of God himself on purpose that He may ‘be a Prince and a Saviour’ unto us. And, if we rely on him, he is ‘able to save us to the uttermost.’ Only let our trust in him be entire (exactly like that of a vessel on a nail), and we may rest assured, that all, who so hang on him, shall be ‘the glory of his Father’s house.’ As there is no other support for sinful man, so neither is there any fear of disappointment to those who trust in him. Let none then imagine themselves so great as not to need his support; or deem themselves so insignificant, that they shall not obtain it; or think themselves in such perilous circumstances, that He cannot uphold them. ‘Every vessel, from the largest flagon to the smallest cup,’ must owe its preservation to him alone; and by him shall all be saved, if they do but ‘cleave to him with full purpose of heart.’”

25 In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that [was] upon it shall be cut off: for the LORD hath spoken [it].

In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “At that time, saith the Lord of hosts, there shall be removed the faithful chief governor, who ministered in a firm place, and he shall be cut off, and he shall fall.” The Syriac (Ⲫ) follows the Masoretic text (ⲙ) in this verse. The LXX (Ⲭ) has, “Thus saith the Lord of hosts, The man that is fastened in the sure place shall be removed and be taken away, and shall fall.” The Syriac (Ⲫ) replaces the words *cut down* with “overthrown.” ¶ Eliakim is put for a type of Christ, as well as a righteous man, contrasted to Shebna. So the idea of Eliakim being cut down is troublesome

until we understand in what sense this happened. A number of suggestions have been made respecting this difficult verse. ¶ Ibn Ezra, and many others here, suggests that Isaiah has returned to speak about Shebna, “who thought himself a nail fixed in a strong place.” Calvin, who agrees with Ibn Ezra, adds, “Hence it ought to be inferred how foolishly men boast, and rely on their greatness, when they have been exalted to a high rank of honour; for in a very short time they may be cast down and deprived of all honour.” ¶ Skinner and Delitzsch argue that this verse still refers to Eliakim and accuse him of nepotism (ISAIAH 22:24). Skinner forcefully contends that nowhere is Shebna labeled a “nail in a sure place.” Delitzsch has, “[Eliakim’s] family makes a wrong use of him; and he is more yielding than he ought to be, and makes a wrong use of his office to favour them! He therefore falls, and brings down with him all that hung upon the peg, i.e., all his relations, who have brought him to ruin through the rapacity with which they have grasped at prosperity.” With the exception of the Prophets of God, I see few cases of types of Christ with happy endings. ¶ The third approach, maintained by Rawlinson and Kay, is strictly Messianic and the most satisfactory and beautiful. Rawlinson explains, “Is it not possible that the prophet, seeing in Eliakim a type of the Messiah, and becoming more and more Messianic in his utterances, has ended by forgetting the type altogether, and being absorbed in the thought of the antitype? He, the nail so surely fixed in his eternal place, would nevertheless be ‘removed’ for a time, and then ‘be cut down and fall’ (compare ISAIAH 52:14; 53:8). At the same time would be ‘cut off’ the burden which Messiah bore (ISAIAH 53:12, ‘He bare the sin of many’).” Regarding the expression *in that day*, Rawlinson continues: “Is not the day that of Christ’s earthly mission, when it seemed as if his people were about to acknowledge him (Matthew 21:1–11; Mark 11:1–10; Luke 19:29–40), and his throne to be established, but suddenly Messiah was ‘cut off’ (Daniel 9:26)—stricken for the transgression of his people (ISAIAH 53:8)?” Kay writes, “ISAIAH 22:25 contains, in germ, what was revealed to Daniel;—that the ‘holy of holies should be anointed,’ and ‘Messiah the prince’ come; but that He should be ‘cut off,’ and ‘the city and the sanctuary be destroyed’ (Daniel 9:24, 26) ... When Christ expired, the Temple veil was rent. Then the whole dispensation came virtually to an end. Then ‘the burden that was’ upon Him ‘was cut off,’—all that heavy burden of ignominy, which He endured, when they *crucified the Lord of glory* (1 Corinthians 2:8); and the name, Eliakim, had its fulfillment in His resurrection and glorification. Then were ‘the *sure mercies of David*’ established (ISAIAH 55:3; Acts 13:34).” Kay explains that these things were spoken of the great High Priest, even Jesus Christ (Revelation 1:17–18). And further states: “The word for ‘be

³⁶ Stenning and Chilton have *harpes*.

removed³⁷ is the same that is used in ISAIAH 54:10; Jeremiah 31:36; where the new, immoveable, covenant is spoken of. The ‘cutting off’ of Messiah was in order to bring in ‘everlasting righteousness.’ The departure of the risen Saviour was in order to establish ‘a kingdom that cannot be moved.’” ¶ *And the burden that [was] upon it shall be cut off: for the LORD hath spoken [it].* The Targum (T), “And there shall be accomplished the burden of prophecy, which was concerning him; because the Word³⁸ of the Lord hath so decreed it.”

Several exegetes explain that the burden could well represent the sins of the world, when Christ triumphed through the expiatory sacrifice. Rawlinson continues with the Messianic line of thought: “*For the Lord hath spoken it.* The double attestation, at the beginning and at the end of the verse, is a mark of the vast importance of the announcement contained in it, which is, in fact, the germ of *the great doctrine of the atonement*” (emphasis added).

19 February 2010

³⁷ תמוש

³⁸ Chilton and Stenning have *Memra*.

Isaiah 23

Nebuchadrezzar would bring down the prideful nation of Tyre to the dust. Most commentators feel that this chapter mainly deals with the Babylonian invasion. Ezekiel makes this clear, also “For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will bring upon Tyre Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, a king of kings, from the north, with horses, and with chariots, and with horsemen, and companies, and much people” (Ezekiel 26:7 (also see 1–21)). In the last days Tyre would turn to the Lord and the clothing she manufactures shall be used to attire those who serve the Lord in the temple. The ancient manuscripts make this a particularly interesting chapter. Calvin says, “Isaiah threatens [Tyre’s] destruction, because it has been hostile to the people of God, as we may infer from what is said by Ezekiel.” Some of the 19th Century exegetes speak of Tyre’s total destruction. Alexander says, “It entirely decayed, and has now disappeared, its site being marked by the insulated rock, by the causeway between it and the mainland still existing as a bar of sand, and by columns and other architectural remains mostly lying under water.” צור, Tzur or Tyre, means *rock* in Hebrew. Yet it would become a *bare* rock: “With the hoofs of his [Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon] horses shall he tread down all thy streets: he shall slay thy people by the sword, and thy strong garrisons shall go down to the ground. And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise: and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses: and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water. And I will cause the noise of thy songs to cease; and the sound of thy harps shall be no more heard. And I will make thee like the top of a rock” (Ezekiel 26:11–14a). And further, “and thou shalt be no more: though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord God” (Ezekiel 26:21b). Tyre is once again a vibrant, populated place. Much of Tyre turned to Christianity, for a while, after the first advent of the Savior, and certainly it will turn to the Lord once again, in the end of days, as is clear from the last verses of this prophecy. Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is the very Christ. So, there are a number of possibilities that may be offered here regarding Tyre’s final outcome. One is that even though Tyre would be inhabited again, the peoples to do so would not be related to those who had been wiped out. An intriguing possibility is offered by Jennings, and that is that Tyre stands as a *type* for Mammon (מַמְּוֹן). This is certainly the most elegant solution as to how Tyre would once again be called a harlot and commit fornication with the world (ISAIAH 23:16–17) after a period of seventy years of desolation, and yet in ISAIAH 23:18 have the riches of the world consecrated to the work of the Lord. Also compare ISAIAH 21 with Ezekiel 26–28.

vv. 1–14. Prideful Tyre would be destroyed, supposedly by the nations who were here enemies. But this only could take place because the Lord permitted it. Tyre would be humbled. Instead of harvesting the sea and being involved in commerce, she might have to harvest the land. Babylon would be an instrument in the hands of God to humble Tyre and the nations.

1 ¶ THE burden of Tyre. Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; for it is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entering in: from the land of Chittim it is revealed to them.

THE burden of Tyre. צור (Tyre, also צור, meaning *rock*) was a Phoenician island in the Mediterranean, quite close to land, and almost equidistant between Sidon on the north, and Acco on the south. It was about 50 kilometers north of Mt. Carmel. Much of the timber as well as masons for the construction of Solomon’s Temple came from Tyre and the surrounding areas in

Lebanon. Tyre is an ancient place, first mentioned in Joshua 19:29, where it was called *a defended or fortified city*. Alexander explains that part of Tyre was in the mainland¹ itself. Gill has: “This was a famous city in Phoenicia, which exceeded in renown and grandeur all the cities of Syria and Phoenicia, and was much known for its trade and navigation, for which it was well situated by the sea.” Hengstenberg feels that the main portion of Tyre was built on a peninsula, which was attached to the mainland by a narrow neck of land (in Alexander). Of the broader region, Fleming² says, “It was about two hundred miles long and from two to fifteen miles wide. Headlands projecting to the sea cut this coastland into a number of small plains that had their names from their chief cities, as the Plain of Tyre, the Plain of Sidon, the Plain of Acco, etc. Thus the topography of the land was unfavorable to a strongly centralized government.” Fleming explains that

¹ The mainland portion also referred to as *Old Tyre* (see Fleming, p. 4)

² Fleming, Wallace B. (1966), *The History of Tyre* (New York, NY: AMS Press).

Tyre was a commercial power as early as 1200 BC—preferring peace over war—or political force.³ They were renowned architects, masons (2 Chronicles 2:14), and seamen—they ventured past the Mediterranean ocean into the Atlantic and onto Africa as early as 1100 BC.⁴ Why is the Lord upset at Tyre? A number of reasons include Tyre's: (1) enmity towards God's chosen people (Ezekiel 26:2); (2) pride in her wisdom (Zechariah 9:2) such that she considered herself as God (Ezekiel 28:2–5); (3) conceit in her riches, beauty and strength⁵ (Ezekiel 27:3–11; 28:5, 12); (4) removal of silver and gold from Jerusalem (Joel 3:5, some have suggested from the Temple there); (5) idolatry and refusal to worship the Living God (Ezekiel 28:18); (6) aiding in the scattering of Israel (Joel 3:6); and (7) traitorous act against Judah by taking Edom's side (Amos 1:9). ¶ In Luke 10:13, the Lord explains that Tyre did not sin against the light, as did Israel (represented by Chorazin and Bethsaida, types for the entire nation, who witnessed the presence and miracles of our Savior in the meridian of time (see Luke 10:13). Barnes explains: "The sense of this passage is, that the fleets coming from **Tarshish** (Tartessus) to Tyre, would, on their way, learn from the inhabitants of Cyprus the news of the downfall of Tyre." ¶ *Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; for it is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entering in: from the land of Chittim it is revealed to them.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "Howl, O ye that are embarking (or, *going down*) in ships of the sea, because their havens are spoiled, so that none can enter in. From the land of Chittim it is coming upon them (the Royal Polyglot reads, ⲁⲩⲏ, 'they shall come')." The Vulgate (ⵅ) also has "*naves maris*" (ships of the sea—Douay) rather than **Tarshish** (ⲧⲁⲣⲱⲱⲥ). The LXX (Ⲭ) has, "Howl, ye ships of Carthage; for she has perished, and men no longer arrive from the land of the Citians: she is led captive." Thompson's Ⲭ translation has, "Raise the mournful cry, ships of Carthage, for Tyre is destroyed and there are no arrivals from the land of the Kitians." The NETS Ⲭ ⲡⲣⲁⲛⲱⲥⲗⲁⲧⲱⲛ has Kitieans; the Greek Ⲭ has ⲕⲓⲧⲓⲁⲓⲱⲛ. The Syriac (Ⲥ) *Peshitta en Español*, has, as the *bad news* revealed from Quitim. Gill reminds us that both Chittim and Tarshish were sons of Javan (Genesis 10:4). Regarding Chittim or ⲕⲓⲧⲓⲁⲓⲱⲛ, *Easton* has: "while the name originally designated the Phoenicians only, it came latterly to be used of all the islands and various settlements on the sea-coasts which they had occupied, and then of the people who succeeded them when the Phoenician power decayed.

³ Fleming, pp. xi, 14.

⁴ Fleming, pp. 15, 17–19, 28, 42–43.

⁵ Pride in wisdom, might and riches are precisely those abhorred by the Lord (Jeremiah 9:23–24). And when it comes to beauty, Fleming tells us that Tyre was renowned for her splendor (pp. 5–6).

Hence it designates generally the islands and coasts of the Mediterranean and the races that inhabit them."

Others believe it was more particularly meant of the island of Cyprus.⁶ Henderson points out that in Ezekiel 27:6 we have the plural ⲙⲁⲓⲓ, *islands*, and that it "satisfactorily shews that more than one island or maritime region are intended." In Ezekiel, the plural is actually spelled without the final ⲙ, ⲙⲁⲓ,

(ⲙⲁⲓⲓ ⲙⲁⲓⲓ ⲙⲁⲓⲓ, from *islands* of Chittim.

¶ Regarding "*so that there is no house, no entering in*," Alexander explains: "The meaning strictly is, *away from house, away from entrance*. It may be less concisely rendered, *so there is no house, &c.* Some make the two expressions strictly parallel and correlative, *so there is neither house nor entrance*, in which case the latter may have reference to the entering of ships into the harbor.⁷ Others make the second dependent on the first, *so that there is no house left to enter*. This may refer particularly to the mariners returning from their long voyage and finding their homes destroyed." It may well be an encompassing phrase, indicating that there is practically nothing left standing: from house to port. The Masoretic text (ⲙ), uses the word ⲡⲁⲗⲁ (to be revealed), as part of the expression ⲡⲁⲗⲁ-ⲕⲓⲧⲓⲙ (to be revealed to them). While most translate it as the KJV, as news revealed from Chittim, the word ⲡⲁⲗⲁ is quite expansive, and could mean *exiled* as well as *revealed*. So the alternate signification is that they were *exiled to Chittim* (Ⲭ) or the news was *revealed from Chittim* (Ⲥ). In Ezekiel 27:12 we read, "**Tarshish** was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all *kind of* riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs." And further, "The ships of **Tarshish** did sing of thee in thy market: and thou wast replenished, and made very glorious in the midst of the seas" (Ezekiel 27:25). It is thought that Tarshish was a "Phoenician port in Spain, between the two mouths of the Guadalquivir" (*Easton*). Often mentioned in the Scriptures, the ships of Tarshish came

⁶ ISBE has, in part: "In its narrower sense *Kittim* appears simply to have stood for the island of Cyprus—it is mentioned between Bashan (= Pal) and the isles of Elisha in Ezekiel 27:6–7, and with this ISAIAH 23:1, 12 agree, *Kittim* occurring in these passages between Tarshish, Tyre and Sidon. The statement of Josephus, that 'all islands, and the greatest part of the sea-coast, are called *Chethim* (= *Kittim*) by the Hebrews,' on the other hand, must be taken as the testimony of one well acquainted with the opinions of the learned world in his time."

⁷ Fleming explains that around the time of King David and Solomon, Hiram connected the main island of Tyre with a smaller one close to it. By means of piers, two harbors were constructed. The one facing the north was called *Sidonian*; the one to the South, *Egyptian*. These, were joined by a canal (p.4). Alexander would later join these islands to the mainland (p.5).

to represent “a general designation for large sea-going vessels to any quarter” (ISBE). These ships loved to trade with Tyre, but her destruction would give rise to the bitterest lamentations. In the last days these ships of **Tarshish** (תַּרְשִׁישׁ) would play a major role in bringing scattered Israel back, “Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of **Tarshish** first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee” (ISAIAH 60:9). For now, the bad news regarding the devastation of Tyre would be picked up by the ships of **Tarshish** in Cyprus or other Mediterranean ports. In Ezekiel we read: “And all that handle the oar, the mariners, and all the pilots of the sea, shall come down from their ships, they shall stand upon the land; And shall cause their voice to be heard against thee, and shall cry bitterly, and shall cast up dust upon their heads, they shall wallow themselves in the ashes: And they shall make themselves utterly bald for thee, and gird them with sackcloth, and they shall weep for thee with bitterness of heart and bitter wailing. And in their wailing they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and lament over thee, saying, What city is like Tyrus, like the destroyed in the midst of the sea? When thy wares went forth out of the seas, thou filledst many people; thou didst enrich the kings of the earth with the multitude of thy riches and of thy merchandise. In the time when thou shalt be broken by the seas in the depths of the waters thy merchandise and all thy company in the midst of thee shall fall. All the inhabitants of the isles shall be astonished at thee, and their kings shall be sore afraid, they shall be troubled in their countenance” (Ezekiel 27:29–36).

2 Be still, ye inhabitants of the isle; thou whom the merchants of Zidon, that pass over the sea, have replenished.

✓ silent

Be still, ye inhabitants of the isle. The Stenning Targum (ⲧ) translation, has “be dismayed.” There are differences among the Dead Sea Scrolls (Ⲭ) here. The 4QIsa^a—in contrast to the 1QIsa^a—has the expression, “To whom are they like?” (DSSB). The 1QIsa^a follows the Masoretic text (ⲙ), “be silent.” The LXX (Ⲟ) also begins with “To whom,” leading the authors of the DSSB to wonder if the 4QIsa^a (Ⲭ) was adjusted to match the LXX (Ⲟ). The Syriac (Ⲫ) uses the plural, *islands*. Some exegetes, indeed, think that *islands* (plural) is meant. This would include the islands and coasts of the Mediterranean. But the word is also associated with America and the islands of the sea. Wesley explains: “The title of islands is often given by the Hebrews to places bordering upon the sea.” Some

exegetes, indeed, think that *islands* (plural) is meant. Wesley explains: “The title of *islands* is often given by the Hebrews to places bordering upon the sea.” The idea is that those who traded heavily with Tyre, then, would be much affected by her destruction. And there is no question that Tyre’s fall would, to be sure, affect the *islands*. It is likely, however, that here the singular (ⲙ) is meant—*island* (ⲙ). It is the inhabitants of Tyre who are addressed in this particular verse. The message to Tyre, according to Gill (leaning on Pliny) is that Tyre should resign herself to what was coming and not think of defending herself. Another possible message is that Tyre should not mourn nor would she complain. And respecting Zidon, who was so close to Tyre, Calvin has, “The Sidonians, therefore, were unquestionably greater gainers than others by imports and exports, and also by sales and merchandise, in consequence of being so near, and trading with it continually; for the wealth of Tyre overflowed on them, and, as the saying is, they flew under its wings ... and suffered more severely than others by the destruction of Tyre.” Sidon is first mentioned in Genesis 10:15, as being the firstborn child of Canaan. ¶ *Thou whom the merchants of Zidon, that pass over the sea, have replenished.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “The merchants that pass over the sea they used to replenish thee.” The LXX (Ⲟ) has, “Who could be compared with the dwellers in this island—these merchants of Phoenicia, who traversed the ocean—.” The Syriac (Ⲫ) also makes mention of Zidon, as does the Dead Sea Scrolls (Ⲭ), and the Vulgate (ⲱ). The ⲱ has the merchants of Zidon who have benefited Tyre: “*negotatio Sidonis transfretantes mare repleverunt te*” (the merchants of Sidon passing over the sea, have filled thee—Douay). Barnes and Gill explain that Tyre was a colony of Zidon. This city, *Zidon*⁸ (צִידוֹן), is about 71 kilometers up the coast from Tyre. ISBE has: “One of the oldest Phoenician cities, situated on a narrow plain between the range of Lebanon and the sea, in latitude 33 degrees 34 minutes nearly. The plain is well watered and fertile, about 10 miles long, extending from a little North of Sarepta to the Bostrenus (*Nahr el-Auly*). The ancient city was situated near the northern end of the plain, surrounded with a strong wall. It

⁸ ISBE has, “Sidon submitted to the Assyrian kings as did the Phoenician cities generally, but revolted against Sennacherib and again under Esar-haddon. The latter destroyed a large part of the city and carried off most of the inhabitants, replacing them by captives from Babylon and Elam, and renamed it Ir-Esar-had-don (“City of Esar-haddon”). The settlers readily mingled with the Phoenicians, and Sidon rose to power again when Assyria fell, was besieged by Nebuchadnezzar at the time of his siege of Jerusalem and Tyre, and was taken, having lost about half of its inhabitants by plague. The fall of Babylon gave another short period of independence, but the Persians gained control without difficulty, and Sidon was prominent in the Persian period as the leading naval power among the Phoenicians who aided their suzerain in his attacks upon Greece.”

possessed two harbors.” In other words, Tyre would supply trade goods for all the surrounding nations in what seemed a never ending harvest of land, ocean and river products. In Ezekiel we see some of the merchandize that Tyre peddled: “Tarshish was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all kind of riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs. Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, they were thy merchants: they traded the persons of men and vessels of brass in thy market. They of the house of Togarmah traded in thy fairs with horses and horsemen and mules. The men of Dedan were thy merchants; many isles were the merchandise of thine hand: they brought thee for a present horns of ivory and ebony. Syria was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of the wares of thy making: they occupied in thy fairs with emeralds, purple, and brodered work, and fine linen, and coral, and agate. Judah, and the land of Israel, they were thy merchants: they traded in thy market wheat of Minnith, and Pannag, and honey, and oil, and balm. Damascus was thy merchant in the multitude of the wares of thy making, for the multitude of all riches; in the wine of Helbon, and white wool. Dan also and Javan going to and fro occupied in thy fairs: bright iron, cassia, and calamus, were in thy market. Dedan was thy merchant in precious clothes for chariots. Arabia, and all the princes of Kedar, they occupied with thee in lambs, and rams, and goats: in these were they thy merchants. The merchants of Sheba and Raamah, they were thy merchants: they occupied in thy fairs with chief of all spices, and with all precious stones, and gold. Haran, and Canneh, and Eden, the merchants of Sheba, Asshur, and Chilmad, were thy merchants. These were thy merchants in all sorts of things, in blue clothes, and brodered work, and in chests of rich apparel, bound with cords, and made of cedar, among thy merchandize” (Ezekiel 27:12–24). And thus we read: “The ships of Tarshish did sing of thee in thy market: and thou wast replenished, and made very glorious in the midst of the seas” (Ezekiel 27:25).

3 And by great waters the seed of Sihor, the harvest of the river, [is] her revenue; and she is a mart of nations.

And by great waters the seed of *Sihor*⁹, the harvest of the river, [is] her revenue. The Targum (T) has, “The

⁹ Regarding שִׁיחֹר, ISBE has: “A stream of water mentioned in connection with Egypt. Joshua (Joshua 13:3) speaks of the “Shihor, which is before Egypt.” In the north easternmost province of ancient Egypt, *Khentab* (“Fronting on the East”), was a canal, a fresh-water stream drawn off from the Nile, called in the Egyptian language *Shi-t-Hor*, i.e. “the Horus Canal” (the -t- is an Egyptian feminine ending). There have been many changes in the branches and canals from the Nile in the Delta, and this one with many others has been lost

harvest of the increase (or, *the gathering*) of the river was her revenue.” The LXX (G), “—this offspring of merchants on many a water.” The Syriac (S) adds the expression “descendant of merchants” when speaking of Tyre in this verse. The Vulgate (V) speaks of the “*in aquis multis semen Nili*” (The seed of the Nile in many waters—Douay). Regarding the expression *the seed of Sihor*, the *harvest of the river*, שִׁיחֹר יָאֹר, it is commonly understood to refer to the Nile. Lowth explains: “The Nile is called here *Shichor*, as it is [found in] Jeremiah 2:18 and 1 Chronicles 13:5. It has this name from the blackness of its waters charged with the mud which it brings down from Ethiopia, when it overflows.” Indeed, the word שִׁיחֹר means *black* in Hebrew. Gesenius, showing the *plene* and other forms of the word writes: “שִׁיחֹר, שִׁיחֹר, שִׁיחֹר [*Shihor*, *Sihor*], properly ‘black,’ ‘turbid’ (root שָׁחַר), hence pr.n. (in Heb. just as יֵאֵר is Egyptian), of the river *Nile*, so called from its muddy and turbid waters.” HAL explains, “Egyptian records never use שִׁיחֹר to indicate the whole extent of the Nile but only a specified area of water.” The harvest of the most productive areas of the Nile was transported in sea vessels for commerce throughout the area of the Mediterranean and beyond, into Africa. Henderson explains: “The seed and harvest are said to be those of that river, because they were produced by its inundation.” That is, the yearly inundations brought fertility to these regions. ¶ *And she is a mart*¹⁰ *of nations*. The LXX (G) has, “who made a traffick of nations as of an ingathered harvest?” Luther explains: “Here the prophet reproves the greed and pride in good times, which are often followed by many other kinds of vices.”

4 Be thou ashamed, O Zidon: for the sea hath spoken, [even] the strength of the sea, saying, I travail not, nor bring forth children, neither do I nourish up young men, [nor] bring up virgins.

altogether; but there is a tradition among the Bedouin of *Wādy el-'Arish* to this day that once a branch of the Nile came over to that point. This *Shi-t-Hor*, ‘Stream of Horus,’ makes perfectly clear and harmonious the different references of Scripture to South. It was ‘before Egypt,’ as Joshua describes it, and it was the first sweet water of Egypt which the traveler from Palestine in those days was able to obtain, as the words of Jeremiah indicate. ‘To drink the waters of South’ meant to reach the supply of the fresh water of the Nile at the border of the desert. The two other references to South (1 Chronicles 13:5; ISAIAH 23:3) are perfectly satisfied by this identification. The ‘seed of South’ (ISAIAH 23:3 the King James Version) would be grain from Egypt by way of the Shihor.”

¹⁰ Marketplace.

Be thou [shamed, O Zidon: for the seah spoken, [even] the strength of the sea saying. The Targum (T) reads: “The Sidonians are confounded, because the west (i.e., Tyre) hath spoken, which dwells in the strength of the sea, saying.” Henderson explains that **מְעוֹד הַיָּם**, or *fortress of the sea*, “describes the maritime situation and strength of Tyre.” ¶ *I travail not, nor bring forth children, neither do I nourish up young men, [nor] bring up virgins.* The Targum (T) has, “O that I had never travailed, never conceived, and never nourished up young men, never brought up virgins delicately!” The LXX (G), “I did not travail nor did I bring her forth; nor did I nourish her youths, nor educate her virgins.” The term **בְּתוּלוֹת** (virgins) is often used in place of a city or place. Here, in contraposition to “young men” (**בְּחֹרִים**), the term can also mean *young women*. Ibn Ezra suggests that this is a description of Tyre’s desolation. The *Concordia*¹¹ by Roehrs/Franzmann suggests: “The sea, personified mother of Sidon, laments the disappearance of ships as if she had never given birth to them.”

5 As at the report concerning Egypt, [so] shall they be sorely pained at the report of Tyre.

The LXX (G) along with the Peshitta (S), Vulgate (V) and almost every single translation into English and Spanish¹² since the Bishops Bible in 1568, has Egypt distressed at Tyre’s sad fortune. For instance, we have: “When the report cometh to Egypt, they shall be sorely pained at the report of Tyre” (ASV). Calvin writes: “The alliance which existed between the inhabitants of Tyre and those of Egypt could not have been more appropriately described; and therefore he shews that this ruin extends also to the Egyptians, because they prompted the Jews to rebellion, and turned them aside from confidence in God.” The *Peshitta en Español* (S), has: “Cuando se enteren en Egipto, los sobrecogerán dolores de parto como lo que oyeron de Tiro.” That is, “When they find out in Egypt, they will be overcome by birth pains, as that which they heard of Tyre.” The Targum (T) has the men of Tyre trembling when they heard what had become of Egypt. Rotherham has: “<Like the report of Egypt> They shall be in pangs at the like report of Tyre.” Henderson, believes that the mention of Egypt is an allusion to the “destruction of the Egyptians at the Red Sea,—so beautifully described in the ode of Moses, Exodus 15:14. **שָׁמַע** [report]

corresponds to **שָׁמַעַי** [shall hear], and **יְהִי לוֹ** [shall they be sorely pained] to **הֵיל אָחֻז** [sorrow shall take hold] in that passage.” Along with Judah, Egypt, Philistia, Edom, Moab, Ammon, Elam, Arabia and a multitude of others (Jeremiah 25:18–26), Tyre is included among the nations that Babylon would crush, because of “the wine cup of this fury at my hand” (Jeremiah 25:15b) and “because of the sword that I will send among them” (Jeremiah 25:16b).

6 Pass ye over to Tarshish; howl, ye inhabitants of the isle.

One explanation is that the people of Tyre would have to escape to Tarshish—the Targum (T) has them being exiled to some province of the sea. Gill, leaning on Kimhi, has: “Kimhi thinks this is spoken, not to the Tyrians, but to the merchants that traded with them, to go elsewhere with their merchandise, since their goods could no more be disposed of in that city as usual.” These explanations are certainly not mutually exclusive. The LXX (G) has Carthage (Καρχηδόνα) rather than Tyre. The Vulgate (V) has “*transite maria*” (Pass over the seas—Douay) rather than **תַּרְשִׁישׁ** (Tarshish) in the Masoretic text (M).

7 [Is] this your joyous [city], whose antiquity [is] of ancient days? her own feet shall carry her afar off to sojourn.

✓ from afar off

[Is] this your joyous [city], whose antiquity [is] of ancient days? The Targum (T) has, “Is this your strong city, Tyre, of ancient days? In olden time they were bringing her **גִּיְפוֹת**¹³ (note: the Royal Polyglot reads the plural, **קָרְבָּנִין**, which agrees better with the context) from a distant land.” Likewise, the Syriac (S) uses the word *mighty* in the stead of the *joyous* (**עֲלִיָּזָה**) in the Masoretic text (M). The LXX (G) renders it, “Was not she your boast of old, before she was delivered up?” The Vulgate (V) has Tyre glorying “*quae gloriabatur*” in her antiquity. Fleming—leaning on the writings of the priests of Melkart spoken about in Herodotus—supposes Tyre to have first established herself on the shores of the Mediterranean as early as 2,800 B.C.¹⁴ Henderson agrees with the KJV translators, that he

¹¹ Roehrs, Walter and Franzmann, Martin H. (1979). *Concordia Self-Study Commentary*.

¹² Including the LDS Reina Valera 2009 translation.

¹³ “But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is Corban*, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free*” (Mark 7:11).

¹⁴ Fleming, 3.

word *city* (either עִיר or קִרְיָה) is implied. ¶ *Her own feet shall carry her afar off to sojourn.* The Targum (Ⲯ), “Behold, now she is removed to sojourn *afar off*!” This suggests an *escape by foot*. Or possible being *carried off as an exile*. Barnes has, “Grotius supposes that by feet here, the ‘feet of ships’ are intended, that is, their sails and oars. But the expression is designed evidently to stand in contrast with ISAIAH 23:6, and to denote that a part of the inhabitants would go by land into captivity. Probably many of them were taken prisoners by Nebuchadnezzar; and perhaps many of them, when the city was besieged, found opportunity to escape and flee by land to a distant place of safety.”

8 Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre, the crowning [city], whose merchants [are] princes, whose traffickers [are] the honourable of the earth?

Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre, the crowning [city]. This verse asks the question, *who* (מִי) will bring the above mentioned destruction against Tyre that culminates in ISAIAH 23:7? We read the answer in ISAIAH 23:9. The Targum (Ⲯ) replaces crowning city with “against *her* that was giving advice.” The Syriac (Ⲥ) in Español also has Tyre giving out crowns, “la que entregaba coronas.” The Douay (based on the Vulgate Ⲟ) speaks of Tyre as having been “formerly crowned.”

The expression תַּמְעִטִּירָה (the crowning) comes from the root עָטַר, to surround (such as surround with a crown), and can mean that Tyre distributes crowns, or other forms of *dignity* (Gesenius) or *glory*

(Friedländer¹⁵) on others. Henderson has: “תַּמְעִטִּירָה, coronatrix, coronam impotens, refers to the power which she exercised in the Phoenician colonies, bestowing the regal dignity at her pleasure. That Arad, Arke, Carthage, Citium, Tartessus, &c. were governed by kings under the supremacy of the mother-state, clearly appears from the statements of the ancients.”

¶ *Whose merchants [are] princes, whose traffickers [are] the honourable of the earth?* The LXX (Ⲭ) renders it, “Is she inferior? Or hath she not power? Her merchants are glorious chiefs of the earth.” In other words, who would bring down such a powerful nation? Of her trading power around 630 BC, Fleming says that “Her commerce extended to the ends of the earth.”¹⁶ In Ezekiel 26:16 we read: “Then all the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones, and lay away their

robes, and put off their brodered garments: they shall clothe themselves with trembling; they shall sit upon the ground, and shall tremble at every moment, and be astonished at thee.” These references to *princes* (שָׂרִים) and the *honorable of the earth* (יְכַבְּדֵי-אֲרֶץ) is probably a allusion to the difficulty faced by the opulent and powerful when their fortunes change.

9 The LORD of hosts hath purposed it, to stain[✓] the pride of all glory, [and] to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth.

✓ to pollute

The LORD of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory. The Targum (Ⲯ) reads, “The Lord of hosts is the counsellor against her (note: the Royal Polyglot has מְלִכָּה, ‘his counsel’) to defile the glory of all the objects of rejoicing.” Instead of *to stain*, *to pollute*, *to profane* or *to wound*¹⁷ (לְחַלֵּל) in the Masoretic text (Ⲛ), the Syriac (Ⲥ) has to *invalidate* or *bring to an end*. It is common to speak of *wounded pride*.¹⁸ The Lord permitted these consequences to come upon Tyre. ¶ *[And] to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth.* All who exalt themselves will be brought low and humbled.

10 Pass through thy land as a river, O daughter of Tarshish; [there is] no more strength[✓] in thee.

✓ girdle

Pass through thy land as a river, O daughter of Tarshish. Pauli’s translation of the Targum (Ⲯ) has: “Remove from thy land, as the waters of a river; flee to a province of the sea.” In the Stenning translation, the Ⲯ makes the allusion that as the waters of a river are exiled—or removed far away from the place they pass through—so will the inhabitants of the land be removed far away from it. The LXX (Ⲭ), “Work thy land: for ships no more arrive from Carthage.” In other words, turn to agricultural pursuits rather than to sea commerce. The DSSB (Ⲟ) has “Cultivate” thy land &c. 1QIsa^a has *worship* and 4QIsa^c, *pass through*, as the Masoretic text (Ⲛ). Ibn Ezra believes that כְּנָהַר “as a river,” either implies the speed of a river, or the overflow carried caused by a river. Kimhi, according to Gill, suggests that the people of Tyre will need to make

¹⁵ *The Commentary of Ibn Ezra* on Isaiah was edited, translated, and annotated by M. Friedländer.

¹⁶ Fleming, 40.

¹⁷ Gesenius. BDB, and *Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament*.

¹⁸ In Spanish, *amor propio herido*.

their escape to Tarshish. ¶ *There is no more strength in thee.* The LXX (Ⲯ) has, “Nor is thy hand which vexed kings, any more powerful by sea.” The Syriac (Ⲥ) instead has, “there is no one to drive you way.” The Douay (based on the Vulgate ⲱ) uses the marginal || translation, *girdle* (מִנְיָה)¹⁹: “thou hast a girdle no more.” ¶ Joseph Smith’s Inspired Version helps give clarity to this verse, with the addition of the words “in thee.” This is supported by Gill, who says there is no more strength in Tyre. Ibn Ezra believes that the figure of a girdle (מִנְיָה) stands for *strength*: “It is a figure for strength, because a girdle supports the loins (see Psalm 109:19).” BDB explain, that in Job 12:21 the word מִנְיָה is used in the expression *loosen the strength of the mighty* to mean, “weaken them, make them defenceless, by ungirding.”

11 He stretched out his hand over the sea, he shook the kingdoms: the LORD hath given a commandment against the merchant [city], to destroy the strong holds thereof.

- ✓ or, concerning a merchantman ✓ ✓ Canaan
✓ ✓ ✓ or, strengths

He stretched out his hand over the sea, he shook the kingdoms: The Targum (Ⲯ) reads, “His power is lifted up against the sea, to make the kingdom²⁰ to tremble.” This is an allusion to the power of the God of Israel, who stopped the Red Sea so Israel could cross over. ¶ *The LORD hath given a commandment against the merchant [city], to destroy the strong holds thereof.* The LXX (Ⲯ) makes it clear that through the Lord’s command, these things have come to pass. However, just as in the margin ||, it uses the word *Canaan* (כְּנָעַן / χανανα). The Syriac (Ⲥ) and the Vulgate (ⲱ) also follow the margin || in using *Canaan* (כְּנָעַן). In Hebrew, כְּנָעַן means *merchant* (Gesenius, HAL). By *strongholds* here, Ibn Ezra suggests that “the fortress of Tyre” is meant. In Ezekiel we read: “Behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the

¹⁹ BDB explains מִנְיָה as removing all restraint; Gesenius “of bonds, or of a yoke put on the people.” DBL has מִנְיָה meaning: “**harbor**, formally, girdle, i.e., a relatively protected cove or area where the land and sea meet, apparently as an extension of a place where wind and wave are *restrained* (Isa 23:10+).” So also LHI and *Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament*.

²⁰ Plural, kingdoms, מְלָכוּתָא, Targum Jonathan to the Prophets (Logos) as well as Sperber. Stenning translates, “shake the kingdoms.”

beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness. They shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die the deaths of *them that are slain* in the midst of the seas” (Ezekiel 28:7–8). And also, “Thy riches, and thy fairs, thy merchandise, thy mariners, and thy pilots, thy calkers, and the occupiers of thy merchandise, and all thy men of war, that *are* in thee, and in all thy company which *is* in the midst of thee, shall fall into the midst of the seas in the day of thy ruin” (Ezekiel 27:27).

12 And he said, Thou shalt no more rejoice, O thou oppressed virgin, daughter of Zidon: arise, pass over to Chittim; there also shalt thou have no rest.

And he said, Thou shalt no more rejoice, O thou oppressed virgin, daughter of Zidon: Calvin well says, “He continues to speak of Tyre, but gives it this name, because it was built by the Sidonians.” The Brenton LXX (Ⲯ) translation has, “And men shall say, Ye shall no longer at all continue to insult and injure the daughter of Sidon.” ¶ *And he said,* (וַיֹּאמֶר). Ibn Ezra has, “And God said.” Gill has: “Kimhi interprets it; when her calamity should come upon her, her jovial time, her time of mirth, jollity, and revelling, would be over for a time; for, at the end of seventy years, she should take her harp, and sing again (ISAIAH 23:15) for the words seem to be spoken of Tyre, concerning whom the whole prophecy is; though some think Zidon is here meant, which, being near, suffered at the same time with Tyre, or quickly after.” Gill continues: “Tyre is called the daughter of Zidon, because it was a colony of the Zidonians,” and goes on to show how in Ezekiel 16:46, the word *daughter* is used of such colonies. ¶ *Arise, pass over to Chittim; there also shalt thou have no rest.* The LXX (Ⲯ) renders it, “Nay though thou shouldst go to the Kitians; yet even there thou shalt not have rest.” The Syriac (Ⲥ) and the Vulgate (ⲱ) also make it clear that although Tyre might remove to Chittim²¹, even there she would have no rest.

13 Behold the land of the Chaldeans; this people was not, [till] the Assyrian founded it for them that dwell in the wilderness: they set up the towers thereof, they raised up the palaces thereof; [and] he brought it to ruin.

²¹ Peshitta en Español has Quitim, while Lamsa uses China again.

Behold the land of the Chaldeans; this people was not, [till] the Assyrian founded it for them that dwell in the wilderness. Instead of wilderness, the Targum (ⲧ) has islands. The LXX (Ⲭ) translations by Brenton and NETS suggest that if Tyre were to seek refuge with the Chaldeans, there also she would not find it, because the Assyrians would pull down her walls and lay the place waste. The moderns suggest that it would be the Chaldeans (i.e., Babylonia) who would destroy Tyre, and not Assyria. The Good News Bible renders it as a parenthetical: “(It was the Babylonians, not the Assyrians, who let the wild animals overrun Tyre &c.)” This says to me that while most people were worried about Assyria as the offending force, as the great world power, that Isaiah was explaining—many years before the fact—that it would be Babylon who would be the invading power (also see NRSV, REB and NAB). The matter seems to be a difference in the translation of **הָאֲשֻׁרִים**.²² That is, “Behold-land-Chaldea-this-the-people-not-are (or be/become)-Asshur.” Possibly, “Look at the land of Chaldea—it was not Assyria—etc.” ¶ *They set up the towers thereof, they raised up the palaces thereof; [and] he brought it to ruin.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “They raised up her beacons, they destroyed her palaces, they have made her a ruinous heap.” The Syriac (Ⲫ) has, “They appointed spies who spied on her palaces, and they brought it to ruin.” The Vulgate (ⲱ) has the Chaldeans removing the strong into captivity: “*in captivitatem traduxerunt robustos ejus*” (they have led away the strong ones thereof into captivity—Douay). The Vulgate (ⲱ), furthermore, has the houses (*domos*) brought to ruin, rather than the palaces.

14 Howl, ye ships of Tarshish: for your strength is laid waste.

The Targum (ⲧ) reads, “Howl, ye that are embarking in ships of the sea, for the seacoast of your strength is spoiled.” The Vulgate (ⲱ) again speaks of the “naves maris” or *ships of the sea*, rather than *ships of Tarshish*. The LXX (Ⲭ) has, “Raise the mournful cry, ships of Carthage, because your strong hold is destroyed.” The Syriac (Ⲫ) has *plundered* instead of *laid waste*. The

²² This is a perfect example of how easy it is to make a mistake and assume there are differences between ancient records, when indeed they may reflect translator preferences. For instance, the DSSB sometimes seems different than the KJV, but many of these differences are because it follows the NRSV. In this verse, the Lamsa Syriac (Ⲫ) translation seems to follow the NRSV, too, “Behold the land of the Chaldeans; this is the people, and not the Assyrians, who destroyed it &c.” The Peshitta en Español (Ⲫ), however, renders it, “Behold the land of the Chaldeans. These people were not; the Assyrian, servant of the wind.” It is impossible to translate without interpreting.

Hebrew (שָׁרָף) permits either of these significations.²³

Why the howling? Once again, let us return to Ezekiel 27:29–33, we read: “And all that handle the oar, the mariners, *and* all the pilots of the sea, shall come down from their ships, they shall stand upon the land; And shall cause their voice to be heard against thee, and shall cry bitterly, and shall cast up dust upon their heads, they shall wallow themselves in the ashes: And they shall make themselves utterly bald for thee, and gird them with sackcloth, and they shall weep for thee with bitterness of heart *and* bitter wailing. And in their wailing they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and lament over thee, *saying*, What *city* is like Tyrus, like the destroyed in the midst of the sea?”

vv. 15–18. Tyre would be forgotten for seventy years but in time the Lord would visit her in kindness.

15 ¶ And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king: after the end of seventy years shall Tyre sing as an harlot. ✓

✓ it shall be unto Tyre as the song of an harlot

And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king: The LXX (Ⲭ) renders it, “And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forsaken seventy years, according to the days of a king, according to the time of a man.” Calvin explains: “‘the days of a king’ are put for the age of a man, in the same manner as the age of a man is shewn by the Psalmist to be generally limited to seventy years (Psalm 90:10). But why did he mention ‘a king’ rather than any other man? It was because Tyre had a king, and reckoned time by the life of a king.” Ibn Ezra explains that the reign of the three Babylonian kings (father, son and grandson),

נְבוּכַדְרֶזָר, Nebuchadrezzar, **אֵילֵן מֶרְדַּךְ**, Evil-

Merodach, and **בֶּלְשַׁאֲצַר**, Belshazzar, lasted 70 years, or the days of one man, after which ‘the world’ was liberated by the King of Persia. In Jeremiah we read that Babylon would have sway over the nations for seventy years, but would then be crushed herself: “And this whole land shall be a desolation, *and* an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, *that* I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations (Jeremiah 25:11–12, also see vv.

²³ Gesenius, HAL.

8–29). Fleming writes that “The city [of Jerusalem] fell in 586 B.C. Nebuchadrezzar now turned to the task of taking Tyre.”²⁴ ¶ *After the end of seventy years shall Tyre sing as an harlot.* The Targum (Ⲯ) instead has, “... it shall be unto Tyre as the song of an harlot.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads: “And it shall come to pass after seventy years, that Tyre shall be as the song of a harlot.” The Syriac (Ⲫ) has a prostitute’s song sung to Tyre, instead. So also the Vulgate (ⲱ): “*post septuaginta autem annos erit Tyro quasi canticum meretricis*” (but after seventy years, there shall be unto Tyre as the song of a harlot—Douay). So also the Dead Sea Scrolls (Ⲙ). Fleming tells us that following the siege of Tyre by Babylon, a great period of depression ensued.²⁵ Leaning on Josephus, Fleming tells us that “In the fourteenth year of the reign of Hiram, Cyrus captured Babylon (538 B.C.) and the monarchy passed under the control of the Persians ... In the period following Nebuchadrezzar’s thirteen-year siege, supremacy among the Phoenician cities passed from Tyre to her ancient rival, Sidon. Tyre’s commerce was ruined during the siege”²⁶

16 Take an harp, go about the city, thou harlot that hast been forgotten; make sweet melody, sing many songs, that thou mayest be remembered.

Take an harp, go about the city, thou harlot that hast been forgotten. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Thy glory is changed: wonder to another country, O city, who has been (note: the Royal Polyglot puts in מְהִימָנָה, ‘who has been faithful as an harlot,’ expressing irony) as an harlot, thou art doomed to oblivion.” The LXX (Ⲯ) renders it: “Take a kithara²⁸, stroll about, city, O harlot long forgotten!” Some translators suggest that ISAIAH 23:16 was the song that was sung. CNTUOT has, “The ‘harlot’ metaphor has the essential idea of an illicit relationship, whether that be religious, economic, political, or a combination of these.”²⁹ ¶ *Make sweet melody, sing many songs, that thou mayest be remembered.* The Targum (Ⲯ) reads, “Thy harp is turned into mourning, and thy song to lamentation; perhaps, thou mayest be remembered (Chaldee, ‘thy remembrance may enter’ the mind; compare the

Hebrew phrase, ³⁰אֵל שׁוֹם לִבְ, ‘not to set the mind upon,’ ‘not to consider’).” Stenning translates the Targum (Ⲯ) as: “Turn thy lute into mourning, and thy song into a lamentation; it may be that thou wilt be remembered.” The LXX (Ⲯ) has, “Play skilfully; sing many songs, that thou mayest be remembered.”

17 And it shall come to pass after the end of seventy years, that the LORD will visit Tyre, and she shall turn to her hire, and shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth.

And it shall come to pass after the end of seventy years, that the LORD will visit Tyre. Instead of visit, the Targum (Ⲯ) has remember, “Tyre shall be remembered³¹ before the Lord.” The Targum (Ⲯ) certainly seems to fit better in this verse than the Masoretic text (ⲙ) the Syriac (Ⲫ) or the Vulgate (ⲱ), when one considers the context of her holiness in ISAIAH 23:18. Regarding the word visit, וְיָבִיט, Gesenius believes it means “to look after again (after an interval).” The expression, however, can also mean to visit with punishment. The LXX (Ⲯ) has, “And it shall come to pass after seventy years, that God will take account of Tyre.” Interestingly, this is the very word that has caused so much controversy in ISAIAH 24:22, וְיָבִיטוּ, where it means to *visit in kindness*, or to visit to *redeem*. No doubt, however, ISAIAH 23:17 seems to clash against ISAIAH 23:18. It is quite likely that ISAIAH 23:17 speaks of Tyre’s economic recovery after being buffeted for 70 years, while ISAIAH 23:18 seems to speak of a latter-day time when Tyre will join other nations to serve the Lord. And certainly Tyre would fall many times beyond the Babylonian captivity, such as the attack by Alexander and others. ¶ *And she shall turn to her hire, and shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth.* The LXX (Ⲯ) renders it, “and she shall be restored to her former state, and be a mart for all the kingdoms of the world ; which are on the face of the earth.” The Vulgate (ⲱ) similarly has: “*et reducet eam ad mercedes suas, et rursum fornicabitur cum universis regnis terrae super faciem terrae*” (and will bring her back again to her traffic: and she shall commit fornication again with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth—Douay). The Targum (Ⲯ) has Tyre restored as at first, being able to satisfy all of the nations with her

²⁴ Fleming, p. 44.

²⁵ Fleming, p. 46.

²⁶ Fleming, p. 47–48.

²⁷ See also מְהִימָנָה, ‘honestidad, fidelidad, autenticidad’

(Targarona), i.e., honesty, fidelity, authenticity. See also מְהִימָנָה.

²⁸ Greek instrument of the lyre family.

²⁹ Page 1139.

³⁰ Often לִב is put for the heart, even though it can also mean mind.

³¹ Targum Jonathan to the Prophets, וְיִזְכְּרֶנָּה, remembrance.

merchandize, but drops the prostitute comment. The Dead Sea Scrolls (Q), instead of אֶת-כָּל-מַמְלָכוֹת (all the kingdoms) drops the כָּל (all). Fleming writes, "... and as appears from the records of the Persian period, she recovered much of her former glory."³²

18 And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the LORD: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the LORD, to eat sufficiently, and for durable ✓ clothing.

✓ old

And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the LORD: The LXX (G) reads, "And her traffick and gain shall be holy to the Lord." So also the Vulgate (V): "*et erunt negotiationes ejus et mercedēs ejus sanctificatæ Dōmino*" (And her merchandise and her hire shall be sanctified to the Lord—Douay). Ibn Ezra asks the questions we all ask ourselves. "Some ask, How can the prophet promise that the hire of the harlot Tyre will be sanctified to the Lord, since the Law prohibits the hire of an harlot to be brought to the house of the Lord? (Deuteronomy 23:19)." Ibn Ezra himself says, "The reply to this question is, that the Law prohibits the real hire of an harlot, but the prophet uses the words, 'her hire,' in a figurative sense; in reality, he does not speak of an harlot at all." ¶ *It shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for*

them that dwell before the LORD, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing. The Targum (T), likewise, makes it clear that Tyre's merchandize will be to feed and clothe those who minister or serve before the LORD, "for food sufficient, and for vestments of glory." The LXX (G) also, "All her gain shall not be treasured up for themselves, but for them who dwell before the Lord, that they may eat and drink and be filled, and for contributions to be kept in remembrance before the Lord." The Syriac (S) has "and replace their old garments with new ones." The Peshitta *en Español* has, instead, "and be clothed with her old (or used) clothing," as does the KJV margin || (עֲתִיק). The Hebrew עֲתִיק also means *choice attire*³³ and even *sacred clothing*³⁴. The Vulgate (V) also gives this feeling of temple service: "*non condentur neque reponentur, quia his qui habitaverint coram Domino erit negotiatio ejus, ut manducent in saturitatem, et vestiantur usque ad vetustatem*" (they shall not be kept in store, nor laid up: for her merchandise shall be for them that shall dwell before the Lord, that they may eat unto fulness, and be clothed for a continuance — Douay). I like the NRSV here, "will not be stored or hoarded, but her merchandise will supply abundant food and fine clothing for those who live in the presence of the LORD." Ibn Ezra suggests that part of Tyre's profits will be used to help the Jewish exiles during the reign of Cyrus in their return to Jerusalem.

13 June 2011

³² Fleming, p. 48.

³³ BDB.

³⁴ HAL.

Isaiah 24

Most commentators feel that ISAIAH 24 through 27 are part of a single prophetic unit. The prophecy is directed to the whole world. Keith says that “much of it must be understood of events yet to come [as furthermore] the prophecy has not yet received its accomplishment in all its particulars.” Cheyne well says, “As for the vagueness or mysteriousness of the language, this ought to be no difficulty to those who recognise in any degree the eschatological purport of the prophecy. The more the authors of the prophetic or apocalyptic literature have their minds directed to the ‘latter days,’ the more mysterious becomes their language, the greater their tendency to wide and general expressions.” It is gratifying to see that many understand this prophecy correctly as being related to the end of times. Horsley says, “The terms of the prophecy are such as cannot be naturally expounded of anything less than the general tribulation of the last ages, and the succeeding prosperity of the Church in the end of the world.” Our Savior said, “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened” (Matthew 24:21–22). President Joseph Fielding Smith explained that the earth would die and be resurrected, just as its human inhabitants. So we also read in Matthew 24:24, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” Sometimes similar language is used to describe this process, but there are differences between the changes that will overtake the earth in (1) the *beginning* of the millennium (D&C 101:23–31; ISAIAH 65:17) and, (2) the *post-millennium* (D&C 88:18–26; 29:22–23; 77:1–2, ISAIAH 24:4, 19; ISAIAH 51:6). President Joseph Fielding Smith explained: “This earth is filling the measure of its creation. Today it is passing through its mortal state. The time will come when it shall die and pass away as do all things upon it. [In contrast] at the beginning of the Millennial reign, as we declare in the tenth article of the Articles of Faith, [the renewed earth] shall receive its paradisiacal glory, or be restored as it was before the fall of man.”¹ We see references to the burning and melting down, some of which seems to be associated with the second coming, and some is given in reference to the final transition of the earth into a celestial orb. We then move from this scene, to a glorious one where “a remnant left in the midst of the earth, who should lift up their voice and sing for the majesty of the Lord.”² They sing to the Righteous One, even Christ Jesus. The moments of joy are short-lived for the prophet, who sees some horrible scenes before we can once again rejoice. Some have thought it was the crucifixion and rejection of our Lord in the meridian of time. Others, that it may regard the impending doom and the horrors of the end of days. The great mission of our Lord and Savior, who would liberate the repentant from spirit prison, is alluded to. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, referring to this chapter, that just as those who lived before the flood had a day of deliverance after the gospel was preached to them, so would those who came after Noah. While men generally believe that a man’s destiny is fixed forever at his death, to be eternally happy or miserable, this is not what the scriptures have to say on this matter; nor is man damned because he was deprived of an opportunity to know Christ in this life, explains Brother Joseph.³ The Lord would reign from both Zion and from Jerusalem during the Millennium. I include a brief note here on the circular logic of the higher critics. Ewald, beginning with ISAIAH 24:21 and spilling into ISAIAH 25:6–11, calls these verses a “beautiful and glowing picture of the Messianic reign.” So beautiful, indeed, that although Ewald assigns these set of chapters (ISAIAH 24–27) to some unknown, more modern writer, yet some strophes are regarded by Ewald as so *beautiful* that they must originate from some ancient writer, to include Isaiah himself! Stanley B. Frost⁴ according to Young, “maintains that these chapters were written by one who deliberately posed as Isaiah.” Wildberger, along similar lines says, speaking of Isaiah’s peculiar use of the word קריה for a city, rather than the more usual עיר, “This is once again a small indicator that there must have been something like an Isaiah school.” In other words, this “unknown writer” who, according to the higher critics, could *not* be Isaiah, wrote just like Isaiah, in every peculiarity of style and vocabulary. So the author must have (1) either found some ancient writing that was originally written by Isaiah; or (2) there was an Isaiah school of writing to train these men. It would be comic if it was not so tragic.

¹ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Church History and Modern Revelation*, 1:132.

² *Millennial Star*, Volume 5, No. 2, July 1844.

³ Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, selected and arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith, p.218.

⁴ Frost is the author of *Old Testament apocalyptic, its origins and growth*, Epworth Press, 1952.

vv. 1–5. Elder John Taylor wrote, “...it would seem that terrible judgments await the inhabitants of the world; that there will be a general destruction; the world will be full of war and confusion, the nations of the earth will be convulsed, and the wicked hurled out of it.”¹ Latter-day prophets have applied these verses of Isaiah to at least two distinct time periods when the earth will be cleansed: (1) the pre-millennial latter-day before the coming of our Lord; and (2) the post-millennial latter day, after Satan is permitted to torment the inhabitants of this earth one last time.

1 ¶ BEHOLD, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.

✓ perverteth the face thereof

BEHOLD, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste. The Dead Sea Scrolls² 4QIsa^c (Q) has *the earth* (הָאָרֶץ) while the Great Isaiah Scroll, 1QIsa^a (Q) ηασ *the land* (הָאֲרָצָה). The Masoretic text (M) has *the earth* (הָאָרֶץ). The Targum (T) has the Lord delivering the earth “over to the enemy,” and adds that “confusion shall cover the faces of the princes.” The LXX³ (G) reads, “Behold the Lord is about to destroy this inhabited land!” The Douay-Rheims (based on the Vulgate, V)⁴ has, “Behold the Lord shall lay waste the earth, and shall strip it.” The Targum (T), as translated by Pauli, tends to render the Aramaic אֲרָצָא as *land* rather than as *earth*. Stenning’s (T) translation systematically uses *earth*, for the complete globe rather than any one particular geographical area. ¶ Behold, הִנֵּה. Ibn Ezra (in ISAIAH 24:14) explains: “The prophet refers to the remote future [beginning with ISAIAH

24:1].” For Ibn Ezra, this remote future would be around the time of Gog and Magog. Cheyne explains, “‘Behold’ with a participle, in the prophets, almost always points to the future... [and it is better] to regard these as prophetic—as proceeding from the point of view of one who had attained a specially clear insight into the eternal purposes of God.” ¶ Make empty, בִּקְבֹּק (from the root, בָּקַק). The expression, to *make empty* or *empty*, according to Gesenius (see also Gray), is derived—as we have already pointed out in earlier chapters—from the sound made by a bottle when its liquid contents are *poured out*. Gesenius has it deriving from בִּקְבֹּק, pronounced roughly as *bakbuk*, with the Persian equivalent being *gulgul*, غلغل. Calvin says, “בִּלְקָהּ, he maketh bare the earth, because the earth is said to be ‘covered,’ when it is inhabited by a great multitude of men, and when it abounds in fruits and flocks; and it is said to be ‘uncovered’ or ‘laid bare,’ when it is deprived of its inhabitants, and when its covering is taken away from it, as if one were stripped of his raiment and ornaments.” Likewise in 2 Kings 21:13b: “And I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it, and turning it upside down.” The word for *dish* used in 2 Kings 21:13 is אֶת־הַצִּלְחָתָה, and a similar word is used for *jar* (BDB) צִלְחִית, which matches this verse even more (see 2 Kings 2:20). ¶ And turneth, וְעָנָה. Gray explains, “The fundamental meaning of the root עָנָה, to bend, twist; and possibly the Hebrews thought of a ruin as a kind of distortion of the face of the earth into shapelessness.” Certainly this is a good way to describe distortions caused by such natural disasters as earthquakes, floods, volcano eruptions, hurricanes, and tsunamis. ¶ Upside down, פָּנֶיהָ. Or, as in the margin ||, the face (פָּנֶיהָ). So Alexander explains this expression, as to mean “the upper part or mouth of the vessel.” This matches well the allusion already spoken referred to in regards to making *empty*, בִּקְבֹּק a dish or jar that is turned over.

¶ And scatter, וְהִפִּיץ. Alexander explains that “וְהִפִּיץ is not to cause to flow, as in Arabic, but to scatter, according to the uniform Hebrew usage” (emphases added). The earth would be put through violent distortions. ¶ And turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. The Targum (T) instead has, “confusion shall cover the faces of the princes, because they have transgressed the law, and scattered its inhabitants.” The LXX (G) reads, “He will lay it waste and uncover the face thereof and scatter abroad them who dwell therein.” The Douay-Rheims (based on the Vulgate, V) has, “And shall afflict the face thereof, and scatter abroad the inhabitants thereof.” Wildberger

¹ Taylor, John. *The Government of God*. Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1852, Chapter 11.

² Beginning with Isaiah 24, I am also leaning on the Dead Sea Scrolls at the *Israel Museum* (<http://dss.collections.imj.org.il/isaiah>); *Discoveries in the Judean Desert*, XXXII, Qumran Cave 1, Volume II. Ulrich and Flint; the *Accordance DSS-M* and *DSS-C*; *Biblical Dead Sea Scrolls* (Logos Bible Software), as well as the *Dead Sea Scrolls Bible* (DSSB). Another excellent reference, although it is limited to the Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^a), are the photos of Fred P Miller of each page of the Dead Sea Scrolls in its ancient script.

³ Thompson, beginning with Isaiah 22, unless otherwise mentioned.

⁴ To simplify, future references to the Douay-Rheims (based on the Vulgate, V), will appear simply as The Douay-Rheims (V), while direct quotes from the Vulgata Clementina in Latin will appear Vulgate (V). Special thanks to Michael Tweedale for making available these texts as part of the VulSearch free software under the GNU General Public License at <http://vulsearch.sourceforge.net/>.

prefers *and disfigures* as a translation of **וְעִנְיָהּ** (*and turneth*): “the face of the earth will be disfigured. That would fit in with what happens in floods, earthquakes, and drought.” Kaiser, especially in ISAIAH 24:4 and 7 thinks of severe drought, such as those mentioned in *Rain in Due Season*. Regarding **וְעִנְיָהּ**, Young has, “Possibly the reference is to the ravages that war brings, and that so upset and displace everything that it no longer looks as formerly.” ¶ Elder Orson Pratt explained, “Many portions of the earth which now lie buried will be thrown to the surface, and many portions which now are the upper crust of the earth will be turned under.”⁵

2 And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; [✓]as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him.

✓ or, prince

Each pair in these expressions seems to indicate the totality of humanity who will be affected. Ibn Ezra explains it this way, “When two nouns with the prefix **כִּ** follow each other, the phrase is elliptical; the complete sentence would be: **as** with the people so with the priest, and **as** with the priest so with the people, **as** with the servant so with the master, and **as** with the master so with the servant, etc.” ¶ *And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest*. This expression is also used by Hosea: “And there shall be, like people, like priest: and I will punish them for their ways, and reward them their doings” (Hosea 4:9). This expression, explains Whitehouse, “seems to have been proverbial.” The Targum (**ת**), likewise, has the **non-priest** or laity, **חֵיל וְנָאָה** contrasted to the **priest**, **כֹּהֵן**. The Lamsa Peshitta (**ܣ**) renders the pair, “so with the priest; as with the servant,” while the *Biblia Peshitta en Español* (BPE **ܣ**) has it the same as the Masoretic text (**מ**). Elder Matthias F. Cowly taught, “We learn from the twenty-fourth chapter of Isaiah that the effects of this ancient apostasy would be so universal as to cover all classes of society, affecting not only the religious and social circles, but the business transactions of the human family.”⁶ The Prophet Joseph Smith, in the same article in which he spoke about the Great Apostasy and ISAIAH 24:5, seemed to make some allusion to ISAIAH 24:3: “I

will proceed to tell you what the Lord requires of all people, high and low, rich and poor, male and female, ministers and people, professors of religion and non-professors, in order that they may enjoy the Holy Spirit of God to a fullness, and escape the judgments of God, which are almost ready to burst upon the nations of the earth. Repent of all your sins, and be baptized in water for the remission of them, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and receive the ordinance of the laying on of the hands of him who is ordained and sealed unto this power, that ye may receive the Holy Spirit of God; and this is according to the Holy Scriptures, and the Book of Mormon; and the only way that man can enter into the celestial kingdom. These are the requirements of the new covenant, or first principles of the Gospel of Christ: then ‘Add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity [or love]; for if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful, in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.’”⁷ President Spencer W. Kimball taught, speaking about ISAIAH 24:2, “The term *priest* is here used to denote all religious leaders of any faith ... From among the discordant voices we are shocked at those of many priests who encourage the defilement of men and wink at the eroding trends and who deny the omniscience of God. Certainly these men should be holding firm [regarding virtuous principles], yet some yield to popular clamor.”⁸ Elder John Taylor also used ISAIAH 24:2 to describe priests from other religious denominations,⁹ as did Elder Bruce R. McConkie, “If there are false Christs, there are false witnesses of these Christs. If there are false churches, there are false ministers.”¹⁰ A number of non-LDS exegetes have similar opinions. Gill suggests that these are not the righteous priests, but the apostate, “who have led the people into superstition and idolatry; blind leaders of the blind, and so both fall into the ditch together.” Jennings sounds very much as a LDS, “The New Testament [has], ‘For that day shall not come except there come *the* apostasy first,’ and every falsely called ‘Christian’ pulpit shall ring with open attacks on the

⁷ Smith, Joseph. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*. Selected by Joseph Fielding Smith. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Press, 1938.

“January 4, 1833, the Prophet wrote to Mr. N. E. Seaton, an editor of a newspaper, the following words of counsel and warning concerning the state of the world and the purpose of the Lord in the restoration spoken of by the ancient prophets,” pp. 14–17.

⁸ Kimball, Spencer W. CR April 1971, Saturday Morning session.

⁹ Taylor, John. *Journal of Discourses* 11:50.

¹⁰ McConkie, Bruce R. *The Millennial Messiah*, False Prophets Precede His Coming, False Prophets Minister on Every Hand, p. 73.

⁵ Elder Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*, 18:315–316.

⁶ Cowly, Mattias F. Cowley’s Talks on Doctrine. Apostasy.

Person and Work of the Son of God. I can leave my readers to decide as to there being any such indications this very day.” ¶ *As with the servant, so with his master. As with the maid, so with her mistress. As with the buyer, so with the seller. As with the lender, so with the borrower. As with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him.* Ezekiel 7:12 also seems to be given in the same vein: “The time is come, the day draweth near: let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn: for wrath is upon all the multitude thereof.” Rabbi Rashi (in Rosenberg) has, “Not like other travelers, that the master is led by the slave, and the mistress is led by her maidservant; the master is esteemed and the slave is held in low esteem, the mistress is esteemed and the maidservant is held in low esteem, but when the captor leads the captives, all are equal before him.” The Lamsa Peshitta (ܣ) renders the first pair, “his master; as with her mistress,” while the BPE (ܣ) has it the same as the Masoretic text (מִי). For the last clause, the Douay-Rheims (V) has, “As with him that calleth for his money, so with him that oweth.” Gill says, “There shall be no distinction of superiors and inferiors; as not of prince and subjects, so not of master and servant, mistress and maid; no respect will be had to persons, but the one shall be treated even as the other.” Regarding the *lender* and the *borrower*, mentioned here in ISAIAH 24:2, President Anthony W. Irvins wrote in 1932, “And we are nearing that condition now [regarding out of control debt]. I do not know who is the worse off today, the banker who is lending money, or the person to Whom he lends it.”¹¹

3 The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word.

The Targum (ܬ) has “utterly trampled underfoot,” for *spoiled*. The LXX (G) reads, “With destruction the land will be destroyed, and with spoiling this land will be ransacked: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken this.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, for the first half, “With desolation shall the earth be laid waste, and it shall be utterly spoiled.” Some of the Rabbis interpreted this of Israel, but it is preferable to look at the subject from an eschatological worldwide perspective. Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, spoke in the 1968 General Conference about searching for peace: “I call your attention to the following quotations from the scriptures: Isaiah, envisioning our day, declared: ‘The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled. . . .’ And then, as if in retrospect, he lamented: ‘Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants

of the earth are burned, and few men left’ (ISAIAH 24:3, 6) . . . President George Albert Smith, speaking from this stand in 1950, said: ‘It will not be long until calamities will overtake the human family unless there is speedy repentance. It will not be long before those who are scattered over the face of the earth by millions will die like flies because of what will come’ (Era, Vol. 53 [May 1950], p. 412).”¹² President Brigham Young quoted Isaiah when he said, “There is no true faith, for all is uncertainty—every man pursuing his own way. They have no light of revelation to guide them, and that which would have saved this nation from its present awful chastisement they have cast out from them, therefore ‘Behold the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled; for the Lord hath spoken this word.’”¹³ ¶ Regarding the *formula*, “For the LORD hath spoken this word”

(כִּי יְהוָה דִּבֶּר אֶת־הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה), Henderson explains that it “is usual with the prophets, and expresses the certainty of the events predicted.”

4 The earth mourneth [and] fadeth away, the world languisheth [and] fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish.

✓ the height of the people

Regarding the last clause the Targum (ܬ) adds, “the strength of the people of the land hath come to an end.” The LXX (G) reads, “The land mourned and this empire is destroyed—the lofty people of the land mourned.” The Peshitta (ܣ)¹⁴ has *mourn* instead of “fadeth away,” in the first clause. For the second clause, BPE (ܣ) has the world as weeping, sitting, and making lamentation. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “The earth mourned, and faded away, and is weakened: the world faded away, the height of the people of the earth is weakened.” נָבַל, *fadeth*, is a favorite word with the Prophet Isaiah, and he also uses it in ISAIAH 40:7–8, there to describe the *wilting flower*. Regarding תִּבֵּל, Delitzsch has, “‘The world’ (תִּבֵּל) is used here in ISAIAH 24:4, as in ISAIAH 26:9 (always in the form of a proper name, and without the article), as a parallel to

¹¹ Irvins, Anthony W. CR October 1932.

¹² Romney, Marion G. Conference Report, April 1968, p. 113.

¹³ Young, Brigham. *Journal of Discourses* 9:367. Discourse delivered in the Bowery, Great Salt Lake City, August 31, 1862.

¹⁴ Unless otherwise noted, from this chapter on, the Peshitta (ܣ) is based on George Lamsa’ Peshitta (ܣ) and the BPE (ܣ) translations. The PPE, of course, is in Spanish, so I am speaking about equivalent meanings.

‘the earth’ (אֶרֶץ), with which it alternates throughout this cycle of prophecies. It is used poetically to signify the globe, and that without limitation... and therefore ‘the earth’ is also to be understood here in its most comprehensive sense.” Young says, “Kittel asserts that תבל is never used of the land of Judah but always of the inhabited world... [and] hence he takes אֶרֶץ in the sense, ‘inhabitant¹⁵ of the earth.’” President Joseph Fielding Smith quoted ISAIAH 24:4 (along with ISAIAH 51:6; Psalm 102:25–28; 2 Peter 3:10; Matthew 24:35; D&C 29:22–25; 88:25–27) and the writings of the Prophet Joseph Smith and Brigham Young (D&C 130:8–9; Journal of Discourses 7: 163) to explain that (1) after the millennium, or thousand years of peace, there would once again come upon the earth the influence of Satan along with contention and wickedness; (2) the earth would die and Satan would be defeated; and (3) the earth would be resurrected into a glorious celestial body that would radiate light becoming a great Urim and Thummim. Furthermore, President Joseph Fielding Smith wrote: “To Joseph Smith the Lord said, speaking of this earth... That is what the Lord means by the expression: ‘Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.’”¹⁶ In other words, only those who can abide a Celestial glory will be permitted to dwell upon this earth at that time. ¶ *The haughty people of the earth do languish.* Both Rabbis Rashi and David Kimhi believe that the expression “the lofty people” (גִּבּוֹרִים), the people refer to the nobility (Slotki/Rosenberg). Regarding *haughty people*, גִּבּוֹרִים, Barnes writes, “Margin ||, as in the Hebrew, ‘Height of the people.’ It denotes the great, the nobles, the princes of the land.” I like what Ludlow says here: “The ‘most exalted people on earth’ (New Jewish Version) could be those who exalt themselves and thus become the proud or haughty. They might also be the ancient Israelites or members of Christ’s latter-day church who have been called and ordained to great callings but who ‘languish’ (New Jewish Version) or grow prideful and fail to fulfill their stewardship. Whoever they are, their primary sin is that they have changed the teachings, laws &c.” As Ludlow tells us, no one is exempt, whether it is prideful nations or individuals. Elder Neal A. Maxwell wrote: “In Isaiah’s remarkable prophesy contained in the first part of chapter 24 of his book, we read that the ‘haughty people of the earth do languish.’ One rendering of the words ‘haughty people’ is the ‘upper class.’ Languish connotes a drooping, a spiritlessness, a loss of animation ... Hence the disappointment in the secular

search for the meaning of life. Hence the drooping of the human spirit in which the conscience can come to be regarded as an intruder. Indeed, ennui, boredom, and humdrum hedonism are descriptive of those thus afflicted.” Elder Maxwell concludes, “It is this [glorious perspective of the Restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ] which can give meaning to life and which can remedy those conditions in which people languish and droop and are desolate ... The restored gospel is thus a gospel of hope and meaning: not a vague, generalized hope but a message of specific and justified hope for which myriad mortals hunger and which all mortals need.”¹⁷

5 The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.

The Prophet Joseph Smith said, regarding the great apostasy: “After this chosen family [Israel] had rejected Christ and His proposals, the heralds of salvation said to them, ‘Lo we turn unto the Gentiles;’ and, the Gentiles received the covenant, and were grafted in from whence the chosen family were broken off: but the Gentiles have not continued in the goodness of God, but have departed from the faith that was once delivered to the Saints, and have broken the covenant in which their fathers were established (see ISAIAH 24:5); and have become high-minded, and have not feared; therefore, but few of them will be gathered with the chosen family ... [W]e may look at the Christian world and see the apostasy there has been from the apostolic platform; and who can look at this and not exclaim, in the language of Isaiah, ‘The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, and broken the everlasting covenant?’”¹⁸ Then Elder Ezra Taft Benson also spoke of the falling away that would precede the glorious latter-day restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ upon the earth: “As the restored Church, we affirm that with the passing of the apostolic age, the Church drifted into a condition of apostasy ... [I]n the Old Testament, prophets had prophesied in a similar manner. Isaiah indicated that the earth would be defiled

¹⁵ Or, *people*.

¹⁶ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Restoration of All Things*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1973, pp. 295–300.

¹⁷ Maxwell, Neal A. *Sermons Not Spoken*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1985. ‘Search the Scriptures,’ pp. 65, 68–72, 82.

¹⁸ Smith, Joseph. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*. Selected by Joseph Fielding Smith. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Press, 1938. “January 4, 1833, the Prophet wrote to Mr. N. E. Seaton, an editor of a newspaper, the following words of counsel and warning concerning the state of the world and the purpose of the Lord in the restoration spoken of by the ancient prophets,” pp. 14–17.

under the inhabitants thereof because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. (ISAIAH 24:5.) ... The everlasting covenant is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Amos had spoken of a famine that should come in the land for ‘hearing the words of the Lord’ and that people would ‘run to and fro to seek the work of the Lord, and shall not find it’ (Amos 8:11). Not only by history, which is quite conclusive, but through prophecy also we have been informed definitely that there was and there would be a complete apostasy from the truth. Many of the early reformers recognized this fact as they struck out against the false teachings and practices of their day. Wesley, the founder of Methodism, lamented that the ‘Christians had turned heathen again and had only a dead form left.’ Even here in America, Roger Williams, head of the oldest Baptist congregation in the land, recognized, as he quit the ministry, that there was no divinely constituted authority or church upon the face of the earth, nor would there be such a church until one arose having apostles and other officers as found in the church established in the Meridian of Time ... I testify in all humility that God has again spoken from the heavens, following a long period of apostasy, that he has raised up a prophet, that Joseph Smith was the instrument in his hands in restoring again to the earth the Holy Priesthood, the true Church organization with all the blessings enjoyed in former days”¹⁹ Elder Sterling W. Sill, in General conference compared the spiritual famine spoken of in Amos 8:11–12 to ISAIAH 24:5.²⁰ ¶ *The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof.* The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “As for the land, it transgressed by means of its inhabitants.” The Peshitta (ܣ) has *like* rather than *under*. The Douay-Rheims (ϣ) has, “And the earth is infected by the inhabitants thereof.” This concept of the earth being defiled, *and the earth defiled* **וְהָאֲרֶץ חִנְפָּה**, is critical to our LDS theology. Throughout the Book of Mormon we read about the blessing or cursing of the land, such as: “But the word of the Lord was verified, which he spake unto our fathers, saying that: Inasmuch as ye will keep my commandments ye shall prosper in the land” (Jarom 1:9b), or a few pages later, the very opposite, “For the Lord would not suffer, after he had led them out of the land of Jerusalem and kept and preserved them from falling into the hands of their enemies, yea, he would not suffer that the words should not be verified, which he spake unto our fathers, saying that: Inasmuch as ye will not keep my commandments ye shall not prosper in the land. Wherefore, the Lord did visit them in great

judgment; nevertheless, he did spare the righteous that they should not perish, but did deliver them out of the hands of their enemies” (Omni 1:6–7). Likewise, Alexander points out: “The land of [Israel] is said to be profaned as being a holy land or consecrated to Jehovah.” Skinner points out: “The condition of the world resembles that which preceded the Deluge (Genesis 6:11).” Such will be the case before the second coming of our Savior. ¶ *Because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.* The Targum (ܬ) has “made the festivals to cease” instead of *ordinances*. The Furthermore, the Targum (ܬ) has *changed* instead of *broken*. The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “Because they transgressed the law, and changed the institutions—the everlasting covenant, therefore a curse devoureth the land.” Young says, “[Isaiah] has taken the language of the theocracy, terms such as *laws, statute, eternal covenant, they are reckoned guilty, etc.*, designations which belong to Israel; and he has applied these to the whole world.”

¶ *Laws* **תּוֹרָה**,²¹ *ordinance* **חֹק**, *everlasting covenant* **בְּרִית עוֹלָם**. ¶ The expression *everlasting covenant* **בְּרִית עוֹלָם**, is first mentioned in relation to the post-flood covenant (Genesis 9:16, *see also* 1–17) between God and man. We often focus on what God agrees to do, that is, to withhold another universal Deluge. But it also appears that mankind was also commanded to keep some very specific laws as mentioned in Genesis 9:1–7. There are at least fourteen instances of the expression in the Old Testament, which can be found in Genesis, Leviticus, 2 Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. In the Prophets, the expression is often looking to a *future* date, and to a *future* covenant, “*and I will make an everlasting covenant with them,*” **וַיַּבְרִית עִלָּם אֶבְרֹתָ לָהֶם** (ISAIAH 61:8), and **וַיַּבְרִית עִלָּם אֶבְרֹתָ לָהֶם** (Jeremiah 32:40, *literally, and I will make with them covenant everlasting*). Beside the everlasting covenant mentioned in relation to the flood and to circumcision, we have that all important *everlasting covenant* with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, all of which point to the *everlasting covenant* διαθήκης αἰωνίου, even that of Jesus Christ, Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ himself. Elder B. H. Roberts elucidates: “The prophet cannot have reference to transgressing the law, and changing the ordinances of the Mosaic covenant, for the Mosaic Law was not an everlasting covenant, but merely a temporary law, ‘added to the Gospel because of transgression’ (Galatians 3). It was a law of carnal commandments to act as a schoolmaster to bring the

¹⁹ Elder Ezra Taft Benson, Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, October 1949 General Conference, p. 26–28.

²⁰ Elder Sterling W. Sill, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles, 3 April 1956, General Conference, p. 14.

²¹ Some exegetes have spoken about the *unusual* form the word takes in the plural. It may be an unusual form, but it is quite typical. **תּוֹרָה** is often translated as the *law/s*. The very first usage of the word **וְתוֹרָתִי**, appears in Genesis 26:5, ‘*and my laws.*’

people to Christ; and when Christ came was laid aside, having fulfilled its purpose. It was not, therefore an everlasting covenant, and hence was not the thing the prophet Isaiah had in mind in his great prophecy. On the other hand, Paul refers to the blood of Christ as the ‘blood of the everlasting covenant’ (Hebrews 13:20). Hence, it is the covenant sealed by that blood to which Isaiah must have had reference—the Gospel; and the transgression of its laws, the changing of its ordinances, the breaking of that covenant, was to result in making desolate the earth and the inhabitants thereof. Hence, the everlasting covenant in the passage represents the gospel covenant.”²² Elsewhere, Elder B. H. Roberts has, “Because they have broken—not the covenant made with Moses, or with Abraham—but because they have broken the everlasting covenant; of which covenant the blood of Christ is the sign and seal. In other words, they have broken the Gospel covenant—departed from the Gospel faith—hence the predicted judgment.”²³ ¶ For *ordinance* אֶרֶץ, Calvin feels it refers to the *commandments*. Finally, Calvin says, “The third term employed by him is בְּרִית, by which he means a *covenant* and *contract*.”

6 Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.

Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: The Masoretic text (מ) has *devoured [the] earth* (אֶרֶץ אֲכָלָה), which is also supported Dead Sea Scrolls (Q) 4QIsa^c fragment 24 (אֶרֶץ אֲכָלָה), but not by 1QIsa^a (אֲכָלָה) which has dropped *earth* from the expression. The Targum (T) adds, “Because of perjury (בְּיָמִין, ‘an oath’ from יָמָא, ‘to swear’).” The LXX (G) reads, “Because they who dwell therein have sinned, therefore the inhabitants of the land shall be distressed.” The BPE (S) has *mourned* and Lamsa Peshitta has “sit in mourning” for *curse devoured*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, for the second clause, “And the inhabitants thereof shall sin.” ¶ *Curse*.

²² Elder B. H. Roberts. *Improvement Era*, June 1908. Seventy’s Council Table.

²³ B. H. Roberts. *Seventy’s Course*, 2:205–206, The Apostatic Period., The Testimony of Prophecy.

²⁴ Translators sometimes use brackets [] or *italics* to indicate an *ellipsis*. Brackets [] are also used to indicate a *lacunae*. That is, pieces or fragments of the original are missing. In this case the Aleph א is missing from the word אֲכָלָה, *devoured*, but can safely be assumed to have been part of this word, based on either the Masoretic text (מ) or other fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls (Q).

Luther and Calvin see this reference, those found in the *Rain in Due Season*. ¶ *Desolate*. Elder Neal A. Maxwell wrote: “While we usually think of apostasy solely in terms of theological deviation, we often fail to see its connections to the everyday, human condition in which the consequences of that deviation are enormous. To continue the suggestion about connecting up the scriptures and the human condition, the words of Isaiah indicate that the dwellers of the earth will be ‘desolate’ (ISAIAH 24:6). ‘Desolate’ connotes joylessness or a grief-stricken condition—a state kindred to the spiritlessness which the word languish connotes.”²⁵ ¶ *Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left*. The LXX (G) reads, “And few are the men who shall be left.” The Peshitta (S) has *destroyed* (Lamsa) / *massacred* (BPE) rather than *burned*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And therefore they that dwell therein shall be mad, and few men shall be left.”

¶ *Burned*, בָּרָק. Gray has, “*The inhabitants . . . are scorched*” Revelation 16:8 records that, as a result of the pouring out of the fourth vial of God’s wrath, ‘men were scorched with great heat.’” Elder Orson Pratt taught, “To the query, how many are to be overtaken by this last great judgment, Isaiah would answer, ‘the inhabitants of the earth are burned and few men left.’ What, only a few persons to be converted, only a few to receive the true Gospel, and be prepared for the coming of the Bridegroom; only a few people to escape this awful desolation? So says the Prophet Isaiah; that is, few in comparison to the great and numerous population of our globe.”²⁶ Elder B. H. Roberts wrote, “Clearly all this prophecy of Isaiah’s has not yet been fulfilled; for the earth, however much it may have been defiled under the inhabitants thereof, has not yet been burned, and but few men left. That is a judgment that still hangs over the world; and will come upon it as sure as the Lord has spoken the word.”²⁷ Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote, “Fire, flaming fire, literal fire, fire that burns trees, melts ore, and consumes corruption—such shall accompany the Lord Jesus and cover the earth when he returns in all the glory of his Father’s kingdom. Not only will the Lord come in flaming fire, but that fire will produce fervent, glowing, intense heat, heat that has not been known in the entire history of the earth, heat that will cause the very elements to melt, the mountains to flow down at his presence, and the very earth itself, as now constituted, to dissolve . . . Only those who are quickened, as were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the furnace of Nebuchadnezzar, shall

²⁵ Maxwell, Neal A. *Sermons Not Spoken*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1985. ‘Search the Scriptures,’ pp. 65, 68–72, 82.

²⁶ Elder Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses* 20:14–16.

²⁷ B. H. Roberts. *Seventy’s Course*, 2:205–206, The Apostatic Period., The Testimony of Prophecy.

be able to abide the day of burning. In that day, as Isaiah says ... ‘The inhabitants of the earth are burned and few men left’ (ISAIAH 24:6).”²⁸ Here we can turn to the questions often posed by the Prophets of God, regarding the human qualities we are to possess if we wish to abide that day. We have three such *who* (וְ) questions (*emphasis added*). “*Who* among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? *who* among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; (ISAIAH 33:14b–15); “*Who* shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or *who* shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation” (Psalm 24:3–5); and “But *who* may abide the day of his coming? and *who* shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap” (Malachi 3:2).

7 The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merryhearted do sigh.

The Targum (ܬ) has, “All that drink wine mourn, because the vines are broken down &c.” The Peshitta (ܣ) has *grain* rather than *new wine*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, for the first half, “The vintage hath mourned, the vine hath languished away.” Joel 1:10 has a similar note, “The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn²⁹ is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth.” The Dead Sea Scrolls 4QIsa^c (Q) adds *oil* ³⁰(יִצְהָר) after *vine*. Not so the 1QIsa^a (Q). Rabbi Ibn Ezra (in Rosenberg) suggests that it is the vines that have been neglected and left without pruning or care so the vine no longer yields. Gray, along with a number of exegetes, here suggests that *new wine*, תִּירָשׁ (or, תִּירָשׁ) refers to *grape juice*. More likely, it was partially fermented. The Bible makes it clear that wine in excess can have a negative effect on people, and more importantly, the Lord in these latter days has prohibited its use. This has been a great blessing to

members of the Church. Drinking of wine is much more than a health hazard; wine and other forms of alcohol are often associated with violations of the law of chastity (both today and in Biblical times). At any rate, in this verse people are weeping because they do not have wine to drink. I have seen plenty of that, but never because they lacked grape juice! Those who love their wine will whine because they will not find it. Vineyards will also be abandoned, and probably because of conditions of drought. Young says, “When [God] deprives them of their luxury, they do not turn to Him, but sigh at their own supposed misfortune.” Regarding *new wine*, also see notes under ISAIAH 5:2.

8 The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth.

Instead of *the noise* &c., the Targum (ܬ) has, “the tumultuous assembly of the mighty is restrained.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “The mirth of timbrels hath ceased, the noise of them that rejoice is ended, the melody of the harp is silent.” Revelation 18:22 has, “And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee.” (See notes on ISAIAH 24:10.) The lack of wine spoken of in the previous verse may mean less drunken revelry?

9 They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it.

They shall not drink wine with a song. The LXX (G) reads, “They are confounded: they have drunk no wine.” Whitehouse points us to Amos, “And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation” (Amos 8:10). Whitehouse says, “The mirth of tabrets would be the inevitable accompaniment of the vintage-season commemorated in the festival of Succoth (or Tabernacles).” Perhaps the drought would mean not only a lack of a vintage, but also of the general harvest. ¶ *Strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it.* Instead of “strong drink,” the Targum (ܬ) has, “old wine.” Old wine is considered the best and most refined of wines. The LXX (G) reads, “The palm wine was bitter to them who drank it.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “The drink shall be bitter to them that drink it.” Lowth and Horsley suggest that שִׁכָּר (in LXX, σικερα), refers to wine made out of the palm tree, that is, from dates. In ISAIAH 5:11, Lowth explains,

²⁸ McConkie, Bruce R. *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1985. pp. 644–646.

²⁹ Not maize, but rather *grains*.

³⁰ The Dead Sea Scrolls DSSB (Q) adds it as a separate clause, *the oil*: “The new wine dries up, the vine, the oil decays &c.” I had supposed that the intention of the 4QIsa^c (Q) scribe was to specify *olive tree*, in contrast to a grapevine. יִצְהָר, however, is seldom used other than for grapevines and never for an olive tree.

“Judea was famous for the abundance and excellence of its palm-trees; and consequently had plenty of this wine.” Even alcohol will not be able to reduce the feelings of despair of those who drink it.

10 The city of confusion is broken down: every house is shut up, that no man may come in.

The city of confusion is broken down: The Targum (Ⲯ) has “Their city is broken down, *and* laid desolate.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Every city is desolated.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has the city being *plundered* rather than “broken down.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, “The city of vanity is broken down.” תְּהוֹמָה is often rendered as *vanity*, *confusion*, *emptiness*, *wilderness*, or *nothingness*. Rabbi Joseph Kara (in Rosenberg), “This is Jerusalem, formerly called ‘joyous city,’ will now be called ‘wasted city.’” So also Delitzsch who has, “We understand it as referring to Jerusalem, as the majority of commentators have done, including even Schegg and Stier... after we have taken ‘the earth’ in the sense of *kosmos* (the world). It is rather the central city of the world as estranged from God; and it is here designated according to its end, which end will be *tohu*, as its nature was *tohu*.” Ibn Ezra has, “The city whose inhabitants go after vain things.” Rawlinson says, “No special city seems to be intended.” Wordsworth has, “The Earth of the last days is represented as a city of confusion. It will be in the same condition, socially and politically, as it was physically before its creation in its present form, viz. as a city of confusion, Heb. *tohu* [תְּהוֹמָה], a remarkable word; see on Genesis 1:2, where that word is rendered *without form*, and where it represents the Earth in its ruined condition, before its reproduction in its present state. The analogy is this. The Earth will be reduced to a ruinous and chaotic state, morally and socially, before the future creation of the ‘new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness’ (2 Peter 3:13).” Cheyne also believes that chaos תְּהוֹמָה, “is an allusion to the narrative... of the Creation... [and] it is the most striking expression for utter desolation [no germ of life remaining] which the prophet could have chosen.” Gill similarly explains תְּהוֹמָה: “Or ‘of *vanity*’, as the Vulgate Latin version; or of ‘emptiness’ or ‘desolation’; the word is ‘*tohu*,’ used in Genesis 1:2 this is to be understood not of Bethel, where one of Jeroboam’s calves was, called Bethaven, or ‘the house of *vanity*’; nor Samaria, the chief city of the ten tribes; nor Jerusalem; but mystical Babylon,³¹ whose name signifies ‘*confusion*’ ... in which there is

nothing but disorder and irregularity, no truth, justice, or religion; a city of *vanity*, full of superstition and idolatry, and devoted to ruin and desolation; and will be broke to pieces by the judgments of God, which will come upon it in one hour, Revelation 18:8.” In Revelation 24:21 we read, “And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.” The very next verse, Revelation 24:22, is associated with ISAIAH 24:8, as we have already seen. And yet another reason to believe the city here mentioned is Babylon is found in ISAIAH 25:2: “For thou hast made of a city an heap; of a defenced city a ruin: a palace of strangers to be no city; it shall never be built.” The clause *it shall never be built* alludes principally to Babylon, although there would be others who would suffer a similar fate. In the introduction to ISAIAH 24 we said that most commentators believe that ISAIAH 24 through 27 form part of a single unit. Isaiah often introduces a subject and then little by little comes back to it. We first hear some clues about the city here and then again in ISAIAH 25:2. Gray writes, “The city of Chaos is the city of idolatry, of sham gods, in contrast to Jerusalem, ‘the city of God’; it is essentially, as the capital of the world empire which is in rebellion against God...” Jennings writes: “I take no specific city is intended by the City of Confusion, but as in Revelations 16:9, where it is termed ‘the great city,’ not a literal city (for that would not accord with the intensely spiritual and symbolic character of that book), but what man has been building as in united opposition to God, as Babel of old, expressive of their pride... as the central city of Jerusalem is really representative of all Israel, as Babel was the representative of the whole earth, so here there is again a symbolic city that represents the proud building of the whole earth...” Yeah, the proud and great and spacious building with people pointing their mocking fingers at those who partake of the good fruit of the gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Nephi 8:26–27). Gray continues, *is broken* נִשְׁבְּרָה, “compare ‘Babylon is fallen and broken,’ Jeremiah 51:8 like a cup (ib. v. 7). Possibly the writer has this v. in mind, for the use of נִשְׁבָּר of the destruction of a city is uncommon.”

¶ *Every house is shut up, that no man may come in.* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “The houses will be shut up that none may enter.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *almacén* (storage place or store, BPE) / *cellar* (Lamsa) rather than *house*. Ibn Ezra in Slotki/Rosenberg have that either “Most houses will be deserted, and there will be no one to enter them (Ibn Ezra³²) [or] alternatively, most of the houses will

³¹ Also, August Dillmann, according to Wade.

³² “They had to count the houses, in order to know the number of the soldiers. *And the houses have ye broken down.* The houses that were near the wall from without” (Ibn Ezra).

be in ruins (Kimhi).” Gill writes, “Not for fear of the enemy, and to keep him out; but because there are no inhabitants in them, being all destroyed by one means or another, by fire or sword, or famine or pestilence, so that there is none to go in or out.” ¶ Both ISAIAH 24:10 and 24:12 seem to be strongly related to ISAIAH 6:11, where Isaiah asks the question “Lord, how long?” For how long would the Gospel be preached? The answer seems to be: to the very end. Until every house is emptied and every city destroyed. In D&C 88:88–91 we read: “And after your testimony cometh wrath and indignation upon the people. For after your testimony cometh the testimony of earthquakes, that shall cause groanings in the midst of her, and men shall fall upon the ground and shall not be able to stand. And also cometh the testimony of the voice of thunders, and the voice of lightnings, and the voice of tempests, and the voice of the waves of the sea heaving themselves beyond their bounds. And all things shall be in commotion; and surely, men's hearts shall fail them; for fear shall come upon all people.”

11 [There is] a crying for wine in the streets; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone.

[There is] a crying for wine in the streets. The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Raise the mournful cry everywhere for the wine.” The BPE (Ⲥ) renders this as does the Masoretic text (מ). Once again, we hear about the shortage of wine. Joel 1:5 has a similar bend, “Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine; for it is cut off from your mouth.” ¶ *All joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “all joy is ended” rather than darkened. The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “A stop is put to all the joy of the land—all the joy of the land is gone.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “All mirth is forsaken: the joy of the earth is gone away.” Regarding עֲרֵבָה, *darkened*, the Rabbis once again make some interesting points. Ibn Ezra explains that the word עֲרֵבָה is related to עָרַב. That is, *darkened* is related to *evening*, and as Rabbi Joseph Kara (in Rosenberg) says, “All joy is confused. The two interpretations are closely related, since darkness leads to impairment or confusion of perception.”

12 In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, for the second clause, “and tumult at the destruction of the gates.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “The cities will be left desolate, and the houses being

forsaken will be destroyed.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, for the second clause, “And calamity shall oppress the gates.” Alexander writes, “The gate is here named as the most important part of the city; but it does not directly mean the city itself.” Barnes says, “The idea is, that the gates of the city, once so secure, are how battered down and demolished, so that the enemy can enter freely.” Henderson explains, “The gates of cities were well fortified. When laid in ruins, as here expressed, there was no more defence.” Birks well says, “It was threatened long before that ‘the cities would be wasted without inhabitant, and the land with desolation.’³³ The fulfillment is now shewn.” And even before that, we read in *Rain in Due Season* what would befall rebellion against our God, “And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the LORD thy God hath given thee” (Deuteronomy 28:52). Rabbi Rosenberg has: “Redak [Rabbi David Kimhi] interprets this verse as a prophecy for the future, for the Messianic era, when Gog and Magog, as well as all sinful nations, will meet with divine retribution, and very few people will survive, as the prophet relates in the following verses.”

vv. 13–15. There will be few followers of Christ in the end of times. They shall glorify and sing praises to God. An invitation is made to all who will, to join these choirs of praise.

13 ¶ When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, [there shall be] as the shaking of an olive tree, [and] as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done.

When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, [there shall be] as the shaking of an olive tree (see ISAIAH 17:6). The Targum (Ⲯ) thinks this verse as that of the few solitary righteous who are left: “When thus the righteous shall be left alone in the midst of the earth, among the kingdoms.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “All this shall come to pass in this land, in the midst of the nations. As when one shall shake an olive tree, so shall they be shaken.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “For it shall be thus in the midst of the earth, in the midst of the people, as if a few olives, that remain, should be shaken out of the olive tree.” As in ISAIAH 17:5–6, where very few men shall be left and this is compared to the difficulty in finding berries after the harvest is finished. ¶ Elder B. H. Roberts explained ISAIAH 24:13–14,

³³ ISAIAH 6:11.

“From which it is to be understood that there will be a few even in those disastrous times, whose righteousness will call down the favor of God.”³⁴ Gill says, “For now shall be left alone the righteous in the midst of the earth, among the kingdoms, as the shaking of olives, as the gleanings of grapes after the vintage;’ and to olives and grapes are these gracious persons fitly compared, for the goodness, loveliness, and fruitfulness of them, through the grace of God.” It is the job of all missionaries to “shake the olive tree.” ¶ [And] as the gleanings of grapes when the vintage is done. The LXX (Ϯ) reads, “And when the vintage is over a shout will be raised.” The Douay-Rheims (Ϯ) has, “Or grapes, when the vintage is ended.” Govett says, “Jerome notices, in connexion with this, the Saviour’s words, ‘Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?’ implying, that believers shall be few as the gleanings of grapes.” We read these tender words in D&C 43:25: “How oft have I called upon you by the mouth of my servants, and by the ministering of angels, and by mine own voice, and by the voice of thunders, and by the voice of lightnings, and by the voice of tempests, and by the voice of earthquakes, and great hailstorms, and by the voice of famines and pestilences of every kind, and by the great sound of a trumpet, and by the voice of judgment, and by the voice of mercy all the day long, and by the voice of glory and honor and the riches of eternal life, and would have saved you with an everlasting salvation, but ye would not!”

14 They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the LORD, they shall cry aloud from the sea.

They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the LORD. The Targum (ⲉ), in the second clause, has “they shall praise on account of the Word of the Lord (the Royal Polyglot reads ⲃⲱⲥⲙⲁ, ‘in,’ or ‘on account of the name;’ but all other copies agree with the Biblia Magna in reading ⲃⲱⲥⲙⲁⲙⲁ, ‘in,’ or ‘on account of the Word).’” The LXX (Ϯ) reads, “But they who are left in the land shall be gladdened with the glory of the Lord.” The Douay-Rheims (Ϯ) has, “These shall lift up their voice, and shall give praise: when the Lord shall be glorified.” Cowles well points out that here there is a sudden transition from grief to joy and a few verses later, in ISAIAH 24:16, the transition is just as abrupt the other direction. The joy seems to be placed in a chiasmus. ¶ According to

Lowth, the Jews “were greatly instrumental in propagating the knowledge of the true God amongst these heathen nations, and preparing them for the reception of Christianity. This is what the Prophet seems to mean by the celebration of the name of JEHOVAH in the waters, in the distant coasts, and in the uttermost parts of the land.” Gill looks to the end of days, “These shall lift up their voice, in singing the praises of God, for his judgments on Babylon, and avenging the blood of his saints; and for their deliverance and salvation, and the inestimable blessings they are now put into the possession of; these are they, who, having gotten the victory over the beast and his image, sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, Revelation 15:2.” ¶ *They shall cry aloud from the sea.* Masoretic text (ⲙ) (ⲙⲓ) and the Dead Sea

Scrolls 1QIsa^a (ⲙ) (ⲙⲓ) both have *from* [the] *sea*, while 4QIsa^c (ⲙ) has *from* [the] *day* (ⲙⲓ). The Targum (ⲉ) makes an allusion to the escape from Egypt, at the Red Sea, and the shout for joy made by the Israelites at that time: “They shall rejoice as they rejoiced on account of the mighty works which were done for them by the sea.” Alexander writes, “Dathe give the ⲙ its comparative sense: more (i.e. louder) than the sea. Jarchi [i.e., Rashi] had before given the same construction but a different sense: *more than* (at) *the sea*, i.e. more than they rejoiced at the deliverance from Egypt.” So also the Rabbis explains Rosenberg: “More than they shouted for joy by the sea during the redemption from Egypt—[Rashi, Kara, following Jonathan³⁶].” So also more modern exegetes, such as Kaiser. The LXX (Ϯ) reads, “The water of the sea will be troubled.” The Douay-Rheims (Ϯ) has, “They shall make a joyful noise from the sea.” The sea may also be put for the isles, or the countries from afar, such as the American Continent and other nations who accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Nägelsbach surprises us with his insight, “Does there lie in the expression ⲙⲓ something like a foreboding of the fact that the Church of the LORD would spread especially in the lands of the west, and that, therefore, the great mass of the redeemed would come from that quarter?” Nägelsbach goes on to say that “All the godly dwelling in the east and west are to praise the name of the Lord who has given to them, in place of the terrible day of judgment, the promise of deliverance.” ¶ *They shall cry aloud*, ⲙⲓⲙⲓ. Ibn Ezra compares this crying out loud to the *neighing of the horse*, ⲙⲓⲙⲓⲙⲓ.³⁷

³⁴ B. H. Roberts. *Seventy’s Course*, 2:205–206, The Apostatic Period., The Testimony of Prophecy.

³⁵ Memra, ⲙⲓⲙⲓⲙⲓ, Word, or Logos (Λόγος).

³⁶ “Following Jonathan” means, that Rashi and Kara followed the Targum Jonathan (ⲉ).

³⁷ Friedländer prefers a Biblical expression, such as Jeremiah 8:16, “the neighing of his strong ones,” ⲙⲓⲙⲓⲙⲓⲙⲓ.

15 Wherefore glorify ye the LORD in the fires, [✓] [even] the name of the LORD God of Israel in the isles of the sea.

✓ or, valleys

Wherefore glorify ye the LORD in the fires. The Dead Sea Scrolls 4QIsa^c (Q) adds *in Aram* (בְּאַרָם) after *in the fires* while the 1QIsa^a (Q) follows the Masoretic text (M). Some translate *in the fires* (בְּאַרָם) as *in the east* and so the DSSB (Q) τρανσλατιον renders 4QIsa^c as *in the east, in Aram*. Some believe that בְּאַרָם is an error for what should have been *the islands*. But this suggestion is not related to the way the word is spelled. (More on this topic, below.) The Targum (T), “When light shall come to the righteous, they shall glorify the LORD.” The LXX (G) reads, “For this cause the glory of the Lord will be in the isles of the sea.” The Peshitta (S) has, *song* (Lamsa) / *praise* (BPE) rather than *fires*. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Therefore glorify ye the Lord in instruction.” Kay writes, “Or, ‘in the light,’ that is, the bright light of divine revelation (*urim*): compare the Targum, ‘When light shall come to the righteous.’ They are to reflect the Divine Light, so that men may glorify God (Cp. Matthew 5:14, 16); Philippians 2:15–16).” To these scriptures we may well add from Doctrine & Covenants 50:24: “That which is of God is light; and he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day.” Birks suggests: “The faithful remnant, both in the land itself, in the fires of affliction, and as exiles, even in the farthest isles of the sea, will glorify Jehovah, the God of Israel.” There are two words used frequently for *fire*, אֵשׁ and אֹר. Birks explains: “Isaiah’s own use of the word [בְּאַרָם or אֹר] seems the safest guide, ISAIAH 31:9; 44:16; 47:14; and 50:2.” In ISAIAH 50:2, however, we read *walking in the light of your fire* בְּאֹר אֶשְׁכֶּם, where the prophet uses the word אֹר, in relation to “walking in the light [בְּאֹר] and אֵשׁ for fire [אֶשְׁכֶּם]. Regarding אֹר, Delitzsch writes, “the lands of the Asiatic East, which are called ‘*urim*’, the lands of light, i.e., of the sun-rising. This is the true meaning of ‘*urim*’, as J. Schelling and Drechsler agree.” So also Faussett, “Rather translates for “fires,” “in the regions of morning light,” that is, the east, in antithesis to the “isles of the sea,” that is, the west [Maurer]. Wheresoever ye be scattered, east or west, still glorify the Lord (Malachi 1:11). The reference to Malachi is instructive: “For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every

place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts” (Malachi 1:11). Gill writes, “These are the words of the remnant, now triumphing and singing, calling upon others also to glorify the Lord in the fires of affliction and tribulation, in which they had lately been, and had themselves done: or, ‘in the valleys’; in low estates and conditions: or, ‘in holes’; dens and clefts of rocks, where they fled from their persecuting enemies; but neither of these versions suit the state of the true church, as it will be at this time. The word ‘*Urim*’,³⁸ here used, which is one of the names of what was put into the breastplate of the high priest, signifies ‘lights’; which sense of the word the Vulgate Latin version retains, rendering it, ‘in doctrines glorify the Lord’, and so the Targum, ‘therefore, when light cometh to the righteous, they shall glorify the Lord’ and so the words may be rendered, ‘glorify the Lord for the *Urim*,’ or ‘the lights’; for Christ, who has the true ‘*Urim*’ and ‘Thummim’, lights and perfections; for the light of his Gospel, and the truths of it, which will now be spread in a most wonderful manner throughout the world; to which times may be applied those words, ‘arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee—and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising,’ (ISAIAH 60:1) and which will be a just and sufficient reason for giving glory to the Lord.” ¶ [Even] *the name of the LORD God of Israel in the isles of the sea*. The Targum (T) has “In the islands of the sea they shall laud and bless the name of the Lord, the God of Israel.” The LXX (G) reads, “In the isles of the sea the name of the Lord will be glorious.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “The name of the Lord God of Israel in the islands of the sea.” Kaiser writes: “The most likely possibility is the redeemed Jews³⁹ in the Holy Land, who are now putting out a call to the nations of the world to give their God Yahweh the honour due to him, and hear their call echoed by the choirs of the ends of the earth. That this interpretation is not pure imagination is shown not only by the emphasis on Yahweh as the God of Israel, but also the fact that in passages such as Psalm 76:11; 97:1, 6; 98:2 ff.; ISAIAH 42:10, 12 and 51:5, we learn that the nations and islands are waiting upon Yahweh and giving him honour.” Gill writes, “Whose name will now be known, not in Israel, or among the Jews only, but in all distant and foreign countries, which are sometimes meant by the isles of the sea; and in all islands, even the most remote, who will have reason to join with them on the continent to

³⁸ בְּאַרָם (in *Urim*). As mentioned in the *LDS Scripture Resources*, ‘perhaps a scribal error for “islands.”’

³⁹ As LDS we would say Jews, but not only Jews, but all of those of Israel, who have returned to the covenant, along with a minority who have been adopted in.

glorify God, whose name will now be great in all the earth.” M. H. Mansfield wrote in the *Improvement Era*, “Lands distant from Palestine, where the sea separated them from that land, are referred to by the prophets as isles of the sea. ‘Wherefore, glorify ye the Lord in the fires [valleys], even the name of the Lord God of Israel in the isles of the sea’ (ISAIAH 24:15).”⁴⁰ ¶ Now, here we have an interesting quote from Jenour: “The prophet, as if transported to the times in which he speaks, encourages the scattered pious remnant to proclaim the name of Jehovah in those parts wither they had fled.” Or rather, where they had been *scattered*. This would serve an important purpose, to bring Israel back to the Lord.

vv. 16–19. Christ is the recipient of the songs of praise, but suddenly the prophet sees something that makes him gasp in agony. The cheerfulness departs as suddenly as it came. We are then transported to the end of days one more time, where various disasters are enumerated. In JS–M (Matthew 24) we read: “Behold I speak for mine elect’s; for nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. And again, because iniquity shall abound, the love of men shall wax cold; but he that shall not be overcome, the same shall be saved. And again, this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come, or the destruction of the wicked” (JS–M:29–31).

16 ¶ From the uttermost[✓] part of the earth have we heard songs, [even] glory to the righteous. But I said, My leanness,[✓] my leanness, woe unto me! the treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously.

✓ wing

✓ ✓ Leanness to me, or, My secret to me

From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, [even] glory to the righteous. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “From the house of the sanctuary,⁴¹ yea, from thence joy shall go forth to all the inhabitants of the earth, for we have heard the praise of the righteous!” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “‘Lord the God of Israel! from the outskirts of the earth we have heard of thy wonders : there is hope for the righteous.’” The Douay-Rheims

(Ⲯ) has, “From the ends of the earth we have heard praises, the glory of the just one.” Compare with *Rain in Due Season*, “If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost *parts* of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee”

(Deuteronomy 30:4). Regarding מִכְנֶנֶךָ, and also making allusion to the margin ||, Birks says, “The wing, or uttermost part of the earth, seems to refer, not to the bounds of Judea, but to the furthest limit of Jewish dispersion among the heathen.” The remnant that shall be gathered into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will break out in songs of praise to the Lord. Gill writes, that praise would be given “For the glorious appearance of Christ’s kingdom; for the spread of his Gospel throughout the world; for the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles everywhere; wherefore these songs are heard from all parts of the world, and the uttermost parts of them; these are the voices said to be heard in heaven, or in the church, everywhere, Revelation 11:15 so some Jewish writers (Midrash Kohelet, fol. 62:3) interpret the words of the days of the Messiah, and of the songs then to be sung.” ¶ *Glory to the righteous, צְבִי לְצַדִּיק.*

Most exegetes feel these words are supposed to refer to various classes of men or even to the land of Israel. I cannot entertain such thoughts, as to me there is but only one Righteous, even the Messiah, הַמְּשִׁיחַ.

Horsley well suggests that צְבִי לְצַדִּיק should read *glory to the Just One*. Wildberger, likewise says, “Since Yahweh is apparently the one who is to be praised, it seems likely that the צַדִּיק (righteous one), to whom

צְבִי (majesty) is attributed, is God.” Wildberger backs up this assertion with three excellent points, that although in the Old Testament *the Righteous* does not appear elsewhere as a title, that: (1) leaning on Henry, how odd it would be to suddenly change the focus of praise from the Lord to some other person or thing; (2) similar expressions are found in Psalm 11:7 and elsewhere in the Old Testament (*For the righteous*

Lord, כִּי צַדִּיק יְהוָה); and (3) we find the title in I Enoch 38:2, “And when the Righteous One shall appear &c.” and 1 Enoch 53:6, “And after this the Righteous and Elect One &c.” In any case, ISAIAH 24:16 here continues the praise for the Lord, *to the name of the Lord God of Israel, שֵׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל*. ¶ *But I said, My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has: “The Prophet said, a secret! A reward to the righteous is shown to me, a secret! A punishment for the wicked is revealed to me. Woe to the oppressors, for they shall be oppressed; and to those who spoil, for,

⁴⁰ Mansfield, M. H. *Improvement Era*, February 1904. Jacob’s Isle.

⁴¹ Or temple, בֵּית.

behold, they shall be spoiled.” The LXX (6) reads, “Let them say also, ‘Woe to the rebels who reject the law.’” The Peshitta (5) repeats the expression, “it is a mystery to me” instead of “my leanness.” The Douay-Rheims (8) has, “And I said: My secret to myself, my secret to myself, woe is me: the prevaricators have prevaricated, and with the prevarication of transgressors they have prevaricated.” ¶ *My leanness, my leanness, לֵי-רֵי-לֵי*. The word *רֵי* means *destruction* (Gesenius); *leanness, wasting [away]* (BDB); *my secret, diminution, vanishing* (HALOT, based on Wildberger and Bauer); and *consumption* (Bosman & Potsma). Gesenius, with the Douay-Rheims, has the full expression meaning something equivalent to “Woe is me.” Wildberger, similarly translates is as “I am done for.” Regarding this clause, Horsley explains this looking toward the first coming of the Savior: “The Prophet, hearing songs of praise to the Just One, is naturally led to think of the general corruption of human nature, and of the base treatment which the Just One met with from the Jews.” Luther presents a similar view, at the distress of the rejection of Christ by “the Jews, who have not accepted this loveliness of the Gospel.” Gill, rather, thinks of the pain of the present moment and has, “[Isaiah is] either pining and fretting at the present state of his people, so very unlike to that which he now had a view of.” So also Rawlinson, “The thought of this joyful time, when the saints shall reign with their Lord in a new heaven and a new earth, recalls the prophet (contrast being one of the laws of the association of ideas) to the misery of the present, and his own participation therein. A time of suffering, of wasting, and pining away must be endured—for how long he knows not—before the joyous consummation, towards which he stretches in hope and confident expectancy, can be reached.” Or, even perhaps the view of the impending disasters that would come upon the earth in the last days as spoken of in Joseph Smith-Matthew (Matthew 24). There we read that most will be clueless about the impending appearance of the Savior despite all of the signs of the times: “But of that day, and hour, no one knoweth; no, not the angels of God in heaven, but my Father only. But as it was in the days of Noah, so it shall be also at the coming of the Son of Man; For it shall be with them, as it was in the days which were before the flood; for until the day that Noah entered into the ark they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage; And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also⁴² the coming of the Son of Man be” (JS-M:40–43). ¶ *The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously, בְּנִדְרִים בְּנִדְרֵי וּבְנִדְרֵי*. Wordsworth would rather translate this expression as *the transgressors have transgressed*.

To support his argument, Wordsworth points to 1 Samuel 14:33, where it is translated as *transgress*.⁴³ BDB for *בְּנִדְרֵי* has, “act or deal treacherously, faithlessly, deceitfully, in the marriage relation, in matters of property or right, in covenants, in word and in general conduct.” Wildberger explains, “When the Prophet ‘writes *בְּנִדְרִים בְּנִדְרֵי וּבְנִדְרֵי* (in cunning the cunning ones act cunningly)... one cannot conceive of, and plumb the depths of, how horrible this event really is.”

17 Fear, and the pit, and the snare, [are] upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth.

See also, Jeremiah 48:43–44, who repeats the same paronomasia we have here. The LXX (6) reads, “*Terror and a pit and a snare* are for you who dwell in the land.” Gill writes, “There is an elegant play on words in the Hebrew, which cannot well be expressed in English, in the words ‘pachad, pachath, pach’,⁴⁴ fear, pit, and a snare; which are expressive of a variety of dangers, difficulties, and distresses; there seems to be an allusion to creatures that are hunted, who flee through fear, and fleeing fall into pits, or are entangled in snares, and so taken.” Barnes explains: “In the passage before us, there is an advance from one danger to another, or the subsequent one is more to be dreaded than the preceding. The figure is taken from the mode of taking wild beasts, where various nets, toils, or pitfalls were employed to secure them. The word ‘fear’ (*פַּחַד*), denotes anything that was used to frighten or arouse the wild beasts in hunting, or to drive them into the pitfall that was prepared for them. Among the Romans the name ‘fears’ (‘formidines’) was given to lines or cords strung with feathers of all colors, which, when they fluttered in the air or were shaken, frightened the beasts into the pits, or the birds into the snares which were prepared to take them (Seneca, De Ira, ii. 122; virg. AE. xii. 7499; Geor. iii. 372). It is possible that this may be referred to here under the name of ‘fear.’ The word ‘pit’ (*פֶּחַח*) denotes the pitfall; a hole dug in the ground, and covered over with bushes, leaves, etc., into which they might fall unawares. The word ‘snare’ (*פֶּחַח*) denotes a net, or gin [a snare or trap], and perhaps refers to a series of nets enclosing at first a large space of ground, in which the wild beasts were, and then drawn by degrees into a narrow compass, so that they could not escape.” Lowth describes it as “a series of nets, inclosing at first a great space of ground, in which the

⁴³ *בְּנִדְרֵי הֵם*, Ye have transgressed.

⁴⁴ Or in the Hebrew, *פַּחַד וְפֶחַח וְפֶחַח*.

⁴² Speaking of the surprise factor, not of the universal flood.

wild beasts were known to be; and then drawn in by degrees into a narrower compass, till they were at last closely shut up, and entangled in them.” Wordsworth writes, “These words are adopted by our Blessed Lord, when speaking of the Day of Doom: ‘As a snare shall it come upon all them that dwelt on the face of the whole earth’ (see Luke 21:35).” In that same place, the Lord says, “Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”

18 And it shall come to pass, [that] he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake.

And it shall come to pass, [that] he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit. The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the terror, shall fall into the pit.” Regarding *the noise of the fear*, Barnes explains, “A cry or shout was made in hunting, designed to arouse the game, and drive it to the pitfall.” Recall in *Rain in Due Season* the Lord warns Israel that disobedience will bring fright: “And upon them that are left *alive* of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and *the sound of a shaken leaf* shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth” (Leviticus 26:36). This whole verse shows how escape from one danger only exposes them to the next. Joel 1:4 has a similar tone: “That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten.” See also, Amos 5:19. In reality, the only escape from danger is turning to the Lord for refuge. ¶ *From the noise*, קוֹל מִקּוֹל usually stands for *sound, voice, word, speech and noise*, especially in relation to the crack of thunder (see HAL, BDB, Gesenius). Noise is often heard during times of war, as well as in storms and large earthquakes. I have heard the sound of earthquakes in Chile that sounded like that of a lion during feeding time. So also can anyone attest who has woken up to the sound of nearby thunder strikes. It is interesting to see how in Psalm 29:3 the *voice* of Yahweh (קוֹל יְהוָה) is associated with thunder (Gesenius). ¶ *And he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare*: The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And he who getteth out of the pit, shall be caught by the snare.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, *rid himself*

rather than *cometh up*. Barnes adds, “A figure taken still from hunting. It was possible that some of the more strong and active of the wild beasts driven into the pitfall would spring out, and attempt to escape, yet they might be secured by snares or gins purposely contrived for such an occurrence.” ¶ *For the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake*. The Targum (ⲡ), “For mighty works are done in the heavens, therefore the foundations of the earth quake.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Because the flood gates of heaven are opened, therefore the foundations of the land shall be shaken.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has, *torrents* (BPE) / *fountains* (Lamsa) for *windows*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, *flood-gates* rather than *windows*. Regarding *the windows from on high*, Barnes has, “The word ‘windows’ here (אֲרָבוֹת) is the same which occurs in Genesis, and properly denotes a grate, a lattice, a window, and then any opening, as a sluice or floodgate, and is applied to a tempest or a deluge, because when the rain descends, it seems like opening sluices or floodgates in the sky. The sense here is, that calamities had come upon the nation resembling the universal deluge.” Rawlinson well says, “It is not actually another flood that is threatened, but it is a judgment as sweeping and destructive as the Flood.” So says Young, “Just as that deluge was all-destroying, so will this judgment be also ... Isaiah does not teach that there will be a repetition of that flood, for it was expressly revealed (Genesis 8:21) that such a means of universal destruction would never be repeated ... The ‘windows from on high’ are the windows through which the power from on high will flood.” Gill writes regarding the *shaking of the earth*, “Very probably the dissolution⁴⁵ of the world may be attended with a general earthquake; or this may denote the dread and terror that will seize the inhabitants of it.”

19 The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly.

The Targum Stenning (ⲡ), “The earth shall tremble greatly, the earth shall shake to and fro, the earth shall be utterly torn asunder.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “With confusion the land will be confounded; with perplexity this land will be perplexed.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲫ) renders it, “The earth is broken down, the earth is utterly moved, the earth is staggering exceedingly.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “With breaking shall the earth be broken, with crushing shall the earth be crushed, with trembling shall the earth be moved.” Rabbi Rosenberg has: “The repetition is for emphasis of the

⁴⁵ Better, transformation.

grave troubles destined to befall the nations at the onset of the Messianic era⁴⁶.—[Redak].” Whitehouse renders it, “the earth is shattered to pieces, the earth violently swayed to and fro.” Barnes explains, “Everything in this verse is intense and emphatic. The verbs are in the strongest form of emphasis: ‘By breaking, the land is broken;’⁴⁷ ‘by scattering, the land is scattered;’⁴⁸ ‘by commotion, the land is moved.’⁴⁹ The repetition also of the expression in the same sense three times, is a strong form of emphasis; and the whole passage is designed to denote the utter desolation and ruin that had come upon the land.” Keith points out the writings of Revelation: “And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath” (Revelation 16:18–19). ¶ President Joseph Fielding Smith taught that this verse was related to the post-millennial death of the earth, before its resurrection.⁵⁰ Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote about this verse, “Employing the strong language and graphic imagery that he alone can use with such power, Isaiah says: ‘The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly.’ He is talking of the new heaven and the new earth that shall come into being when the elements melt with fervent heat.”⁵¹ Of course some of the elements of this prophecy can also be applied to the Second Coming. See also ISAIAH 51:6.

vv. 20–22. The principle of deliverance of the dead from their bonds of spiritual prison is among the most glorious to be found in the Holy Scriptures but has only come to be understood after the restoration of the Gospel in these latter days. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that just as the antediluvians had their day of deliverance and visitation from the bonds of spiritual prison, so would those who lived after them: “The situation of the Christian nations after death, is a subject that has called forth all the wisdom and talent of the philosopher and the divine, and it is an opinion which is generally received, that the destiny of man is

irretrievably fixed at his death, and that he is made either eternally happy, or eternally miserable; that if a man dies without a knowledge of God, he must be eternally damned, without any mitigation of his punishment, alleviation of his pain, or the most latent hope of a deliverance while endless ages shall roll along. However orthodox this principle may be, we shall find that it is at variance with the testimony of Holy Writ, for our Savior says, that all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men wherewith they shall blaspheme; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, *nor in the world to come*, evidently showing that there are sins which may be forgiven in the world to come... Peter, also, in speaking concerning our Savior, says, that ‘He went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometimes were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah’ (1 Peter 3:19, 20). Here then we have an account of our Savior preaching to the spirits in prison, to spirits that had been imprisoned from the days of Noah; and what did He preach to them? That they were to stay there? Certainly not! Let His own declaration testify. ‘He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight of the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised’ (Luke 4:18). Isaiah has it—‘To bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness from the prison house.’ (ISAIAH 42:7.) It is very evident from this that he not only went to preach to them, but to *deliver*, or *bring them out of the prison house*. Isaiah, in testifying concerning the calamities that will overtake the inhabitants of the earth, says, ‘The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall and not rise again. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. *And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited.*’ Thus we find that God will deal with all the human family equally, and that as the antediluvians had their day of visitation, so will those characters referred to by Isaiah, have their time of visitation and deliverance; after having been many days in prison” (emphasis added).⁵² Elder Theodore M Burton, spoke at the October 1964 General Conference regarding ISAIAH 24:21–22, “There is no question but that Jesus was to be the Deliverer and that they that sit in this prison were to be in the bonds of darkness, which must refer to spiritual darkness rather than to political prisoners here upon the earth. The work of Jesus definitely was not

⁴⁶ Many of the Jews today have lost hope for the coming of an actual Messiah, and are waiting for a *Messianic Era* instead.

⁴⁷ רָעָה הַתְּרַעֲשָׁה הָאָרֶץ

⁴⁸ פֹּזַר הַתְּפֹרְרָה אֶרֶץ

⁴⁹ מוֹט הַתְּמוֹטָה אֶרֶץ

⁵⁰ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Church History and Modern Revelation*, 1:132.

⁵¹ McConkie, Bruce R. *Millennial Messiah*, The Promised Signs and Wonders, Signs and Wonders in Heaven and on Earth, p. 411.

⁵² Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, selected and arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith, p.218.

confined solely to those of his own earthly generation who heard his voice in person as on this occasion when he spoke in the synagogue at Nazareth. His work was a greater work, a *universal work*, and applied not only to the whole wide world of those then living, but *also to all who ever lived or ever would live upon this earth*" (emphasis added).⁵³ ¶ In these verses, then, we read about the consequences of man's transgression, but also the ultimate mercy of the Lord *after* these individuals have come to a repentant understanding. Those who will inherit in the Telestial Kingdom, such as King David ben Jesse,⁵⁴ will not come forth in the first resurrection but will, eventually, toward the end of the millennium, obtain their resurrection and be released from spirit prison (see Psalm 16:10a, see also TPJS, 339). Elder Talmage explains, "Further, if, in the plan of God, provision be made for the redemption of the wilfully disobedient, those who actually spurn the truth, can we believe that the still greater multitudes of spirits who have never heard the Gospel are to be left in punishment eternally? No; God has decreed that even the heathen nations, and those that knew no law, shall be redeemed. The gifts of God are not confined to this sphere of action, but will be bestowed in justice throughout eternity. Upon all who reject the word of God in this life will fall the penalties provided; but after the debt has been paid the prison doors shall be opened, and the spirits once confined in suffering, then chastened and clean, shall come forth to partake of the glory provided for their class."⁵⁵ In ISAIAH 42:7, we include additional pertinent quotes on the matter of the teaching of the gospel to those in the spirit world.

20 The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.

The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "The land is utterly cast down like a drunkard." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "It reeled to and fro like a drunkard when intoxicated." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, "With shaking shall the earth be shaken as a

drunken man." Nyman has, "The Savior quoted part of ISAIAH 24:20 in two revelations given to Joseph Smith (see D&C 49:23; 88:87). Oliver Cowdery paraphrased the same verse in noting which scriptures the angel Moroni said were soon to be fulfilled (see MA, April 1835, pp. 111–12). The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that the events spoken of in ISAIAH 24:20 were soon to occur as the Second Coming rapidly approached (TPJS, pp. 29, 71)." Kaiser well writes, "The world and history will not really come to an end, but will only then have their true beginning, which will then continue throughout the future." Enormous earthquakes must have played a role in the dividing of the land mass into continents. In the last days there once again will be earthquakes of great proportion (I write these words in Chile about a year after the 2010 earthquake and in a nation where we have suffered the very largest earthquakes in recorded history). Bishop Edward Partridge taught, "When we reflect upon the many mighty earthquakes that have been, and that the earth was never so shook as it then will be: and especially when we reflect that in the days of Peleg it was so shaken as to be divided, probably into two continents, besides numerous islands—I say, when we reflect upon this subject and see what a tremendous shaking the earth must have, we are not at all surprised that the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and be removed like a cottage."⁵⁶ ¶ *And shall be removed like a cottage.* The Stenning Targum (Ⲯ), "And shall swing to and fro like a booth." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "Like a lodge in a vineyard the land shall be shaken." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, "And shall be removed as the tent of one night." *As a cottage*, כְּמִלּוּנָה. Gill explains, "Or, 'a tent'; either of soldiers or shepherds, which are easily taken down and moved; or like 'a lodge', as the word is rendered (ISAIAH 1:8). The Septuagint render it a 'fruit watch'; and, according to the Jewish writers, it signifies a booth or tent, in which the keepers of gardens or vineyards watched in the night; which Jarchi [i.e., Rashi] says was built on the top of a tree, and Kimhi on a hill; and, being made of light wood, was easily moved to and fro with the wind." Or, moved from one location to another. This is the reason why it will appear as if the stars are falling because the whole earth will be transported to another location. President Brigham Young explains: "This earth is our home, it was framed expressly for the habitation of those who are faithful to God, and who prove themselves worthy to inherit the earth when the Lord shall have sanctified, purified and glorified it and brought it back into his presence, from which it fell far into space ... When the earth was framed and brought into existence and man

⁵³ Elder Theodore M Burton, October 1964 General Conference CR.

⁵⁴ To me, no story is sadder than that of King David. No youth or man was ever so valiant as young David. He truly feared God more than man. And this is why his fall is so painful. He was worthy to receive some of the most transcendental Messianic revelations ever given to man. The life of David is a warning to each one of us to ever be vigilant and pray always that we might endure to the end in righteousness.

⁵⁵ Elder James E. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*. Baptism for the Dead, p. 134. With the words, "glory provided for their class"

⁵⁶ Partridge, Edward. *Messenger and Advocate*, January 1835, p. 58.

was placed upon it, it was near the throne of our Father in heaven. And when man fell—though that was designed in the economy, there was nothing about it mysterious or unknown to the Gods, they understood it all, it was all planned—but when man fell, the earth fell into space, and took up its abode in this planetary system, and the sun became our light. When the Lord said— ‘Let there be light,’ there was light, for the earth was brought near the sun that it might reflect upon it so as to give us light by day, and the moon to give us light by night. This is the glory the earth came from, and when it is glorified it will return again unto the presence of the Father, and it will dwell there, and these intelligent beings that I am looking at, if they live worthy of it, will dwell upon this earth.”⁵⁷ ¶ Faussett has, “Here, *a hanging couch*, suspended from the trees by cords, such as Niebuhr describes the Arab keepers of lands as having, to enable them to keep watch, and at the same time to be secure from wild beasts. Translate, ‘Shall wave to and fro like a hammock’ swung about by the wind.” ¶ *And the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.* The Targum (ⲧ) renders it, “And her sins are heavy upon her: she shall fall, and rise no more.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “For iniquity hath prevailed over it; and it shall fall and shall not be able to rise.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, *iniquity* instead of *transgression*. Nägelsbach writes: “As man ... fell by sin, so must the earth also, the theatre of human history, fall by sin never again to rise in its *previous form*” (emphasis added). Gill similarly says, “In the form it now is [the earth]; for there will be new heavens and a new earth, in which the righteous, who will share the first resurrection, will dwell; for as for the first earth, or present one, it shall pass away ... (Revelation 20:11).”

21 And it shall come to pass in that day, [that] the LORD shall punish ✓ the host of the high ones [that are] on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.

✓ visit upon

And it shall come to pass in that day, [that] the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones [that are] on high. The Targum (ⲧ) has “the Lord shall punish the mighty host that is dwelling in power.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “When God shall bring his hand on the hosts of heaven.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, for the second half, “The Lord shall visit upon the host of heaven on high.” In Revelation we have: “And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and

every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” (Revelation 6:15–17). ¶ *And the kings of the earth upon the earth.* The Targum (ⲧ) adds to the list of those who will be punished, the “sons of men,” ⲁⲛⲱⲛ ⲁⲛⲱⲛ. The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Even upon the kings of this land.”

22 And they shall be gathered together, [as] prisoners are gathered ✓ in the pit, ✓ and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited. ✓ ✓

✓ with the gathering of prisoners

✓ ✓ or, dungeon

✓ ✓ or, found wanting

The partial Dead Sea Scrolls 4QIsa^c (ⲱ) has (ⲁⲛⲱⲛ ⲁⲛⲱⲛ) and thus preserves the Masoretic text (ⲙ) inclusion of the word *prisoners* (ⲁⲛⲱⲛ) while the 1QIsa^a (ⲱ) has dropped it. For *visited*, the Targum (ⲧ) has *remembered* (Chaldee, ‘their memory shall come up’). The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And the congregation thereof shall have been assembled for imprisonment, and shut up as chaff for many generations; of them there shall be a visitation.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲥ) renders it *saved* rather than *visited*. The BPE Peshitta (Ⲥ) does not include either end clause, but ends with “and they will be abandoned for many days.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, for the first half, “And they shall be gathered together as in the gathering of one bundle into the pit.” Pseudepigraphical 1 Enoch 18:14–15 reads: “... the prison house for the stars and the powers of heaven. And the stars which roll over upon the fire, they are the ones which have transgressed the commandments of God from the beginning of their rising because they did not arrive punctually [i.e. in their allotted time].” While it is not clear what this unpunctuality refers to, it is quite apparent that the prisoners are there because they have transgressed the commandments. Those who inherit the Telesstial kingdom are compared to *stars*. But these are not to stay in prison for ever: “And he was wroth with them and bound them until the time of the completion of their sin in the year of mystery (or, for a myriad years)” (1 Enoch 18:16).⁵⁸ On 21 December 2010, I had the opportunity to get up very early in the morning in Llanquihue, Chile, and spend the rest of the night watching the full lunar eclipse. As a heavenly body, the moon lost its brightness and was left as a dark red mass.

⁵⁷ President Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses* 17:144.

⁵⁸ *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (James H. Charlesworth, editor). Volume I. Doubleday, 1983.

The moon, without the sun, has no glory at all. In ISAIAH 24:23 we see that just as the moon has no glory without the sun, neither the sun nor the moon have any glory compared to the Son. This passage in 1 Enoch 18:14b–16 seems to go hand in hand with what we know about the millennium and those who will come forth in the resurrection of the unjust. Regarding the word *pit*, Henderson writes, “[בֹּרַר] is descriptive of the most ancient kinds of prisons, which consisted of empty cisterns that narrowed towards the mouth, so that it was scarcely possible for those who were confined in them to make their escape without assistance (Genesis 37:20, 22; Jeremiah 38:13). Not unfrequently the bottom was covered with mire or soft clay, which rendered them at once unhealthy and disagreeable.” Nägelsbach says, “The pit is here used for Sheol ... oftentimes (ISAIAH 14:15, 19; 38:18).” Lowth adds, “The image seems to be taken from the practice of the great monarchs of that time; who, when they had thrown their wretched captives into a dungeon, never gave themselves the trouble of inquiring about them; but let them lie a long time in that miserable condition, wholly destitute of relief, and disregarded.” Contrary to these rulers, Lowth explains that the Lord will visit these prisoners with mercy. Lowth, however, makes the prisoners *his people*, implying Israel will not be abandoned. ¶ *And after many days shall they be visited* [וְיִבְקְרוּ]. Exegetes are here divided as to the nature of this *visitation*, whether one of mercy or one of punishment. We saw this same word, *יִבְקַר*, in ISAIAH 23:17, where it also appears to be used in the sense of *visit to redeem*, to *remember in mercy*. Rabbi David Kimhi felt that the purpose of the visitation was to release the prisoners from the pit (in Rosenberg). Barnes has, “To me it seems that the connection seems to require the idea of a visitation for the purpose of relief or of deliverance... [and] after a long time they would be visited by the Great Deliverer.” Henderson says, “A *merciful visitation*, for the purpose of restoring those here spoken of from captivity, alone suits the connexion.” Cheyne tends towards a merciful visitation, for, says he, “It is difficult... to see why there should be two punishments.” Alexander says, regarding the opinion of mercy, “This explanation is as old as Rabbi Joseph Kimhi, if not as the Peshito.” To these voices we add that of Jenour and according to Delitzsch, also Hitzig, Knobel and Luzzatto. For every exegete who believes this is a merciful visit, there are probably four who believe the visitation is one of punishment. ¶ Gladly, we have the inspired comments of prophets who have made it clear that indeed this is a *visitation of mercy*. To us as LDS, it is of great interest that Faussett associates this verse with 1 Peter 3:19, “By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison,” and calls that verse “the disputed passage.” Also see ISAIAH 42:7.

23 Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously. ✓

✓ or, there shall be glory before his ancients

Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed. The Targum (Ⲯ), “And they shall be confounded that worship the moon, and they shall be ashamed that worship the sun.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “When the bricks shall have mouldered away, and the wall shall have fallen.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has *blush* instead of *confounded*. Slotki/Rosenberg have: “God’s glory will outshine the celestial lights, the moon and the sun being eclipsed into insignificance (cf. 60:19) (Ibn Ezra⁵⁹).” Young is correct in saying, “Isaiah uses a poetic word for ‘moon,’ a word that really means ‘white⁶⁰’” Likewise, Young points out that for the sun, Isaiah has *the hot*. חֹם, (in several places), rather than שֶׁשֶׁשׁ. ISAIAH 60:19–20 has, “The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.” Alexander correctly says, “It was not merely *when* Jehovah reigned, but *because* he reigned, that all inferior luminaries were to be eclipsed.” Nägelsbach says, not exactly as we would as LDS explain it, but interestingly close: “Then follows the last, highest and grandest revelation of God. The earth now becomes what it ought originally to have been, but which it was hindered from being by sin, viz., the common dwelling-place of God and of men. The heavenly Jerusalem, the tabernacle in which God dwells with men (Revelation 21:3) descends upon the renovated earth. This is the Jerusalem in which according to ISAIAH 24:23, Jehovah Zebaoth reigns as King.” Elder Orson Pratt taught, “In describing the glory of his personal reign on the earth, [Isaiah] says that ‘Then the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed,’ because of the superior light that will attend the presence of the being who is to reign in Zion and Jerusalem.”⁶¹ Rashi suggests that the reason the moon and the sun will “fade into insignificance because of the light radiating from the righteous (Rashi in Sanh. 91b)” (Talmud, Soncino). Elder Orson Pratt makes uses similar language in the Journal of Discourses: “... because of the superior light that will

⁵⁹ Not in my copy of Ibn Ezra, in Isaiah 60:19 we have: “Thou wilt not want the light of the sun, because of the light of God.”

⁶⁰ חֹם means *the white*, from לבן, instead of moon, יָרֵחַ.

⁶¹ Elder Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses* 20:14–16.

attend the presence of the being who is to reign in Zion and Jerusalem.”⁶² Who is this Being, this Righteous? The Holy One of Israel. Elder Pratt goes on to explain that it is this same light and heat—ininitely more powerful than that of the sun—that will burn the wicked at His coming: “This seems, then, to be a work preparatory to the coming of the Lord in flaming fire. The nature of the fire that will be exhibited at his second coming in the clouds of heaven will be such that it will consume the wicked and ungodly, and those who repent not and who do not sanctify themselves before the Lord. Our God in that day will be a consuming fire; the intensity of this fire will be so great that the very hills, the Psalmist David informs us in another place, ‘will melt like wax before his presence.’ The Prophet Isaiah in speaking of the fire or heat that would accompany the second advent of the Son of God, declares that the mountains shall flow down at his presence. The elements that now constitute these rugged mountains which we see here on this continent and in all parts of the earth where we travel will melt with fervent heat, and will flow down before the presence of the Lord. The brightness of this fire will be greater than that of the sun in its glory. I mean our temporal, literal sun, from which we receive light and heat, as you will find recorded in the last verse of the 24th chapter of Isaiah, which says that ‘when the Lord of Hosts shall come to reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously, the sun shall hide his face in shame and the moon shall be confounded.’ With all the brightness of that luminary which lights this creation it will hide its face in shame; and the bright luminaries of heaven will be confounded as it were, so great will be the glory of his presence—a fire devouring before him, and all nature feeling the power of the Almighty, which will be exerted on that grand occasion.”⁶³ Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: “In his vision of the Celestial Jerusalem, John saw ‘the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God ... The street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.’ There was no temple therein, neither the need for the sun nor moon to give light, ‘for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.’ (Revelation 21).”⁶⁴ ¶ *When the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.* The Targum (T) renders it: “Because the power of the Lord of hosts shall be revealed in mount Zion, and before the elders of his people in glory.” The LXX (G) reads, “Because the Lord will commence his reign from Sion and from Jerusalem, and be glorified in the presence of

the elders.” The Peshitta (S) has *for* (Lamsa) / *because* (BPE) rather than *when*. The Peshitta (S) also has the Lord *praised* (BPE) / *glorified* (Lamsa) by His *saints* rather than *ancients*. The book of Revelation talks about a New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:2) and the Talmud tradition (Seder Nezikin, Baba Bathra 75b) likewise speaks of a Messianic one: “Rabbah said in the name of Rabbi Johanan: Jerusalem of the world to come will not be like Jerusalem of the present world. [To] Jerusalem of the present world, anyone who wishes goes up, but to that of the world to come only those invited will go” (Talmud, Soncino). ¶ Before *his ancients*, *לְנִיחַ זְקֵנָיו*. It is interesting to note that the word *ancients* *זְקֵנִים*, here also stands for *elders*. Calvin writes, “By expressly mentioning the ‘elders,’ he employs a figure of speech frequently used in Scripture, by which the chief part of the Church is taken for the whole body of it.” Cheyne says, “These shall be admitted to a direct intuition of the Divine glory, like the seventy elders of old (Exodus 24:9), and shall carry the reflection of it wherever they go (Exodus 34:29).” ¶ Regarding the *Lord of hosts*, here it may well be asked, “Who is this King of glory?” The answer, “The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory,” (Psalm 24:10) even *Jesus Christ*! Regarding *Lord of hosts*, Gill testifies: “Who is no other than the Lord Jesus Christ, the true Jehovah, the Lord of hosts or armies, of the sun, moon, and stars, the host of heaven, and of the heavenly host of angels, and of men on earth; who was King from eternity, and reigned during the Old Testament dispensation; came a King into this world, though his kingdom was not of it.” Calvin writes, “He shews how great will be the splendor and glory of God, when the kingdom of Christ shall be established, because all that is brilliant must be obscured, and the glory of Christ alone must hold a high and prominent place.” From Bishop Edward Partridge, in the *Messenger and Advocate*, we have this: “Thus we see that the Lord is not only to reign in Jerusalem, but in mount Zion, also, which shows that Jerusalem and Zion are two places.”⁶⁵ We read in the *Evening and Morning Star*, “[In ISAIAH 24:23]... here he is said to reign before his ancients, that is, all the saints from our father Adam, down...”⁶⁶ President Charles W. Penrose often quoted ISAIAH 24:23 in his General Conference talks: “*He shall rule and reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients, gloriously*, as the prophets predicted. This is to be a kingdom of righteousness, a kingdom of truth, a kingdom of equity, of kindness, of brotherly love and of unity, a kingdom and organization in which the utmost fraternity will

⁶² Pratt, Elder Orson. *Journal of Discourses* 20:16.

⁶³ Pratt, Elder Orson, *Journal of Discourses* 15:55.

⁶⁴ McConkie, Elder Bruce R. *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, p. 588

⁶⁵ Partridge, Edward. *Messenger and Advocate*, January 1835, p. 58.

⁶⁶ *Evening and Morning Star*, 2:155, May, 1834.

prevail” (emphasis added).⁶⁷ On another occasion President Penrose said, “[Christ] said, the keys should not be taken from the Prophet Joseph, for he had been tested and proved and found worthy before the Lord, before the angels and before the Church. They should not be taken from him and from the Twelve (that is the promise) ‘until I shall come, saith the Lord.’ So the keys were to abide with the Church from that time henceforth, *until the Lord Himself should come and reign in Zion and Jerusalem and before His ancients gloriously*” (emphasis added).⁶⁸ In the 1842 *Times and*

Seasons we read, “The prophet [Isaiah] says, that the Lord shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously; hence, when the redeemed saints dwell on earth, they will dwell in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem which places the Lord will fully prepare for them.”⁶⁹

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⁶⁷ Penrose, Elder Charles W. April 1912 CR, pp. 18–19. Also see *Journal of Discourses* 21:140.

⁶⁸ Penrose, Elder Charles W. CR October 1905.

⁶⁹ *Times and Seasons* 3:690–692, February 15, 1842. The Millennium.

Isaiah 25

As Cheyne points out, we find Jeremiah 31 in much *harmony* with this chapter. There we hear about the gathering of Israel, a new covenant to be embraced by the people, the Lord telling us He will be Israel's God, the song of gratitude, and the feast of fat things. All of these things bring us to the removal of the veil of ignorance until all who live shall know the Lord—such that it will not be necessary to preach about Him anymore. This is probably to take place, to a large degree, during the Millennium. Finally, Moab, representing the nations that hate God, is brought down to the depths of humiliation. ⁴¹ At the same time, saith the LORD, will *I be the God* of all the families of Israel, and *they shall be my people*.² Thus saith the LORD, The people *which were* left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; *even* Israel, when I went to cause him to rest.³ The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, *saying*, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.⁴ Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry.⁵ Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria: the planters shall plant, and shall eat *them* as common things.⁶ For there shall be a day, *that* the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the LORD our God.⁷ For thus saith the LORD; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O LORD, save *thy people, the remnant of Israel*.⁸ Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and *gather them* from the coasts of the earth, *and* with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither.⁹ They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim *is* my firstborn.¹⁰ Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare *it* in the isles afar off, and say, *He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock*.¹¹ For the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of *him that was* stronger than he.¹² Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the LORD, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all.¹³ Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow.¹⁴ And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the LORD” (Jeremiah 31:1-14, emphasis added); ³¹ Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that *I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah*:³² Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD:³³ But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people*.³⁴ And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” (Jeremiah 31:31-34, emphasis added).

vv. 1–5. The Lord is praised, for He has redeemed Israel and the faithful against those who hate her.

1 ¶ O LORD, thou [art] my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful [things; thy] counsels of old [are] faithfulness [and] truth.

O LORD, thou [art] my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Lord God, thee I will glorify: in songs of praise I will extol thy name.” The Peshitta (ܣ) combines *I will exalt thee* and *I will praise thy name* into a single clause, “I will exalt (BPE) / praise (Lamsa) thy name.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ)

has, for the last clause, “And give glory to thy name.” As the Prophet Joseph Smith often taught, “for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Revelation 19:10b). Without such a *spirit of prophecy*, it is not possible to truly sing praises to Christ the Lord, even the *LORD (JEHOVAH) my God (Elohai)*, יהוה אֱלֹהֵי.

Besides the exalted title we use for the Father, *Elohim* appears hundreds of times in the Old Testament, almost always associated with *God the Son*. ¶ *I will exalt thee*. According to Rabbi Ibn Ezra, “The first person singular refers to the prophet, or these are the words which every one of ‘the ancients’ [i.e., elders] is represented speaking (ISAIAH 24:23).” Kimhi explains, according to Rabbi Rosenberg, that each and every one of the elders who is privileged to behold the power of God over the heathen nations will recognize and glorify God. Kimhi

explains regarding אַתָּה (thou) / שְׁמִי (thy name), “The prophet uses the expressions, ‘You’ and ‘Your name’ interchangeably because they are synonymous” (in Rosenberg). Delitzsch, and most commentators, note that Isaiah begins by borrowing from the Psalmist, “Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee” (Psalm 118:28); and finishes with Moses, “... fearful in praises, doing wonders” (Exodus 16:11). ¶ *For thou hast done wonderful [things; thy] counsels of old [are] faithfulness [and] truth.* פְּלֵא עֲצוֹת, *wonderful and counsels.* (Compare with ISAIAH 9:6, *wonderful, counselor,* פְּלֵא יוֹעֵץ.) Isaiah seems to be praising not only Yahweh, the God of Israel, but also has in his view set at a time when Jehovah would put on mortality as the Christ child born in Bethlehem and later fulfilled His Father’s will, and died that we might live. ¶ Nägelsbach well says that the “כִּי in the beginning of verse 2 and the כִּי in the beginning of verse 4 correspond to one another. Both serve to prove the truth of what was said in ISAIAH 25:1: **For [כִּי] thou hast done, etc.**” The Targum (ܬ) reads: “Surely though hast brought to pass and hast established the counsels which thou hadst promised of old to bring to pass.” The LXX (ϸ) reads, “For thou hast executed wonderful things, a counsel of old immutably true.” The Peshitta (ܣ), “from afar” instead of “of old,” and ends the idea with an *amen*.¹ The BPE (ܣ) has, “From afar thou hast given faithful counsel. Amen.” The Douay-Rheims (ܕ) has, for the second half, “Thy designs of old faithful, amen.” Kimhi explains, according to Rosenberg, “You have performed a wonder for us, for You have taken us from among the nations among whom we were scattered and whom we served... i.e., the prophecies You conveyed to the prophets long ago have been truly realized today.” Abarbanel, according to Rosenberg, also looked at Israel’s exiles or scatterings and “the final redemption” which was given with “an irrevocable promise.” Ibn Ezra, according to Rosenberg, explained that מִרְחֹק, *of old*, has to do with a *long time ago* rather than the more literal *far in distance*. LITV, for instance, renders it “counsels from *afar*” (emphasis added). Most of the Rabbis, explains Rosenberg, see this fulfillment taking place at the time of Gog and Magog. Young explains: “As once God had stated (ISAIAH 1:2) that He had raised² (רִמְּתִי) sons, now the prophet declares that he will exalt (אֲרִמְּנִי) God.”

¹ So also we have praise and a grand *amen* in the NT, “And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia” (Revelation 19:4).

² Or, exalted.

2 For thou hast made of a city an heap; [of] a defenced city a ruin: a palace of strangers to be no city; it shall never be built.

For thou hast made of a city an heap; [of] a defenced city a ruin: The Targum (ܬ) has, “For thou hast made the unfortified cities heaps; the fortified city is a ruin.” The LXX (ϸ) reads, “Because thou hast reduced cities to a heap of ruins.” The Douay-Rheims (ܕ) has, “For thou hast reduced the city to a heap, the strong city to ruin.” This is an allusion to Babylon, or to spiritual Babylon—or sometimes called Edom (Idumea)³—in the war between Zion and *the world*; between good and evil. So Rashi (in Rosenberg) says this represents Seir, or Esau’s home in Edom. Henderson, Alexander, Barnes, Jennings, Cowles, Keith and JFB, to name a few, think it of Babylon (or a spiritual or mystic Babylon). Kaiser, instead, calls it the “World Capital.” Such a thought of a *world capital* immediately makes us think of Satan, the *prince of this world* (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). ¶ *A palace of strangers to be no city; it shall never be built.* The Targum (ܬ) has, “The idolatrous house of the nations in the city of Jerusalem, shall never be built again.” The LXX (ϸ) reads, “Cities made strong, that their foundations might not fall; (a city of wicked men cannot be built to last forever).” NETS ϸ renders it, “Fortified cities, so their foundations might fall.” Brenton ϸ probably has the right idea, by filling the ellipsis “*Even cities made strong that their foundations should not fall &c.*” The idea of the ϸ is that even the strongest fortified city would not be able to resist the punishment that would come upon it. The BPE (ܣ) gives the idea that the temple of the foreigner shall never be built again in the city, while the Lamsa Peshitta (ܣ) suggests that neither the palace of the stranger nor the city shall ever be rebuilt. The Douay-Rheims (ܕ) has, “The house of strangers, to be no city, and to be no more built up for ever.” In terms of the city that shall never be rebuilt, or Babylon, we read, “It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation” (ISAIAH 13:20a, *also see vv. 19–23*). In Revelation 18:2 we read: “And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.” Regarding אֲרָמִים (strangers), Ibn Ezra has, *non-Israelites*, and renders it “The palaces of the heathen people shall never be built again in any city.” Kimhi believes the *palace of strangers* refers to Babylon (see

³ D&C 1:36.

both Rosenberg and Gill). Barnes, also speaking of **זָרִים**, explains: “Of strangers—Foreigners; a term often given to the inhabitants of foreign lands, and especially to the Babylonians... the capital of the whole Pagan world; the city where foreigners congregated and dwelt.” McFadyen suggests that *strangers* here may well be interpreted as *the insolent*.

3 Therefore shall the strong people glorify thee, the city of the terrible nations shall fear thee.

Therefore shall the strong people glorify thee. The LXX (6) reads, “Therefore the distressed people will bless thee.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Therefore shall a strong people praise thee.” Ibn Ezra explains it as, “Those who have escaped or are far off shall glorify thee, when they hear the report.” Barnes suggests that *the strong people* represent not only Babylon, but all the surrounding nations that become her allies. ¶ *The city of the terrible nations shall fear thee.* The LXX (6) reads, “And the cities of injured men will give thee thanks.” The BPE (S) has, “The cities of the tyrannical nations shall fear thee.” The Lamsa Peshitta (S) has *worship* instead of *fear*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, *mighty* instead of *terrible*. Kimhi and Kara, according to Rosenberg, suggest that even the “tyrannical nations that did not worship You heretofore, shall honor You and fear You when they witness Your power over Gog and Magog.”

4 For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones [is] as a storm [against] the wall.

For thou hast been a strength to the poor. The LXX (6) reads, “For thou hast been the support of every humble city.” According to Kimhi, in Rosenberg, this refers to Israel. Ibn Ezra suggests, “It is wonderful how all well fortified towns were taken and the city of the poor, that is, Jerusalem, escaped.” Barnes suggests, regarding this verse: “By the ‘poor’ and the ‘needy’ here undoubtedly are mean; the captive Jews who had been stripped of their wealth, and carried from their homes, and confined in Babylon.” Likewise, Alexander says, “**לַדָּל** and **אֶבְיֹוֹן** are epithets often applied to Israel considered as a sufferer.” ¶ *A strength to the needy in his distress.* The LXX (6) reads, “And the defence of them who were dispirited, by reason of their weakness.” It is the Lord,

then, who will strengthen Israel, or the *poor* and the *needy*. Also see ISAIAH 26:6, however. ¶ *A refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat.* The Targum (T) has, “As those who are protected from before the storm.” The LXX (6) reads, “From wicked men thou will deliver them.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has *whirlwind* instead of *storm*. Ibn Ezra has *showers* instead of *storm*, “from the enemy who is compared to showers of water.” Kimhi explains, according to Rosenberg, “God was a shelter for the Jews throughout the years of exile.” Alexander writes: “The two figures of extreme heat and a storm of rain are combined to express the idea of persecution or affliction.” All of this can be applied to spiritual Babylon. ¶ *When the blast of the terrible ones [is] as a storm [against] the wall.* The Targum (T) has, “Or who are protected as in a shade from the scorching heat; thus the words of the wicked against the righteous are as a storm that beats against the wall.” To no avail, then, are the words of the wicked against the righteous, according to the Targum (T). The LXX (6) reads, “Thou art the support of the thirsty and the breath of men in distress.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “For the blast of the mighty is like a whirlwind beating against a wall.” Henderson believes that here **רָעַם** stands for *anger*, rather than *blast*. The Hebrew certainly can mean *spirit*, *wind*, *breath* or, in this case, *threatening*. HCSB has, “...the breath of the violent is like rain *against* a wall.” It is the same idea as what we find in Saul, “breathing out threatening” (ἐμπνέω ἀπειλή, Acts 9:1) before his heart was turned to the Lord. Kay tells us that the same word for wall (**קִיר**) is used in Ezekiel 13:12–15, “where the figure of a tempest beating against a fortress-wall is expanded (cp. Matthew 7:25, 27).” Alexander, who speaks of the “striking and impressive imagery of this verse,” explains: “As a storm of rain beats upon a wall, so the Babylonian persecution beat upon the captive Jews.” Today, the influence of the world is beating upon our homes. It is only by turning to Christ that we may be kept safe.

5 Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; [even] the heat with the shadow of a cloud: the branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low.

Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; [even] the heat with the shadow of a cloud: The Targum (T) has, “As the scorching heat in a dry land thou shalt bring low the tumult of the mighty: as the shade of a cooling rock in a parched land.” The LXX (6) reads, “When dispirited men shall be thirsting

in Sion on account of wicked men to whom thou hast delivered us up.” The Lamsa Peshitta (**S**) has, “Thou shalt blot out the pride of aliens as the shadow at noonday, and as the heat is blotted out by the shade of a cloud.” The Douay-Rheims (**V**) reads, “Thou shalt bring down the tumult of strangers, as heat in thirst.” The *noise* (נִשְׁאֵן) of *strangers* seems to represent the sound of the heathen coming to battle against Israel (or else of their joyous victory songs, זִמְרֵי), something that the Lord will *bring down* or eliminate. Malbim has, according to Slotki/Rosenberg: “As the heat of the day, however fierce, is abated by the shadow of a cloud, so will God subdue the arrogant clamour or triumphant song of the most violent oppressors.” Gill explains that the shadow of a cloud provides shelter: “from the scorching beams of the sun, and by letting down rain, which moistens the earth; so the Lord protects his people from the fury of persecution, and abates it by the interposition of his power and providence; and at last puts an end to it.” ¶ *The branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low.* The Targum (**Ƨ**) has, “Thus peace of mind shall be to the righteous, when the wicked shall be humbled.” The Peshitta (**S**) translators use “tyrants (BPE) / mighty (Lamsa)” for *terrible*. The Douay-Rheims (**V**) has, “And as with heat under a burning cloud, thou shalt make the branch of the mighty to wither away.” ¶ *As the heat in a dry place,* פֶּחַח בְּצִיּוֹן. Kay says, “The word for ‘parched land’ occurs only here and in ISAIAH 32:2. In both places the LXX has Σῶν.—There need be little doubt that *Sion* was referred to. The refreshing dews of divine blessing, the fertilizing clouds of spiritual grace, had been long withheld from it (v. 6).” Zion is almost always spelled צִיּוֹן (but in Deuteronomy 4:48, we find it as שִׁיאֵן).⁴ ¶ Instead of *branch*, Gesenius, BDB and HALOT have *song*, especially a *victory song*, for זִמְרֵי. Kay says, “The word for *chant* [זִמְרֵי] (AV, *branch*) occurs elsewhere only in Song of Solomon 2:12)” [AV, *the singing זִמְרֵי*]. Bishop’s 1568 Bible renders this verse as: “Like as the heate in a drye place wasteth all thinges: so shalt thou suppress the noyse of aliantes, the heate [is abated] with the shadowe of the cloude, [euen so shall God] asswage the noyse of the cruel tirauntes.” Geneva’s 1587 Bible renders it “Thou shalt bring downe the noyse of the strangers, as the heate in a drie place: he wil bring downe the song of the mightie, as the heate in the shadowe of a cloude.” So also, most modern English Bibles (e.g., AAT, AMP, ASV, BBE, Berkeley, CEV, EB, HCSB, JPS, NASB, NBLH, NJB, NRSV, REB, RV, Tanakh, YLT). The German Luther Bible has *Siegesgesang* (i.e., *victory song*). The DRB

leaning on the Vulgate (**V**); and the LBP leaning on the Aramaic (**S**) have *branch*. A number of Bibles use the word *shout*, also. Moffatt gives us the idea that the tyrants are *humbled*, which is the result either way. Barnes has, “Here it is undoubtedly used in the sense of a song, meaning either a shout of victory or of revelry; and the idea of the prophet is, that this would be brought low by the destruction of Babylon, and by the return of the captive Jews to their own land.”

vv. 6–8. The Supper of the Lord is announced—for all who fear Him, Jew and Gentile alike—as well as Christ’s victorious triumph over death.

6 ¶ And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees,⁵ of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.

And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things / Of fat things full of marrow. The Targum (**Ƨ**) has, “And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make a feast and a banquet.” The Targum (**Ƨ**) offers, “They think that it shall be *for their* glory; but it shall be to them for disgrace and for mighty (the Royal Polyglot omits הִילָא, ‘mighty’) afflictions, from which they shall not deliver themselves, afflictions through which they shall come to an end.” The LXX (**6**) reads, “Then will the Lord of Hosts make provision for all the nations.” Ibn Ezra takes בְּהָרֵי, *in [the] mountains*, for Zion. And compares it to Obadiah 1:16, were the heathen nations who hate the Lord are destroyed, but those *in mount Zion* בְּהָרֵי צִיּוֹן (Obadiah 1:17) are blessed. Kay has, “At the end of ISAIAH 24 the prophet had spoken of a time, when ‘the Lord of Hosts’ should ‘reign on Mount Zion’ in glory. He now adds that ‘on this mountain,’ which must still be Zion, ‘the Lord of Hosts’ would ‘make for all peoples (v. 7) a feast’ of richest viands (compare Psalm 22:26).” Nägelsbach explains that the mountain here referred to “points back to ‘Mount Zion,’ ISAIAH 24:23.” Interestingly to us, as LDS, Wordsworth says, “Wherever the Church is, there is Zion—there is Jerusalem.” Gill explains that “the Lord’s supper itself is a feast... it seems rather to respect the marriage supper of the Lamb, in the latter day, when antichrist shall be destroyed, and Jews and Gentiles be converted, and shall join together in the participation of divine blessings... and ‘fat’ being mentioned is a proof that the

⁴ My friend שִׁיאֵן כהן lives in Jerusalem, and has this unique name.

⁵ *Sediment* is another word for *lees*. So, it appears to be the wine whose sediment has separated and thus only the clear part remains.

words must respect the times of the Messiah, since, under the law, fat was not to be eaten.” Nägelsbach writes, regarding the fat: “What God Himself formerly required of men, as the noblest part of the victims offered to Him, He now Himself as host offers to His redeemed upon His holy mountain. But the expression ‘fat’ or ‘marrow’ is used also in reference to the land and its vegetable products, to designate the finest. Thus it is said in Genesis 45:18, ‘ye shall eat the fat of the land,’ &c.” John M. Lundquist writes, “The ultimate sacramental meal was the one celebrated in honor of the Savior, who ‘by his own blood ... entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us’ (Hebrews 9:12). In this setting the temple imagery is very clear. Indeed, there is to be yet another messianic sacramental meal, and this too is spoken of in the scriptures within the context of the temple. We read in Revelation 19:9, ‘Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.’ And earlier in the same book: ‘Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.... For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes’ (Revelation 7:15, 17; emphasis added). This same conjunction of concepts is found in the Doctrine and Covenants, where we read of ‘a supper of the house of the Lord, well prepared, unto which all nations shall be invited ... And after that cometh the day of my power; then shall the poor, the lame, and the blind, and the deaf, come in unto the marriage of the Lamb, and partake of the supper of the Lord, prepared for the great day to come’ (D&C 58:9, 11; emphasis added). Nyman explains: “The Saints who went into Jackson County in 1831 were to invite the rich and the learned, the wise and the noble (the Gentiles) to participate in the establishment of Zion. Since the Gentiles rejected this opportunity, the work would be accomplished later by the poor, the lame, the blind, and the deaf (the house of Israel) through the Lord’s power. This is the time spoken of by Isaiah in ISAIAH 25:6. The law of consecration was to do away with the poverty, and the feast would be physical as well as spiritual.” It is within this context of a millennial supper, to be enjoyed in the temple (‘on this mountain’) by all those who have entered into holy temple covenants with the Lord, that I believe the passage in Isaiah is to be understood”⁶ We have an exquisite explanation offered in *Understanding Isaiah*, “**Feast of fat things, a feast of wines.** By teaching the gospel to the earth’s inhabitants, our missionaries invite people to come to this feast, also called ‘the supper of the Lord’ (D&C 58:11), the ‘supper of the house of the Lord’ (D&C 58:9), and the

‘marriage supper of the Lamb’ (Revelation 19:9). ‘All nations’ are invited—‘first, the rich and the learned, the wise and the noble’—but when these reject the invitation to the feast, the Lord’s representatives will invite the poor and the humble. Only those who have received the ordinances of the temple and who are truly the humble followers of Christ will be able to partake of the feast. This feast will take place at or near the time of the Second Coming (D&C 58:9–11; Revelation 19:7–8; Matthew 22:2–14; Luke 14:16–24). ***Fat things full of marrow.*** The feast, like the sacramental emblems, reminds us of Christ’s atonement, for fat things and wines recall sacrificial offerings (Leviticus 3:3–16) these things also imply abundance and bounty. The phrase wines on the lees well refined speaks of ‘wine that remains upon its settlings until it is well matured. It is then poured off and strained to provide the best wine possible,’ [Hailey, *Commentary on ISAIAH*, 206] since only the very best will be served at the Lord’s feast.”⁷ Calvin has, “Some render the Hebrew word שְׁמֵרִים, dregs, but inaccurately, for it means ‘old wines,’ such as the French call, *vins de garde*, ‘wines that have been long kept,’ and that are preferable to ordinary wines [as] ... they carry their age better. He calls them liquids which contain no dregs or sediment.” Delitzsch explains that *this mountain* is Zion, and the feast is a spiritual one taken from an allusion to the peace offerings (Psalm 22:27). Barnes has, “The following verses undoubtedly refer to the times of the Messiah. Several of the expressions used here are quoted in the New Testament, showing that the reference is to the Messiah, and to the fact that his kingdom would commence in Jerusalem and then extend to all people.” ¶ *A feast of wines on the lees. / Of wines on the lees well refined* (also see, Jeremiah 48:11). The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “On this mount they shall drink gladness: they shall drink wine.” The Peshitta (ܣ) has the wines as *aged* and “exquisite (BPE) / rich (Lamsa),” and explains that these blessings will come from our Heavenly Savior. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, “A feast of wine / of wine purified from the lees.” Delitzsch explains of this *aged and filtered wines* (LHI), שְׁמֵרִים מְזֻקִּים: “wines which have been left to stand upon their lees after the first fermentation is over, which have thus thoroughly fermented, and have been kept a long time (from *shâmar*, to keep, *spec.* to allow to ferment), and which are then filtered before drinking (Gr. οἶνος σακκίας, i.e., διυλισμένος or διηθικός, from διηθεῖν, *percolare*), hence wine both strong and clear ... The thing symbolized in this way is the full enjoyment of blessedness in the perfected kingdom of God.” Gray says, “That wine, not dregs, is

⁷ Parry, Donald W.; Parry, Jay A.; & Peterson, Tina M. *Understanding Isaiah*, p.227.

⁶ Lundquist, John M. *Temple Symbolism in Isaiah* (pp. 42–43).

intended, is clear from the last clause of the verse.” Kay explains, “old wines, but carefully strained... At Sinai the seventy elders, who accompanied Moses a certain distance up the ascent, ‘saw God, and did eat and drink.’ Afterwards, all Israel was invited to come up three times a year to Jerusalem, to hold festival and to ‘rejoice before the Lord.’ These sacred feasts were types of the great banquet, to which *all nations* should hereafter be called (ISAIAH 40:1–2),—the banquet held in celebration of the victory which was gained over Death and Hades by the Son of God Incarnate.” Also see ISAIAH 55:2, similarly an invitation to come unto Christ.

7 And he will destroy[✓] in this mountain the face of the covering cast over[✓] all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.

✓ swallow up

✓ ✓ covered

And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “The face of the prince, of the prince of all the people shall be destroyed (or swallowed up).” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And be anointed with myrrh on this mount.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) renders it, “And the governor who had made himself ruler over all the people would be destroyed (Lamsa) / consumed (BPE) in this mountain.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “And he shall destroy in this mountain the face of the bond with which all people were tied.” Kimhi, in Slotki/Rosenberg, explains the *veil* in relation to the enemies of Israel: “A metaphor for the shelter and protection these nations enjoy. God will remove this, making them vulnerable to the punishment due them.” Probably so, but much better, Gill explains it of the *dark veil* of the false systems of religion: “the covering of human doctrines and traditions ... which now will be removed ... through the clear ministration of the everlasting Gospel, which will be spread with power, and in its purity, throughout the whole world (see ISAIAH 60:1); more especially this may respect the light and glory of the New Jerusalem state, in which Christ will be the light⁸ thereof, and the nations of them that are saved shall walk in it, and Satan will be bound a thousand years, that he may not deceive the nations any more.” Calvin says, “Not only the Jews, but all nations,

⁸ Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught that this event, rather, is part of the post-Millennial earth. “In his vision of the Celestial Jerusalem, John saw ‘the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God ... The street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.’ There was no temple therein, neither the need for the sun nor moon to give light, ‘for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.’ (Revelation 21)” (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, p. 588).

which formerly were buried in every kind of errors and superstition, are invited to this banquet.” Ironside takes us to Ephesians 4:18, where we also read about this veil of darkness of false religion: “Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart” (4:18). Also of interest is: “That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (4:14). Wordsworth writes, “In Exodus 34:19–34, Moses is described as putting a covering or veil over his face, after he had been communing with God on Mount Sinai (contrasted here with Mount Sion), because his face shone; and the people, who had been guilty of a great sin, could not bear to look on his countenance, which shone with a reflection of God’s glory, and dazzled them with its splendour. St. Paul teaches us to see there a figure of the veil which is on the hearts of the unbelieving Jews, in reading the Books of Moses and the Prophets; and he foretells that this veil or covering will be taken away in the Gospel, when they turn to the Lord Christ.” Similarly, when we read that the JST corrects the obviously incorrect and contradictory John 1:18, “No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him” to read: “And no man hath seen God at any time, except he hath borne record of the Son; for except it is through him no man can be saved.” The JST also corrects the corrupt text in 1 John 4:12. ¶ *And the veil that is spread over all nations.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “and the face of the king, of the ruler of all the kingdoms.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Hand down all these things to the nations for this counsel is for all the nations.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *slaughter* rather than “veil that is spread.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “And the web that he began over all nations.” Delitzsch explains regarding the veil and also makes some curious observations about the same: “The ‘veil’ and ‘covering’ (מִסְכָּה from נָסַךְ = מָסַךְ, ISAIAH 22:8, from סָכַךְ, to weave, twist, and twist over = to cover) are not symbols of mourning and affliction, but of spiritual blindness, like the ‘veil’ upon the heart of Israel mentioned in 2 Corinthians 3:15.⁹ The פָּנֵי-הַלֹּוֹט¹⁰ (cf., Job 41:5)¹¹ is the upper side of the veil, the side turned towards you, by which Jehovah takes hold of the veil to lift it up.” Nägelsbach suggests that when the veil is removed, “men will be capable of seeing the glory of the LORD

⁹ See also 2 Corinthians 3:13–16.

¹⁰ Face of the covering.

¹¹ In the AV, Job 41:13, “Who can discover the face of his garment?” (מִי-נִלְוֶה פָּנֵי לְבוּשׁוֹ).

face to face (1 Corinthians 13:12¹²; 1 John 3:2).” Ludlow shares several scriptures, of which I include two: “But the day soon cometh that ye shall see me, and know that I am; for the veil of darkness shall soon be rent, and he that is not purified shall not abide the day” (D&C 38:8); and “And again, verily I say unto you that it is your privilege, and a promise I give unto you that have been ordained unto this ministry, that inasmuch as you strip yourselves from jealousies and fears, and humble yourselves before me, for ye are not sufficiently humble, the veil shall be rent and you shall see me and know that I am—not with the carnal neither natural mind, but with the spiritual” (D&C 67:10). I believe that, in effect, there is a double veil. When we are willing to humble ourselves in holy prayer, we remove our veil of incredulity from before our face. When our prayers reach God, He, in effect, removes the veil from off His face, and we can commune with God. The Savior’s promise then comes to pass, “And I will walk among you, and will be *your God*, and ye shall be *my people*” (Leviticus 26:12, emphasis added). This is why it is so vital to follow the scripture that says, “Quench not the Spirit” (1 Thessalonians 5:19). If we are in tune with the Spirit the Lord will speak to us through the Holy Ghost and direct our paths. In the Millennial day, of course, all these things will be magnified. But let not anyone think that such communion is not possible until then.

8 He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken [it].

He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces. ¶ The Targum (Ⲯ) has *Jehovah God* (Elohim), **יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים** (CAL); **יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים** (Stenning Ⲯ, as usual, I had to transform the *superlinear* punctuation into the more traditional *underlinear* type); or **יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים** (Sperber Ⲯ, where once again I had to transform the *superlinear* punctuation); while the literal Masoretic text (ⲙ) renders it *Adonai* (Lord) *Jehovah*, **אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה**.¹³ ¶ The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Death shall be forgotten for ever; and the Lord God shall wipe away tears from off all the faces.” The LXX (Ⲙ) reads, “Mighty death had swallowed up; but the Lord God hath again wiped every

tear from every face.” The Peshitta (Ⲑ) adds “forever” to the victory over death. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, for the first clause, “He shall cast death down headlong forever.” Christ, through His expiatory sacrifice and resurrection, puts away physical death for all mankind. As Paul so beautifully writes under the inspiration of the Spirit: “Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” (1 Corinthians 15:51–55, *also see* Ezekiel 37:1–14; ISAIAH 26:19). Thompson (*also see* Whitehouse) says: “The quotation in 1 Corinthians 15:54 gives the word for ‘for ever’ its Aramaic sense of ‘victory.’” In his Old Testament commentary Clarke says that “Jesus dying instead of a guilty world” is what is meant by these words about swallowing up death. In his New Testament commentary, under 1 Corinthians 15:54, Clarke has, “Κατεποθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νίκος. These words are a quotation from ISAIAH 25:8, where the Hebrew is **בִּלְעַם הַמָּוֶת לְנִצָּחַ**: He (God) hath *swallowed up death in victory*; or, for ever. These words in the Septuagint are thus translated: κατεπεν ὁ θάνατος ἰσχυσας: Death having prevailed, or conquered, hath swallowed up. But in the version of Theodotion, the words are the same with those of the apostle. The Hebrew **לְנִצָּחַ** the Septuagint sometimes translate εἰς νίκος, in *victory*, but most commonly εἰς τέλος, for ever; both, as Bishop Pearce observes, in such kind of phrases, signifying the same thing, because eternity conquers all things...” Likewise, Keith also suggests that **לְנִצָּחַ**, *forever*, may well be synonymous with *victory*. The idea is that Christ swallowed up death for each of us, and in glory will give us resurrection from death. Gesenius, according to Alexander, speaks of the abolishment of death as bringing man to enjoy the condition that existed before the fall, or the former paradisiacal glory. Luther compares this verse to Hosea 13:14, “I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.” The time will come when the cares of this earth will be left behind, and thus the Lord will *wipe away tears from all faces*. Delitzsch writes: “There is something very significant in the use

¹² “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known” (1 Corinthians 13:12).

¹³ The Jewish tradition is to read this as in the KJV, Lord God.

of the expression דִּמְעָה (a tear), which the Apocalypse renders πᾶν δάκρυον (Revelation 21:4). Wherever there is a tear on any face whatever, Jehovah wipes it away; and if Jehovah wipes away, this must be done most thoroughly: He removes the cause with the outward symptom, the sin as well as the tear.” Kay says, “After the general resurrection and the judgment ‘Death and Hades’ are to be ‘cast into the lake of fire’ (Revelation 20:14).” Rawlinson observes, “But surely death is not the only cause of human mourning. Our own sins, the sins and sufferings of our dear ones, are the main provocatives of our tears. When it is promised, as here and in Revelation 7:17 and 21:4, that ‘there shall be no more pain, neither sorrow nor crying,’ the revelation is made that *there shall be no more sin*; for where sin is, sorrow must be.” ¶ *And the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken [it].* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And the reproach of his people he shall remove from off all the earth, because it hath been decreed thus by the Word of the Lord.” It is of interest that Pauli has rendered בְּמִמְרָא *Meimra*, with a capital letter, which well suits the word in Syriac. The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And removed from the whole earth the reproach of this people. For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, for the first clause, “And the reproach of his people he shall take away from off the whole earth.” ¶ *His people*, עַמּוֹ. Gray suggests that the Lord begins with a “feast for *all* His subjects” in ISAIAH 25:6–8 but at the end of ISAIAH 25:8 “the passage closes with a special reference to the Jews, Yahweh’s peculiar people.” Indeed, we note such universal words as *unto all the people* (לְכָל-הָעַמִּים, verse 6); *over all the people* (עַל-כָּל-הָעַמִּים, verse 7); and *from off all faces* (מֵעַל כָּל-פָּנִים, verse 8a), yet the verse moves on to say, *and the rebuke of his people shall he take away* (וְהִרְפֹּת עֲמוֹ יִסֵּר, verse 8b). This seems to be an allusion to other scriptures in which the Lord speaks about Israel paying a double portion for her sins but then receiving a double reward. For instance, in Isaiah we have, “Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD’s hand double for all her sins,” (ISAIAH 40:2); and “For your shame ye shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them” (ISAIAH 61:7). But also, through the grace of Christ, the burden of sin is removed from all repentant followers of Christ. This requires, however, that we have a sincere desire to change and turn to follow Christ.

vv. 9–12. Edom, as a type of the world, drowns in contaminated dung water. These verses make us think of ISAIAH 63, where the Lord says, “And I will tread down the people in mine anger” (see ISAIAH 63:3–6). The Savior will come to the rescue of Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:1–4) when the whole of the earth has turned against His people in the last days. Moab seems to be made a representative of the nations who turn against Israel and surround Jerusalem.

9 ¶ And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this [is] our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this [is] the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

And it shall be said in that day [וְאָמַר בַּיּוֹם], *Lo, this [is] our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us:* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And one shall say at that time: Behold, this is our God; this is he for whom we have hoped, and he shall save us.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And in that day they will say, ‘Behold our God in whom we trusted, will indeed save us.’” ¶ *This [is] the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “This is the Lord, for his Word we have hoped; we will rejoice, and be glad in his salvation.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “He is the Lord, for him we waited and exulted; let us therefore rejoice in our salvation.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “This is the Lord, we have patiently waited for him, we shall rejoice and be joyful in his salvation.” Nägelsbach writes, “The redeemed now *see* the Lord in whom they have hitherto only *believed* (compare ISAIAH 25:7 and 1 John 3:2). The heathen, who believed in false gods, experience the very opposite. They are confounded when they must mark the vanity of their idols; but they who believe in Jehovah will after faith be rewarded with seeing... [and say]: we and all see Him as truly existing, as Him *who was and is to come*, יְהוָה (Exodus 3:14). Herein is their joy perfect (John 15:11)” (emphasis added).

10 For in this mountain shall the hand of the LORD rest, and Moab shall be trodden down under him, even as straw is trodden down for the dunghill. ✓ ✓

✓ or, threshed

✓ ✓ or, threshed in Madmenah

For in this mountain shall the hand of the LORD rest. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “For the power of the Lord of hosts shall be revealed in this mountain.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “God will give rest on this mountain.” Ibn Ezra

explains that **כִּי-תָנוּחַ יַד-יְהוָה** (*for-rest-hand* of the LORD), is a reference to the Lord's *punishment*. Rashi, in Rosenberg, mentions that this is an anthropomorphic expression. This is because the hand of the Lord is mentioned. Barnes writes, "The hand' in the Scriptures is often used as the symbol of protection and defense. By the expression that the hand of Yahweh should REST on mount Zion, is meant probably that he would be its defender; his protection would not be withdrawn, but would be permanent there." ¶ *And Moab shall be trodden down under him, even as straw is trodden down for the dunghill.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "And the Moabites shall be trodden under foot even as straw is in the clay." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "When the country of Moab shall be trodden down, as a threshing floor is trampled with cars¹⁴ (i.e., 'wagons'—Brenton and NETS)." The Peshitta (Ⲫ) also has the straw trodden down with a threshing (Lamsa) or grinding (BPE) instrument. The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, for the second clause, "As straw is broken in pieces with the wain." The **קָרַי** (what the Masoretic (Ⲛ) scholars indicated should be *read* despite what was *written*), in this case **בְּמוֹ** (*in, through*) suggest that the "straw is trodden down *for* [בְּמוֹ] the dunghill" (*emphasis added*, KJV); or "straw is trodden down *in* [בְּמוֹ] the dunghill" (*emphasis added*, JPS). Other translations follow the **בְּתַיִב**, or what is *written*, **בְּתַיִב** (*in the water*). Several versions follow the **בְּתַיִב**: "straw is trodden down *in the water* [בְּתַיִב] of the dung-hill" (*emphasis added*, ASV); or "straw is trodden down *in the water* [בְּתַיִב] of a manure pile" (*emphasis added*, NASB). As the DSSB 1QIsa^a (Ⲫ) points out, the Dead Sea Scrolls (Ⲫ) coincide with the Masoretic text (Ⲛ). So we see *in [the] water* **בְּתַיִב**. Ibn Ezra explains that Moab will be included in those who come to besiege. Slotki/Rosenberg, leaning on Kimhi, suggest that **מִדְּמִנָּה** or *dunghill* "may perhaps be a contemptuous allusion to a Moabite city named Madmen" (**מִדְּמִנָּה**, see Jeremiah 48:2). Having worked on a number of animal farms, rainy conditions—where the manure is made wet and mixes with the animal urine—tend to be more unpleasant and difficult to work around than in dry conditions. In dairies, these are removed from where the cows stand to a separate manure pond. Gray reflects, "Moab's end with that of a man drowned in dung-water recalls the malignancy of the saga that told of Moab's birth (Genesis 19:30–37)." Additional reasons, besides

this, are suggested by Kay, for the use of Moab as the enemy of Israel: (1) Moab's desire to curse Israel through Balaam; (2) an allusion to the mountains of Moab that were divided by the Dead Sea from the mountains of Zion, possibly in rivalry to the latter, "'a great gulf is fixed;' like that which divine judgment interposed between Lot and Abraham,; and (3) the fact that Moab attempted to prevent Israel from returning to the promised land after she fled from Egypt. Nägelsbach adds yet another reason: (4) Moab's pride or arrogance at her living in peace and not under subjugation (Jeremiah 48:11). Kay goes on to say, "It is observable that the only place outside the Pentateuch, in which 'the children of Lot' are mentioned, is Psalm 83:8: where they appear as the leaders of a vast confederacy against God's 'hidden ones' (vv. 3–8). The sentence, which is there prayed for, is that they may become 'as the dung of the earth' (v. 10)." Nägelsbach does well in explaining that Moab is here only used as a *type of the world*, for the day will come when she will turn to the Lord, "Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days, saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 48:47a).

11 And he shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth [his hands] to swim: and he shall bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands.

And he shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth [his hands] to swim: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "And he shall extend the stroke of his power among them, as the swimmer extends himself to swim." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "And he shall cause his hands to relax ('spread forth his hands' Brenton)." The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, for the first clause, "And he shall stretch forth his hands under him." This figure seems to have Israel's enemies crawling and 'swimming' in the manure mixed mire or manure pond after being trampled in it. Delitzsch has: "The swimmer is Moab itself, as Gesenius, Hitzig, Knobel, and in fact the majority of commentators suppose." Lowth also thinks this words as reflected in Moab, and adds, "So **בְּקִרְבוֹ**, *in the midst of him*, means, that this destruction shall be open and exposed to the view of all: The neighboring nations shall plainly see him struggling against it, as a man in the midst of the deep waters exerts all his efforts, by swimming, to save himself from drowning." Not just from drowning, but from the horror of drowning in a urine and manure pit. Wildberger, leaning on Duhm, suggests that this may have happened to Moab when she was "subjugated by Alexander Jannaeus (Josephus, Antiquities 13.13.5)."

¹⁴ Seems to refer to the rake or plow or some other implement of husbandry whose purpose is to incorporate the standing straw into the soil, after the grain has been harvested.

This scripture, however, is most likely looking to a mystic Moab as it earlier looked at a mystic Babylon. ¶ *And he shall bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And he shall humble his glory, together with the wiles of his hands (i.e., what Moab has got by craftiness or sleight of hands).” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “As he indeed humbled him to be slain, and shall humble his pride—those things on which he hath laid his hands.” We must each overcome our own pride.

12 And the fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall he bring down, lay low, [and] bring to the ground, [even] to the dust.

And the fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall he bring down, lay low. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “He shall cast down the fortified city, the great city.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And shall lower the height of his wall of refuge.” The BPE (Ⲥ) explains that even the most fortified walls shall be brought down. The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲥ) calls it the “fortress of treason.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “And the bulwarks of thy high walls shall fall, and be brought low.” Rashi and Ibn

Ezra, according to Slotki/Rosenberg think this verse is addressed to Moab. Delitzsch has: “We are evidently to understand by it the strong and lofty walls of the cities of Moab in general.” Barnes has, “The repetition of the expressions ‘bring down,’ ‘lay low,’ and ‘bring to the ground,’ is designed to make the sentence emphatic, and to indicate that it would certainly be accomplished.” Regarding this city, Cheyne writes: “Most explain this of Kir Moab, or of the cities of Moab in general; Vitranga and Gesenius, of Babylon. I think it refers at any rate to the ‘city’ mentioned in ISAIAH 24:10–12; and especially (note the expressions) ISAIAH 26:5.” Moab and Babylon, however, seem to be synonyms when it comes to their mystic representation of the earth. ¶ *[And] bring to the ground, [even] to the dust.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “he shall thrust *it* down, it shall come to the earth, *even* to the dust.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And it shall be laid low in the dust.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “And shall be pulled down to the ground, even to the dust.” The dust here is probably Sheol, or the *spirit prison* portion of it.

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Isaiah 26

From *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*: “The land of America is a promised land unto [the descendants of Joseph], and unto it all the tribes of Israel will come, with as many of the Gentiles as shall comply with the requisitions of the new covenant. But the tribe of Judah will return to old Jerusalem. The city of Zion spoken of by David, in the one hundred and second Psalm, will be built upon the land of America, ‘And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads.’ (ISAIAH 35:10); and then they will be delivered from the overflowing scourge that shall pass through the land. But Judah shall obtain deliverance at Jerusalem. See Joel 2:32; ISAIAH 26:20–21; Jeremiah 31:12; Psalm 1:5; 10. These are testimonies that the Good Shepherd will put forth His own sheep, and lead them out from all nations where they have been scattered in a cloudy and dark day, to Zion, and to Jerusalem; besides many more testimonies which might be brought.” This chapter may be contrasted with ISAIAH 35. There the focus is on Zion and the gathering of Israel; here on Judah and the gathering to Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Jenour says: “Doubtless the Spirit, in dictating the terms of this song to the prophet, intended that it should be for the instruction and comfort of believers in all ages.” Wordsworth does a brilliant job of applying this chapter of to the very times of Isaiah, Hezekiah and the invasion of Sennacherib. Other exegetes have applied these to the Babylonian captivity and return therefrom. And this is good. After all, Nephi taught us to *liken all scripture unto us* (1 Nephi 19:23b). These, however, are secondary applications. ISAIAH 26 is strictly *eschatological* (in this case pre-millennial, millennial and post-millennial days) and begins with the words *in that day* (יָמֵי הַהוּא). Judah is introduced as singing a song of praise and thanksgiving for she has much to be grateful for. The Lord, even the Lord of Hosts will be her protector; her ransom in Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement); her giver of peace; her bringer forth in the resurrection. Yes, the Lord’s hand has been lifted up to humble her, but this has been a show of the most exquisite love. Israel shall learn to *call on the name of the LORD* (Joel 2:32) in the last days. The Lord himself will be for a protection to the children of Israel, as He was also when they escaped out of Egypt. Who is the enemy referred to here? Not just the surrounding nations who hate Israel, but Satan himself (see ISAIAH 27:1). Israel shall trust in Yahweh and none else. The poor and the needy represent in great measure those who will join the Church. The just will behold the majesty of the Lord—while those who rebel against Him will not. Perfect peace is only found in serving the Lord. Others have ruled wickedly over Judah but these will not be remembered. The Lord will be resurrected and with him all the just. At the beginning of the Millennium, only the just shall be brought forth. All memory of the unjust is lost until the very end of the millennial day. The wicked nations only remembered God in the day of their trouble. The children of Israel suffered birth pains but were not able to bring forth delivery. Redemption only comes through Messiah. The bliss of the resurrected righteous is not to be yet. The Lord will come to punish the wicked as He did in the time of the Passover. The Lord’s disciples need to stand in holy places and protect themselves from Babylon, at least for “a little moment.” The earth shall be a witness against those who have spilled innocent blood and committed other abominations and none shall be able to hide his wickedness.

vv. 1–4. Judah will sing a song of gratitude to the Lord *in that day*. The Lord will be her protector. A very special place is prepared for those who have acted in righteousness and put their trust in the Lord. In return for obedience, the Lord gives His disciples perfect peace. It follows that we ought to put our trust in the Lord God if we want to be partakers of that peace.

1 ¶ IN that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will [God] appoint [for] walls and bulwarks.

IN that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah.

The Masoretic text (שִׁיר־הַיְּהוּדָה) renders it *this the*

song in the *masculine*, while the DSS¹ 1QIsa^b (א) (שִׁירָה הַזֹּאת) has it in the *feminine*. The DSS 1QIsa^a (א) has *song* in the *masculine* and *this* in the *feminine*, שִׁיר הַזֹּאת. The Targum (ܬܠܬ) has, “At that time shall they sing a new (the Royal Polyglot reads ܢܚܕܐ, ‘this’) song in the land of the house of Judah.” The LXX (Ϯ) reads, “In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judea.” Clarke writes, “[Kimhi] says, ‘This song refers to the time of salvation, i.e., the days of the Messiah.’” The *days of the Messiah* is a Jewish expression for *the day of the Lord* (e.g., ISAIAH 2:12; 13:6; 13:9; Ezekiel

¹ Beginning with this chapter I have no longer just quoted DSSB (first edition), but have consulted other sources, such as Accordance, *Discoveries in the Judean Desert XXXII Isaiah* (Volumes I & II) and *Biblical Qumran Scrolls* (both by Eugene Ulrich), Logos, Fred Miller, and DSSB.

30:3; D&C 2: 12; 13:6, 9), *day of God* (2 Peter 3:12), or the *end of days*. Now, regarding Kimhi's comment about *salvation*, the word in Hebrew is **יְשׁוּעָה**! That is, *Yeshua*, or in Greek, *Iesus*, **Ἰησοῦς**, or our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ, **Ἰησοῦς Χριστοῦ**. And *Messiah* in Greek is *Christos*, or *Christ*, **Χριστοῦ**; and in Hebrew, *Mashiaj*, the Anointed One, **מָשִׁיחַ**. Numerous exegetes point to this allusion in the next clause. This song, then, will be sung in the last days, in Jerusalem (in ISAIAH 35 we hear another song, but that one in relation to the gathering of Israel back to Zion or the New Jerusalem).² ISAIAH 26:1 will have its more perfect fulfillment at the beginning of the millennial day. Young says, "This city is not yet inhabited, for, like the Garden of Eden, it was first made by God for those whom He loved and wished to be its inhabitants." Yes, indeed, the earth, like in the times of the Garden of Eden, will once again be restored to its paradisiacal glory in preparation for the resurrection of the just at the Second Coming. And in the Millennium the Lord will have two capitals: one of them in Jerusalem and the other in Zion (or the New Jerusalem). I also believe that this verse has a partial pre-millennium fulfillment as Judah has begun to be restored to the land of her former habitation. ¶ *We have a strong city; salvation will [God] appoint [for] walls and bulwarks.* As Ibn Ezra points out, the Masoretic text (**מ**) gives the Hebrew idiom, *city strength to us*, **עִיר עֲזָרָנוּ**, rather than *a strong city*. The Masoretic text (**מ**) has *walls and bulwarks*, **חֻמוֹת וְיָחַל**, as does the DSS 1QIsa^a (**ש**) and DSS 1QIsa^b (**ש**), **חֻמוֹת וְיָחַל**, while the DSS 4QIsa^c (**ש**) renders it *her walls and her bulwarks*, **חֻמוֹתֶיהָ וְיָחַלֶּיהָ**. The Targum (**ס**) has, "We have a strong city, salvation and mercy shall be established upon *her* walls." The BPE (**ס**) offers, "The strong city is its salvation; build walls and bulwarks." The Douay-Rheims (**ט**) has, "Sion the city of our strength a saviour, a wall and a bulwark shall be set therein." The LXX (**θ**) reads, "Behold we have a strong city! he will make salvation its wall and outworks." Lowth explains that this *strong city* is in contrast to that mentioned in ISAIAH 25:2. In the present passage the city has 'gates' (ISAIAH 26:2), but no 'walls'—**walls and bulwarks** being unnecessary, since

the saving might of God himself would be its sure defense against every enemy." Calvin³ has, "As if he had said, 'Let other cities rely on their fortifications, God alone will be to us instead of all bulwarks.'"⁴ Barnes explains: "The idea here is, that Yahweh would be a protector, and that this would constitute its strength... [God] will himself be the defender of his people in the place of walls and bulwarks." Keith well says: "The language of this song, as well as its connexion and coincidence with other prophecies, shows that its fulfilment is still future. For when, either at their return from Babylon, or at any past period, can it be said that salvation has been the walls and bulwarks of Jerusalem?" ¶ **חֻמוֹת וְיָחַל**, *walls and bulwarks*.

Regarding bulwarks, various definitions are given but what is most important is that they are part of the fortifications. Barnes explains: "This word means properly bastions, or ramparts. The original means properly a *pomoerium*, or antemural defense; a space without the wall of a city raised up like a small wall. The Syriac renders it, *Bar shuro*, – 'Son of a wall,' meaning a small wall. It was usually a breastwork, or heap of earth thrown up around the city, that constituted an additional defense." Delitzsch beautifully writes: "for the walls and bulwarks of Jerusalem (**חל**), as in Lamentations 2:8, the small outside wall which encloses all the fortifications) are not dead stone, but *yeshuâh*, ever living and never exhausted *salvation* (ISAIAH 60:18). In just the same sense Jehovah is called elsewhere the wall of Jerusalem, and even a wall of fire in Zechariah 2:9."⁵ Barnes points us to Jeremiah's assertion that salvation can only come through the Lord: "Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: truly in the LORD our God is the salvation of Israel" (Jeremiah 3:23); as well as ISAIAH 60:18, "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise." ¶ Since the dedicatory prayer by Orson Hyde, 24 October 1841, for the return of Judah to Israel, we may see the hand of the Lord in this gathering back to

² Jerusalem (or, the *Old Jerusalem*) and Zion (or, the *New Jerusalem*) constitute two different locations (ISAIAH 2:3). Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained: "Before the Second Coming, gathered Judah, as directed by Ephraim, shall build up anew the Old Jerusalem and prepare therein a holy temple; and gathered Ephraim, aided by Manasseh, shall build a New Jerusalem in an American Zion and prepare therein a holy temple. It is to these two temples in particular that the Lord shall come at his glorious return, and it is from these two cities – Zion in America and Jerusalem in Old Canaan – that the governance and worship of the world will be directed" (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, pp. 587–588).

³ Calvin also writes: "Let us learn to be satisfied with the Lord's protection, and with his sure salvation, which is better than all bulwarks." Indeed, this can be contrasted to Ahaz—when the pending attack of Syria and Ephraim was upon Israel—and he refused to be comforted by the Prophet of the Lord. How often do we, also, permit our fears to displace our trust in Him who will comfort, and guide, and save?

⁴ This is how I feel about our own home. No human protection is good enough to keep it safe, and so I prefer to put my trust in the Lord.

⁵ "And said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein: For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her" (Zechariah 2:4–5).

the Holy Land. Israel has been in continual peril since then, but who can deny that the Lord has appointed a wall and a bulwark for her?

2 Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth[✓] may enter in.

✓ truths

The Targum (ܬ) has, “Open ye the gates, and let the righteous nation enter, which have kept the law with a perfect heart.” What a beautiful and touching invitation, “To keep the law with a perfect heart!” The Peshitta (ܣ) has the righteous nation keeping the truth and being faithful. The 1QIsa^a (א) has שְׁעֵרֶיךָ, *your gates*, rather than the Masoretic text (מ), שְׁעָרִים, *gates*. The LXX (Ϝ) reads, “Open the gates; let the people enter, who keep righteousness and who keep truth.” We read: “Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the LORD: This gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter” (Psalm 118:19–20). Beginning with the sacred ordinances of baptism and confirmation, we travel through a highway of ordinances that take us, step by step, toward those heavenly gates, if we stay the course. We make every attempt to keep the Abrahamic covenant (“walk before me, and be thou perfect”) knowing, however, that it is through the merits of Christ, that salvation can come.

The *righteous nation* (נֹרִי-צְדִיק) is being gathered, one by one, commencing with the tribe of Ephraim and will not cease to gather in until Judah and all of the twelve tribes have entered into the peace of the Lord (ISAIAH 60:21). Young says: “It is clear that this righteous nation [is] composed of those who have come from all over the earth.” Rashi has: “Open her gates, and let a righteous nation, awaiting and longed in its exile many days for the faith of the Holy One, blessed be He, that He fulfill His promise through His prophets, to redeem them” (in Rabbi Rosenberg). Keith points us to ISAIAH 35 (which speaks in contrast about Zion): “And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein... the redeemed shall walk there: And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (ISAIAH 35:8, 9b, 10). As Nägelsbach explains, this nation includes all that “are called and entitled to partake of the great feast on Mount Zion.” Our spiritual exile will come to an end as we return to the Lord bending the knee (ISAIAH 60:14). Gill reminds us that Christ is the door (or the gate) (*see*,

John 10:1). Some of my favorite words from that ancient record, the Book of Mormon, read: “O then, my beloved brethren, come unto the Lord, the Holy One. Remember that his paths are righteous. Behold, the way for man is narrow, but it lieth in a straight course before him, and the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there; and there is none other way save it be by the gate; for he cannot be deceived, for the Lord God is his name” (2 Nephi 9:41). At the end of the millennium the whole earth shall be transformed into its celestial glory and be given to the righteous posterity of Abraham. In a most beautiful and poetic way, all who desire to leave Babylon may have these gates of Zion opened for him or her. Kay says of this city, “for it was the city on the mount of the Lord, spoken in Psalm 24, whose gates were opened at the approach of the King of Glory. Its warders⁶ are now bidden to *open the gates* for admission of fresh citizens, the new created Israel;—the *righteous nation*, gathered in from the ends of the earth (ISAIAH 24:16); ‘that keepeth the truth,’ or, fidelity; maintaining loyalty of faith toward God... The King of Glory entered first; His people follow.”

3 Thou wilt keep [him] in perfect peace,[✓] [whose] mind[✓] [is] stayed [on thee]: because he trusteth in thee.

✓ peace peace

✓ ✓ or, thought or, imagination

The Targum (ܬ) has, “In a perfect heart they shall preserve peace: peace shall be wrought for them, because they have trusted in thy Word.” The LXX (Ϝ) reads, “Who support truth and keep peace; because their confidence is placed in thee.” The Douay-Rheims (Ϯ) has, “The old error is passed away: thou wilt keep peace: peace, because we have hoped in thee.” The 1QIsa^a (א) has בְּכֶפֶץ, ⁷ *in thee*, rather than 1QIsa^b (א) בְּכֶפֶץ, and the Masoretic text (מ), בְּכֶפֶץ, *he trusteth in thee*. Henderson translates this verse as “The mind that is firm, thou wilt keep in perfect peace, because it trusteth in thee.” The Hebrew word order in this verse begins with the expression *mind stayed*, נֶצַח סְמוּךְ, and Henderson is of the opinion that it is elliptical of a longer expression, “The man whose mind is stayed upon thee, &c.” The key point, according to Henderson, “is that by implication *firm unshaken*,

⁶ Sentinels, watchmen (Oxford Dictionary of English, Merriam-Webster).

⁷ Where both בְּכֶפֶץ in 1QIsa^b and Masoretic text (מ) and בְּכֶפֶץ 1QIsa^a (א) are *pronominal suffixes*, equivalent to a contraction of כֹּ (in) and תָּהָה (thee), in *thee*. For example, see Kelley’s *Biblical Hebrew* (pp. 68–75 and 153–159), and specifically, Table 27.1.

steady.” The expression *perfect peace* comes from the repetition of the word *Shalom* or *peace* in the Masoretic text (שָׁלוֹם, שָׁלוֹם). In 2 Peter 1:2 we read: “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.” Also, we have, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid,” (John 14:27). Indeed, it is the function of the Holy Ghost to fill us with peace after we have been baptized and confirmed as tokens of our entering into the Abrahamic covenant, or the *peace of the Lord*. This is most certainly a peace that we can experience upon this earth now, not something that we have to wait for until the millennial day. “He [who] rests himself on God alone,” says Cowles, “he will be kept by him in perfect peace because of such faith.” ¶ *Trusteth*, בְּטִיחַ, from the root, בָּטַח, “to be confident” (HAL). Kay says, “The form (which occurs *elsewhere only* in Psalm 112:7⁸) implies entire *repose* of faith; such as leads a man to cast away human anxiety (cp. Philippians 4:6).” President Ezra Taft Benson gave this advice, “Let your minds be filled with the goal of being like the Lord, and you will crowd out depressing thoughts as you anxiously seek to know Him and do His will. ‘Let this mind be in you,’ said Paul (Philippians 2:5). ‘Look unto me in every thought,’ said Jesus (D&C 6:36). And what will follow if we do? ‘Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee’ (ISAIAH 26:3). (‘Do Not Despair,’ *Ensign* 16 [October 1986]: 5.)”⁹ President Howard W. Hunter likewise counseled, “The peace for which the world longs is a time of suspended hostilities; but men do not realize that peace is a state of existence that comes to man only upon the terms and conditions set by God, and in no other way. In a psalm in the book of Isaiah are these words: ‘Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee’ (ISAIAH 26:3). This perfect peace mentioned by Isaiah comes to one only through a belief in God. This is not understood by an unbelieving world.”¹⁰ Rawlinson points us to Psalm 112:7, “He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD.” But this peace is not automatic; our minds must be *stayed* (סָמַךְ) on the Lord. In other words, the Lord needs to become both our *stay* and our *staff* (ISAIAH 3:1). To *stay on something*, then, means we can lean or count on that thing for support (*see*,

Gesenius, BDB, HALOT). Indeed, it is only when we are sustained and supported by the Lord that we can have that ever elusive peace. Abraham was promised this peace when the Lord said to him: “Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward” (Genesis 15:1b). ¶ Notice that it all begins with the mind and thoughts¹¹ (נֶפֶשׁ, *also see margin* ||), and this is why the Book of Mormon is so explicit about the fact that we will be judged by our thoughts, our words, our desires and our deeds (*see* Alma 12:14; 41:3; Mosiah 4:30). Psalm 37:11 has, “But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.” A like thought is found a few verses later in Psalm 37:37, “Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.” ¶ *Because he trusteth in thee*. Perhaps a synonym to *staying* on the Lord is *trusting* the Lord, or even *hoping on the Lord* (קָוָה יְהוָה, ISAIAH 40:31), or *glorying* not in wisdom, might, or riches, but rather, in the Lord (Jeremiah 9:23–24).

4 Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH [is] everlasting strength: ✓

✓ the rock of ages

The Targum (ܬ) has, “Trust ye in the Word {or Memra} of the Lord for ever and ever: thus ye shall be saved by the Word, who is the fear of the Lord, the mighty One to eternity.” The LXX (Ϯ) reads, “Lord! who art to everlasting, the Mighty, the Eternal God.” The Douay-Rheims (Ϯ) has, “You have hoped in the Lord for evermore, in the Lord God mighty forever.” The Masoretic text (מ) has *in Yah Yahweh* בְּיָהּ יְהוָה as does 1QIsa^a (ϫ) בִּיהּ יְהוָה while 4QIsa^b (ϫ) has *in Yah Adonai*, אֲדֹנָיִי בִיהּ. ¶ *In Yah Yahweh* (but see Henderson, below), בְּיָהּ יְהוָה. There are a number of suggestions regarding the special meaning of the expression *Yah Yahweh*. Without any doubt, this is a beautiful expression of gratitude toward the Holy One of Israel implied in the expression. Birks prefers: “The double name Jah Jehovah is most emphatic, to denote God’s unchangeableness in His love to His people.” Another beautiful explanation is offered by Jennings: “The reduplication of the name has its significance, and to get it we must remember the meaning of the name Jehovah... Thus we have in the one sacred name, the full equivalent of ‘The Same, yesterday, today and

⁸ “He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD” (Psalms 112:7).

⁹ Benson, Ezra Taft. *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1988. p. 385.

¹⁰ Hunter, Howard W. *The Teachings of Howard W. Hunter*. Edited by Clyde J. Williams. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1997.

¹¹ In Holy Writ the *heart* is also the seat of our *imaginings* (e.g., Jeremiah 16:12; 18:12; Luke 1:51).

forever,’ written to Hebrews who would understand¹² the reference as we might at first fail to do. Again, in Revelation 1:8, we note a similar reference in the greeting from Him, ‘**who is and who was, and who is to come,**’ for that is a translation of Jehovah for us” (emphasis added). ¶ Trust in the Lord *forever*, where the Masoretic text uses the idiom עַד־יָעַד, rather than the traditional forever, לְעֹלָם / לְעֹלָם or עוֹלָם, as we find here in the Targum Jonathan (ܬ) where we can note the triple repetition לְעֹלָמָא וְלְעֹלָמִי עֹלָמָא, (Stenning {ܬ} translates it as *forever and everlasting ages*) with a fourth instance in this verse of עֹלָמָא (ages or eternity) associated with the Mighty One (or, **Mighty One of the ages**, תְּקוּנָה עֹלָמָא). The Targum (ܬ) translations into English use the expression *Memra* (מִימְרָא) or *Word* in capital letters, to signify they refer to YHWH, who is Jesus Christ our Lord (for a detailed discussion of the term *Word* as meaning *Christ*, see my notes under ISAIAH 40:1–8. The Masoretic text (מ) speaks of יְהוָה יְהוָה, or Yah Yahweh’s everlasting strength, or better (as in the margin ||), **rock of ages**, צוּר עוֹלָמִים. The Savior is that Rock, “look **unto the rock whence ye are hewn**” (ISAIAH 51:1b), אֶל-צוּר חֲצֵבְתֶּם. Faussett has, “Maurer translates, ‘For JAH (the eternal unchangeable One, Exodus 3:14) is Jehovah, the rock of ages’ (compare ISAIAH 45:17; Deuteronomy 32:15; 1 Samuel 2:2).” In Exodus 3:14 we read about the great I AM, and come to understand (as translated by the Targum ܬ) יְהוָה, that Jehovah means *I am He who is and who will be*, and Nägelsbach renders it as: “Him who was and is to come.” Barnes explains, “The sense is, ‘Let your confidence in God on no occasion fail. Let no calamity, no adversity, no persecution, no poverty, no trial of any kind, prevent your reposing entire confidence in him.’ This is spoken evidently in view of the fact stated in the previous verse, that the mind that is stayed on him shall have perfect peace.” Abarbanel (in Rabbi Rosenberg) has, “The prophet exhorts the people to trust solely in the Lord, not to rely on the nations’ love for Israel, or on the walls of Jerusalem, as they had done heretofore, but only in the Almighty Himself, for He is the strength of the worlds.” We cannot go wrong if we put our trust in the Rock of ages, even the Lord’s everlasting strength. Saul’s downfall was his inability to trust the Lord.¹³ But

engraved in my heart. Why was Saul rejected from being king? Because Saul feared man more than God. This was not always the case. When Saul was anointed King of Israel, he was a humble young man. But later, Samuel the Prophet would chide him with these words: “When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?” (1 Samuel 15:17). Our first hint that Saul worried more about what men would say than what God would think takes place as Israel prepared to go to war in (1 Samuel 13). When the Prophet Samuel did not show up as promptly as he was expected by Saul, the latter took it upon himself to carry out priesthood duties for which he had no authority. He prepared a peace offering and carried out the ritual for burnt offerings (1 Samuel 13:9). When Samuel questioned Saul, the latter responded: “Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash; Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the LORD: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering” (1 Samuel 13:11a-12). Saul, then, begins with an excuse, “Well, you were late and this thing had to be done.” From the excuse, he moves on to try and point out how noble his actions were, “Look, I forced myself, so instead of being upset, you should thank me, you should be happy I took the initiative.” We have a similar pattern in the matter of Agag and the Amalekites (1 Samuel 15). “But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly” (1 Samuel 15:9). Saul had the audacity to tell Samuel, “Blessed be thou of the LORD: I have performed the commandment of the LORD” (1 Samuel 15:13b). Samuel, once again, was incredulous at this saying, and asked: “What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?” (1 Samuel 15:14b). Once again, the excuse, the false justification: “the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God” (1 Samuel 15:15b). If there was anything Saul hated to do, was to correct the people, or teach the people. Saul refused to stand up to the people. When confronted with his evil doing, Saul again refuses to admit his error. He seems proud of his behavior: “Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites” (1 Samuel 15:20b). Then he blames the people: “But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal” (1 Samuel 15:21b). Samuel rejoins with the often quoted: “Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams” (1 Samuel 15:22b). This was a hard lesson for Saul to learn. So Samuel gives Saul the bad news: “Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king” (1 Samuel 15:23b). Only now does Saul seem repentant: “I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words” (1 Samuel 15:24b). Saul is not moved by godly sorrow, but rather, by the unhappy consequences he will need to face. Then Saul explains what was in his heart, why he had been disobedient: “because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice” (1 Samuel 15:24c). Saul feared man more than God. His confession of what had moved him to do that which was wrong in the sight of God, nevertheless, was not a confession leading to change and repentance and turning to the Lord. Saul now pleads with Samuel to walk with him—even though it is a pretense—so that the people will not realize that the Lord has rejected him: “I have sinned: yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD thy God” (1 Samuel 15:30b). This was the critical moment; the moment of truth. This was the time for Saul to show God that he only cared about following the Lord’s will. Instead, it turned out to be among the most tragic events recorded in Scripture. Saul desired, above all things, to be popular with the people. I submit that the Lord

¹² וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל-מֹשֶׁה אֲהִיָּה אֲשֶׁר אֲהִיָּה, see Exodus 3:14, and footnote 22 in ISAIAH 26, below. Also see notes under ISAIAH 52:6.

¹³ For many years I had a wipe board over the dining room table with the question: “Why was Saul rejected from being king?” It made for good conversation and stood there as a warning. The question is now

returning to the expression, בֵּיתָּהּ יְהוָה, the most beautiful of all is suggested by Henderson: “בֵּיתָּהּ is not to be rendered ‘in Yah,’—the בֵּיתָּהּ being the *Beth essentiae*, which, according to a peculiar idiom points out the *reality, certainty, substantive character* or nature of the subject to which it is prefixed.” As a result Henderson (based on other examples by Schultens and Ewald, elsewhere) translates it as: “For truly Jehovah is Yah—an everlasting Rock.”

would have forgiven Saul had he acted upon godly sorrow. As an illustration, one of the most wicked kings of the Northern Kingdom (or Ephraim) after the civil war divided Israel, was Ahab. Yet even Ahab, when confronted by Elijah the Prophet “rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly” (1 Kings 21:27b). Even though Ahab did not altogether escape punishment, these were delayed for a season. We read: “And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son’s days will I bring the evil upon his house” (1 Kings 21:28–29). Furthermore, if Ahab’s sons would have turned unto the Lord with all their might, such punishment most likely would not have come upon them. Returning to Saul, a man who once had been able to consult the will of the Lord, now was left destitute of communication with God: “And when Saul enquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets” (1 Samuel 28:6). Saul’s prayers went unanswered. What the Father expects of us when we find the heavens shut, is not to give up and say, “Oh, well, God does not care about me, anyway. I do not deserve His tender mercies. The atonement of Jesus Christ does not apply to me.” When Saul was confronted with heavens turned into iron, instead of repenting, he decided to seek counsel from the dark side: “Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor. And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night” (1 Samuel 28:7–8a). What makes Saul’s story so very sad is that at one time he was a righteous youth who loved the Lord. What do we learn from the story of Saul? How can we apply these matters to our own lives? Are we more worried about what God thinks than about what people will say? Are we ashamed of being followers of Christ? Sometimes we are more worried about what men will say than about what God will think. I would submit that one of the main reasons we are upon this earth is to show that we can grow to fear [i.e., have respect for] God more than man. The fear of God is a great desire not to let God down, but to behave in ways that will help us glorify the Father, as the Savior so beautifully demonstrated for us. “And it came to pass that he said unto them: Behold, here are the waters of Mormon (for thus were they called) and now, as ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light; Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places that ye may be in, even until death, that ye may be redeemed of God, and be numbered with those of the first resurrection, that ye may have eternal life—Now I say unto you, if this be the desire of your hearts, what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord, as a witness before him that ye have entered into a covenant with him, that ye will serve him and keep his commandments, that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you?” (Mosiah 18:8–10). And if we have been baptized onto such a great cause, let us now endure to the end as faithful followers of the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, even Jesus the Christ. (Adopted from my blog, *Why was Saul rejected from being king?* 19 June 2010.)

vv. 5–11. In contrast, the self-exalted and prideful, those who do not trust in the Lord and dwell in mystical city of Babylon, will be brought down very low. Despite her weakness, Israel will be helped by the Lord. Uprightness first and foremost refers to the Lord, and to a lesser degree, those who will follow after Him. The Lord will smooth out the way of His disciples. The followers of Christ have put their hopes on Him and sought God both night and day. The trials and tribulations of this earthy existence can help us come closer to God and desire to walk in His ways. Many will not see chastisement as a show of God’s love until it is too late. The Lord shows His zeal for His people.

5 ¶ For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low, [even] to the ground; he bringeth it [even] to the dust.

The Targum (ܬ) has, “For he will humble the inhabitants of the high and strong city; he will humble her, he will cast her unto the ground, he will bring her *even* to the dust.” The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “Who hast humbled and brought down them who dwell in lofty places. Fortified cities thou canst demolish and level them with the dust.” The Douay-Rheims (ϙ) has, “For he shall bring down them that dwell on high, the high city he shall lay low. He shall bring it down even to the ground, he shall pull it down even to the dust.” The DSS 1QIsa^a (ϙ) has *he layeth it low*, יִשְׁפִּילָנָה, while the Masoretic text (מ) repeats it twice, *he layeth it low*, *he layeth it low*, יִשְׁפִּילָנָה יִשְׁפִּילָנָה, so it could be said that the Lord *layeth her very low*. The lofty city is here in contrast to Zion, and it is mystical Babylon. It is the crumbling of the large and spacious building (1 Nephi 12:18), were we find people who value what the earth has to give more than what God offers, individuals whose “manner of dress was exceedingly fine” (1 Nephi 8:27). In Micah 1:3, quoted in relation with v. 21 in this chapter, a similar sentiment is given, about bringing the self-exalted down.

6 The foot shall tread it down, [even] the feet of the poor, [and] the steps of the needy.

The Targum (ܬ) has, “The feet shall tread her down, the feet of the just, the sole of the foot of the poor, of the needy of the people.” Instead of the word *foot* appearing twice as it does in the Masoretic text (מ), רֶגֶל רֶגֶל, it appears a single time in the DSS 1QIsa^a (ϙ), רֶגֶל: The

feet of the lowly trample &c. The DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⓢ) renders the word *lowly* (i.e., afflicted, humble, oppressed, needy, poor) in the *plural* (עניים) while the Masoretic text (Ⓜ) has the *singular*, עני. The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “That the feet of the meek and lowly may trample them.” The most brilliant exegesis of this verse was given by Rashi, or Rabbi Shlomo ben Yitzchak (in R. Rosenberg): “The King Messiah, who is referred to as a poor¹⁴ man riding on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9¹⁵).” We also have: “The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel” (ISAIAH 60:14). In 60:14, the feet refer to those of Messiah; and the city, Zion. As in the *how beautiful upon the mountains* principle (see my notes in ISAIAH 52:7), where the LORD shares His glory with His disciples. The *poor* and the *needy* also represent those mentioned in ISAIAH 25:4, that is, Israel.

7 The way of the just [is] uprightness: thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just.

Psalm 37:23–24, likewise reads: “The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.” The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “The paths of the righteous are right: thou wilt establish the works of the ways of the just.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “The way of the pious was straight; the way of the pious was well prepared.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) renders it, “Straight is the way of the needy (BPE) / humble (Lamsa); straight and level is the path of the just (BPE) / righteous (Lamsa).” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “The way of the just is right, the path of the just is right to walk in.” As we have already said, the righteous here is the Holy One of Israel. It is through His righteousness that we can hope to achieve the same through the *How beautiful upon the mountains* principle (once again, please see ISAIAH 52:7). ¶ The Masoretic text (Ⓜ) has *thou dost weigh* (פלט, make level—also see BDB LHI, AMP, *make level*; JPS, *makest plain*), תפלט, while the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⓢ) has *deliver* or *cause to escape* (פלט, Gesenius), תפלט. So it could read: “... thou, most upright, dost deliver the path of the just.” Also, the Masoretic text (Ⓜ), for the

last *just* {dost make level the path of the *just*} spells it as צדיק while the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⓢ) and DSS 4QIsa^c (Ⓢ) both have it as צדק. Spelled either way, it means the *just* (or the *righteous*). HCSB, YLT and NASB, for instance, render the translation of the Masoretic text (Ⓜ) *righteous*, while the KJV, RV, JPS, Geneva and LITV prefer *just*. The AMP version, which is more of an explanatory version, renders it with both: “You, O [Lord], Who are upright, direct aright and make level the path of the [*uncompromisingly*] just and righteous.” Kaiser has, “Yahweh himself makes [the path] smooth and removes obstacles from his path (Psalm 25:10; 27:11; Proverbs 1:3; 2:9; and Psalm 1:6).” Cowles writes: “The pathway for the just is straight and even; God who is upright makes their way level and smooth. The word rendered ‘weigh’ may mean either to weigh or to make even and level. Since the orientals weighed with scales, it is easy to see how these two senses should meet in one word. The context here requires the latter sense, that of making level their pathway. God smooths the roughnesses of the way for his trustful people.” Faussett explains that to *weigh the path* means: “‘thou dost make plain and level’ [Maurer], removing all obstacles (ISAIAH 40:3–4).” Alexander well points out: “A man’s way is a common Scriptural figure for his course of life.” ¶ Delitzsch translates this whole verse as: “The path that the righteous man takes is smoothness; Thou makest the course of the righteous smooth.” The Righteous [צדיק] One, Messiah, prepares the way for His disciples. Proverbs 3:6 has: “In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” In Isaiah we are instructed exactly how to walk in His paths (ISAIAH 58:13–14). In Psalm 37 we read: “The LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever.

8 Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of [our] soul [is] to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.

Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O LORD have we waited for thee. The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “For the way of the Lord is justice,” while the Masoretic text (Ⓜ) has *waited* קיינו. Redak (in Rabbi Rosenberg) has, “Even [in] the way of Your judgment, O Lord, we hoped for you—Even when you visited judgments upon us, when You punished us during the exile, for our sins, we, nevertheless, hoped for You and did not despair of being redeemed.” The disciples of Christ *wait* or are filled by *hope* in Christ (see ISAIAH 40:31 for more detail as what it means to *wait upon the LORD*). Delitzsch says, “The church of the last days, looking

¹⁴ Rather, *lowly*, in KJV, עני.

¹⁵ “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass” (Zechariah 9:9).

back to the past, declares with what longing it has waited for that manifestation of the righteousness of God which has now taken place.” ¶ *The desire of [our] soul [is] to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.* The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “We have trusted in thy name.” Instead of the Masoretic text (מז) *and for remembrance of thee* (or memorial of thee) וְלִזְכוֹרָתְךָ, the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⓢ) has *and for thy law* וְלִתּוֹרַתְךָ. Barnes explains: “The word ‘name’ is used here, as it is often, to denote God himself. They desired that he would come and deliver them; they earnestly wished that he would manifest himself to them as their friend.”

9 With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments [are] in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “My soul desireth to pray before thee in the night; yea, my spirit within me is blessing thee.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “And in that remembrance which is the desire of our soul by night.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, for the second clause, “With my spirit within me in the morning early I will watch to thee.” How often does man find the solitude of night to pour up his prayers unto God? Oliver Cowdery was one such man, and when he desired comforting reassurance from the Lord, he received this: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, if you desire a further witness, cast your mind upon the night that you cried unto me in your heart, that you might know concerning the truth of these things. Did I not speak peace to your mind concerning the matter? What greater witness can you have than from God? (D&C 6:22–23). After we have obtained our witness—either by day or by night—we are then left to rejoice. And what is better than speaking and rejoicing in these truths with those whose hearts are open to the light of the Gospel? *Sweet is the Work*, by Isaac Watts (1674–1748)¹⁶, has one of my favorite sentiments: “*Sweet is the work, my God, my king, / To praise Thy name, give thanks and sing, / To show Thy love by morning light / And talk of all Thy truth at night.*” This is also the sentiment found in Psalm 57:8b–9, about awaking early to praise and sing unto God: “I myself will awake early. I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations.” What a beautiful word we have here, אֶשְׁחַרְרֶךָ, *will I seek thee early*, from the root שָׁחַר. It means to seek earnestly and diligently as

one may seek for dawn (BDB); to seek... to break forth as the light of dawn (Gesenius); and “to be on the lookout for” (HALOT). To seek the Lord early, then, means to: (1) seek God with a passion, with a *sincere heart and real intent* (Moroni 10:4); and (2) to put our trust in God rather than man—and *not procrastinate the day of [our] repentance* (Alma 34:33). All of our darkness is dissipated when we seek the Lord. The night of darkness may well represent our earthly lives until that time when we acquire a knowledge of the truths of the Gospel, and seek for the saving ordinances, and thus take our first steps in walking in the way of the Lord. Indeed, “weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning” (Psalm 30:5). We can then “Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness” (Psalm 30:4b). ¶ *For when thy judgments [are] in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “When thy judgments are prepared for the earth, those that dwell in the world shall be taught to practice truth.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “To thee, God, my spirit awaketh early, because thy statutes are a light on the earth.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, “When thou shalt do thy judgments on the earth, the inhabitants of the world shall learn justice.” This expression, *when thy judgments are in the earth* makes us think of the millennial day, when His kingdom will come upon the earth. Cheyne explains: “It is the Messianic hope which we have before us. The spread of righteousness over the earth is connected with the coming of Jehovah to ‘reign on mount Zion’ (ISAIAH 24:23), and this advent is to be ushered in by a series of judgments on the unbelievers and unrighteous.”

10 Let favour be shewed to the wicked, [yet] will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the LORD.

Let favour be shewed to the wicked, [yet] will he not learn righteousness: The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Thou hast granted unto the wicked continuance, that verily they should return to the Lord; but they did not return, all the days that they lived.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “Learn righteousness ye dwellers on earth, for the wicked one is no more. Whoever will not learn justice on earth, cannot act agreeably to truth.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) renders it, “The wicked was removed far so that he does not learn justice (BPE) / righteousness (Lamsa).” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, “Let us have pity on the wicked, but he will not learn justice.” Alexander points out the wisdom in the Lord’s way, when we are provided with challenges to overcome in this life: “It is

¹⁶ Hymn 147 in our LDS hymnbook.

here said that continued prosperity is insufficient [to teach men righteousness].” Gill writes: “As it often is in a providential way; they [the wicked] have the good things of this life, and sometimes more than heart could wish for; nor are they in trouble as other men; they have many mercies, and many deliverances; they have their portion here, and are filled with hidden treasure, and are spared when others are cut off.” So it is that we ought to rejoice in our trials and tribulations if at the end they help us obtain the greatest gift of all, *to behold the majesty of the LORD* and be partakers of the same. ¶ *In the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the LORD.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “That they should practice truth in the earth, but they dealt falsely: yea, they will not regard the praise of thy glory, O Lord!” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Let the wicked be removed that he may not see the glory of the Lord.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has, for the first clause, the idea that wrongdoing in the land will lead to punishment, but this will be for naught (second clause), just as the Masoretic text (ⲙ) has, “In the land of the saints he hath done wicked things, and he shall not see the glory of the Lord.” Jenour says of those who refuse the straight and narrow way: “‘In the land of straightness he will walk crookedly.’ As if a man walking in a country where all the roads were perfectly straight and good, should perversely turn out of them, and choose a path of his own. Thus, however plain the ways of God may be, the wicked will not walk in them.” Faussett, leaning on Maurer, follows the same idea expressed by Gill in the previous clause: “**uprightness** — rather, as in ISAIAH 26:7, ‘prosperity,’ answering to ‘favor’ in the parallelism, and in antithesis to ‘judgments in the earth’ (ISAIAH 26:9); where prosperity attends the wicked as well as the just, ‘he will not learn righteousness,’ therefore judgments must be sent that he may ‘learn’ it [Maurer].” Rawlinson adds: “Even good example does not convert the wicked man. Though he live in a ‘land of righteousness,’ where God and his Law are acknowledged, where true religion is professed, where the gospel is preached, he will continue wicked, he will ‘deal unjustly.’” So we have the prosperous man neglect God and trust in his own wisdom, strength or wealth (see Jeremiah 9:23–24). When it says that the wicked will *not behold the majesty of the LORD*, it refers to those who go to the Teletial kingdom. Regarding those who will inherit the Teletial Kingdom we read: “And they shall be servants of the Most High; *but where God and Christ dwell they cannot come*, worlds without end” (D&C 76:112, *emphasis added*). To those in the Terrestrial Kingdom it is said: “These are they who receive of the presence of the Son, *but not of the fulness of the Father*” (D&C 76:77, *emphasis added*).

11 LORD, [when] thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: [but] they shall see, and be ashamed for [their] envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them.

✓ or, toward thy people

LORD, [when] thy hand is lifted up, they will not see:

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “O Lord, when thou shalt be in thy power to do good to them that fear thee.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Thy hand, Lord, was lifted high; but they did not know it.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲫ) has, “Lord, let thy hand be exalted, and let them not see.” A more literal and correct translation of the Masoretic text (ⲙ) is “O Lorde, they will not beholde thine hie hande,” (Geneva Bible), or from a more modern perspective, “Jehovah, thy hand is lifted up, yet they see not” (ASV). The elliptical idea that the hand is lifted up to strike (*see*, ISAIAH 1:5–6) was included in the Bishop’s Bible, “Lorde, when thy hande is lyft vp to strike, they see it not.” Similarly, HCSB has: “LORD, Your hand is lifted up *to take action*.” Delitzsch writes, “The hand of Jehovah had already shown itself to be highly exalted (ⲙⲁⲣ, 3 pr.), by manifesting itself in the history of the nations, by sheltering His congregation, and preparing the way for its exaltation in the midst of its humiliation; but as they had no eye for this hand, they would be made to feel it upon themselves as the avenger of His nation.” Barnes writes: “The lifting up of the hand here refers, doubtless, to the manifestations of the majesty and goodness of the Lord.” His goodness, of course, includes correction. Kimhi well explains that the wicked will not see the hand of God in the calamities they experience. So it is that the Scriptures say: “For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth” (Proverbs 3:12; also Hebrews 12:6). Calvin shows Pharaoh as an example of chastisement making him “more obstinate.” When hearts harden, then humility cannot penetrate our soul. Regarding this verse, Calvin says, “Here he again censures the wicked.” ¶ *[But] they shall see, and be ashamed for [their] envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “There will be no light to the enemies of thy people: the wicked shall see it, and shall be confounded. The vengeance of *thy* people shall cover them; yea, fire shall consume thy enemies.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “But when they know they will be ashamed. Zeal will seize an uninstructed people; even now a fire devoureth the adversaries.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲫ) has, “Let the envious people see, and be confounded: and let fire devour thy enemies.” The *but* [or *and*] which is *implied* in the Masoretic text (ⲙ), “[But] they shall see...

(יְהוָה יִחַזֵּק) is written in the DSS 1QIsa^a (Q), יְחַזֵּק. Likewise, *the* is implied in the Masoretic text (M), “[The] *people* (עַם); yea, the fire...” but is explicit in the DSS 1QIsa^a (Q), הָעַם. The Peshitta (S) has *zeal* rather than *envy*, and the enemies shall be consumed by the fire (Lamsa) of an oven. The correct idea, here, rather, is the zeal of the Lord towards His people. Cowles says, “I take the sense to be that they shall behold with the confusion of shame, not their own envy at the people but God’s jealousy against the nations.” Barns has: “The word ‘their’ is not in the Hebrew, and the sense is, that they shall see the zeal of Yahweh in behalf of his people, and shall be ashamed that they did not sooner recognize his hand.” So then, קְנֵאת־עַם represents the *zeal* of the Lord in favor of His people, so as with the margin || might well read: “for *zeal* toward *thy people*.” ESV so renders it: “Let them see your zeal for your people, and be ashamed &c.” Wordsworth explains that this is the zeal the Lord feels toward His people, “This zeal, which burns (the Hebrew word for zeal, like the Greek and Latin, implies heat), is a fire which will devour the enemies.” Gesenius, likewise explains it as the third acceptance of קְנֵאתָ: “*ardent zeal* towards any one (ζῆλος), 2 Kings 10:16; ISAIAH 9:6, קְנֵאתָ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת ‘the *zeal* of *Jehovah* of *Tsebaoth*’ (towards his people). קְנֵאת־עַם *zeal* (of God) towards the *people*, ISAIAH 26:11.” So also, Thompson, who explains the verse: “Zeal for Thy people (Yahwe’s zeal) and the fire of (i.e. directed against) Thine adversaries shall consume them.” Young also has: “Fire will devour the enemies of God. The zeal of God is like a flame.” Calvin says, “But at length ‘they shall see,’ but too late, and to their great hurt.”

vv. 12–19. Man can obtain peace, true perfect peace, only through embracing the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are able to embrace the gospel through grace or the Lord’s tender mercies. Despite the many rulers who govern this earth, we can only lean upon the Lord to save us. Those who hurt the Lord’s people will not obtain a resurrection with the just. The Lord will continue to chastise His people, even those He has scattered to the ends of the earth. Gladly, this chastisement will have its intended effect. His people will turn toward the Lord, pour their prayers unto God, who will have mercy and extend His arm of salvation. Just like false labor does not deliver a child, Israel could not deliver herself without the aid of the Lord, who would give His life for us. A promise of the resurrection of Christ and His people follow. This becomes another reason for joy and singing.

12 ¶ LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us. ✓

✓ or, for us

LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us: The LXX (G) reads, “Lord, our God, grant us peace.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Lord, thou wilt give us peace.” The Masoretic text (M) has *thou wilt ordain* (from root שָׁפַת, HALOT suggests that here, associated with the word *peace*, שָׁפַת שְׁלֹום means to *offer peace* or *accomplish deliverance*), תְּשַׁפֵּת. DSS 1QIsa^a (Q) and DSS 4QIsa^b (Q) also have שָׁפַת. HAL speaks about an action that restores *peace*, which fits well with this verse in Isaiah where we have תְּשַׁפֵּת שְׁלֹום; BDB speaks of the act of *deliverance*, especially when it involves *Israel*, שָׁפַת יִשְׂרָאֵל. Jenour here quotes: “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God,” (Romans 8:28a). It is through the Comforter that we can experience true peace. It is the only enduring peace. This verse seems to be a request to God for the gift of peace, mentioned in ISAIAH 26:3. ¶ *For thou also hast wrought all our works in us.* This is the idea in Psalm 37:6, “And he [the Lord] shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.” The Targum (T) has, “For at all times, when we restrained ourselves from our sins, thou wast working for us (or, ‘with us’). The LXX (G) reads, “For thou hast forgiven us all things.” The Lamsa Peshitta (S) has, *for* rather than *in*. The BPE (S) has, “for thou hast prepared us according to our works.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “For thou hast wrought all our works *for us*.” LITV, YLT, ASV, HCSB, JPS, NASB, and RV prefer “*for us*” for the Masoretic text (M), לָנוּ, along with the S and V. Bishops and Webster join the KJV in rendering it “*in us*.” The Amplified Version (AMP), translates the expression כָּל-מַעֲשֵׂינוּ פְעָלָהּ לָנוּ as to include both meanings “...*wrought in us* and *for us all our works*.” Birks writes: “‘Our works’ mean here the works needful for their deliverance.” ¶ Gladly, we are not left entirely on our own but can be blessed through the grace of the Lord. The LDS Bible Dictionary in part reads, regarding *grace*: “The main idea of the word [grace] is divine means of help or strength, given through the bounteous mercy and love of Jesus Christ ... It is likewise through the grace of the Lord that individuals, through faith in the atonement of Jesus Christ and repentance of their sins, receive strength and assistance to do good works that they otherwise would not be able to maintain if left to their own means.” So

we read: “For we labor diligently to write, to persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God; for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do” (2 Nephi 25:23, also see notes in ISAIAH 33:6). ¶ Ibn Ezra has “For Thou hast always done for us what we do not know how to do.” Rabbi Rosenberg explains that Ibn Ezra is essentially saying, “Without God’s help all Israel’s efforts to save himself would be of no avail.” ¶ The theme of the resurrection is ever present in these chapters of ISAIAH. So it is fitting to read in 2 Nephi two verses that deal so directly with the subject of the resurrection and our dependence on Christ: “Wherefore, how great the importance to make these things known unto the inhabitants of the earth, that they may know that there is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah, who layeth down his life according to the flesh, and taketh it again by the power of the Spirit, that he may bring to pass the resurrection of the dead, being the first that should rise. Wherefore, he is the firstfruits unto God, inasmuch as he shall make intercession for all the children of men; and they that believe in him shall be saved” (2 Nephi 2:8–9).

13 O LORD our God, [other] lords beside thee have had dominion over us: [but] by thee only will we make mention of thy name.

O LORD our God, [other] lords beside thee have had dominion over us: The Targum (ⲧ) has, “O Lord our God, the nations have had dominion over us, being lords over us beside thee.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Lord, our God, take possession of us!” Wade writes: “In the course of Israel’s history various heathen powers, such as Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, had successively exercised dominion over them, instead of the Lord.” Ibn Ezra has: “For we worshipped Thee even when others became our masters.” By the very fact that we live in the earth, we are exposed to the forces of mystic Babylon and Satan. Furthermore, we are also subjected to earthly lords or rulers that often get much say in what happens to us in this earth. ¶ [But] by thee only will we make mention of thy name. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “But we trust in thy Word; we praise thy name (literally, ‘are praising’). The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Besides thee, Lord, we know none other. We celebrate (or, ‘we name,’ Brenton and NETS) thy name.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) explains that even so, only the Lord’s name will they remember (BPE) / mention (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, “Only in thee let us remember thy name.” By this statement, *only will we make mention of thy name* means that only the Lord can act to help us. We will only put our trust in the Lord and in none else. In

Joshua we read this admonition: “Neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow down yourselves unto them” (Joshua 23:7b). So also we see in Jeremiah 12:16, regarding the day when other nations will learn to acknowledge the one and only true God, “And it shall come to pass, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, The LORD liveth; as they taught my people to swear by Baal; then shall they be built in the midst of my people.” In Isaiah we read of that perfect day when only the Lord, the Holy One of Israel is acknowledged and none else (ISAIAH 44:5–6). So also Hosea 14:3: “Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses: neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy.” In summary, as mentioned by Wade (who in turn leans on Dillmann and Duhm), the essence of this statement is that *only through the Lord*, and no other force, can we hope for salvation: “Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: truly in the LORD our God is the salvation of Israel” (Jeremiah 3:23).

14 [They are] dead, they shall not live; [they are] deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish.

[They are] dead, they shall not live; [they are] deceased, they shall not rise: The Targum (ⲧ) has, “They worship idols (לְמִיתִין, literally, ‘the dead’), who do not live, their heroes, who shall not rise.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “As for those who are dead they would not see life, nor could physicians raise them up.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) renders it, “They cannot make the dead to live, nor the powerful (BPE) / mighty (Lamsa) to be raised up.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, “Let not the dead live, let not the giants rise again.” The Masoretic text (ⲙ) has *deceased* (literally, *Rephaim*), רִפְּאִים, while the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲙ) has *and [they are] deceased* (literally, *and Rephaim*), רִפְּאִים. HALOT includes, under its definitions, רִפְּאִים as *spirits of the dead*. Among the “none else” mentioned in ISAIAH 26:13, are the rulers and powerful men who oppressed Zion and Israel. Barnes writes regarding deceased: “Hebrew, רִפְּאִים – a name given to the shades¹⁷ or manes¹⁸ of the dead.” As powerful as these “other masters” may have been, their power may not be compared to that of

¹⁷ Underworld or world of the spirits.

¹⁸ The spirits of the dead.

God, for they are now dead. Ibn Ezra writes: “Those our masters, that have owned us, are now dead.” From Acts 24:15b we know that there will be a “resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.” So this verse is speaking of the resurrection of the just. At that time the wicked will not come forward. ¶ *Therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Therefore, when thou shalt visit their sins, thou wilt make an end of them, and make all memorial of them to perish.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Therefore thou hast removed and destroyed and taken away all their males.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, for the second clause, “And best destroyed all their memory.” The DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲙ) has *and imprisoned* (or, *and taken captive*) **וְהָאֵסִיר** (from **אָסִיר**) while the Masoretic text (ⲙ) has *and [made to] perish*, **וְהָאֵסִיר** (from **אָסִיר**). Once again, the wicked men who distressed Judah are not to be found among the resurrected just in the early Millennium. All memory of the unjust is lost until the end of the millennial day. At an even further time, this prophecy is doubly fulfilled when the earth becomes celestial: “For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth” (Psalm 37:9).

15 Thou hast increased the nation, O LORD, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed [it] far [unto] all the ends of the earth.

Thou hast increased the nation, O LORD, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Thou shalt reveal thyself to gather the dispersed of thy people, thou wilt bring together the captivity.” The Peshitta (Ⲥ) is missing, “thou art glorified.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “Thou hast been favourable to the nation, O Lord, thou hast been favourable to the nation: art thou glorified?” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Heap, Lord, evils upon them.” Ibn Ezra correctly takes **וְהָאֵסִיר** as *continued*, and fills the ellipsis with “to chastise.” Of the moderns, Kay is one of the few who also understands “thou hast added to the nation” as added chastisement. So also Birks, who says, “[**וְהָאֵסִיר**] refers to the exile of Israel, or their moral estrangement from God.” In Jeremiah we read: “For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah, saith the LORD; that they *might be unto me for a people*, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory: but they would not hear” (Jeremiah 13:11, *emphasis added*). This is a similar sentiment, spoken by the Lord to Jeremiah, hoping that

the Lord could rejoice in Israel at the time. The idea of scattering and captivity follows as a result of Israel’s disobedience: “Give glory to the LORD your God, before he cause darkness, and *before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains*, and, while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, *and make it gross darkness*. But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD’s flock *is carried away captive*” (Jeremiah 13:16–17, *emphasis added*, spiritual and physical captivity). The idea, then, is that the Lord continued to chastise, or increase the chastisement upon the nation of Israel, until it finally had its intended effect. Israel was scattered to every corner of the globe in consequence of her sins. Her seed was mixed with the nations of the world. As her heart was softened, she would then be gathered again, beginning with Ephraim and Manasseh and ending with Judah, through both the book of the Lamb (i.e., the stick of Judah, or the Bible) and the stick of Joseph (Book of Mormon). ¶ *Thou hadst removed [it] far [unto] all the ends of the earth.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Thou wilt reveal thyself in thy power to cast all the wicked into hell.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “Thou hast removed all the ends of the earth far off.” BPE (Ⲥ) has “Thou has removed and eliminated the borders.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲥ) has not only *removed* but also *scattered*, which is the correct idea. Numerous commentators explain that this *removal* (**וְהָאֵסִיר**) signifies a great expansion of the borders of the land of Zion in order to fit Israel (see ISAIAH 49:21.) Here, with Ibn Ezra, Lamsa (Ⲥ) and Kay, I believe it rather refers to the *scattering of Israel to the far ends of the earth*.

16 LORD, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer [when] thy chastening [was] upon them.

✓ secret speech

LORD, in trouble have they visited thee. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “O Lord, in distress they remembered (the Royal Polyglot reads **וְהָאֵסִיר**, ‘they were fearing Thee’) thy fear (i.e., the object of fear).” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Lord, in affliction I remembered thee.” The Peshitta (Ⲥ) explains that only when they have been under *distress* (Lamsa) / *anguish* (BPE) they have sought the Lord. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “Lord, they have sought after thee in distress.” Also see D&C 101:7–8, which is followed by these words of comfort: “Verily I say unto you, notwithstanding their sins, my bowels are filled with compassion towards them. I will not utterly cast them off; and in the day of wrath I will remember mercy. I have sworn, and the decree hath gone forth by a former commandment which I have given unto you,

that I would let fall the sword of mine indignation in behalf of my people; and even as I have said, it shall come to pass. Mine indignation is soon to be poured out without measure upon all nations; and this will I do when the cup of their iniquity is full. And in that day all who are found upon the watch-tower, or in other words, all mine Israel, shall be saved. And they that have been scattered shall be gathered. And all they who have mourned shall be comforted. And all they who have given their lives for my name shall be crowned. Therefore, let your hearts be comforted concerning Zion; for all flesh is in mine hands; be still and know that I am God” (D&C 101:9–16). ¶ *They poured out a prayer [when] thy chastening [was] upon them.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “In their trouble they were ardently learning the doctrine of thy law.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “Thine instruction to us was with a small affliction.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓢ) specifies that the chastening will be through a *siege*. The BPE (Ⓢ) has the people murmuring against God when they are in prison. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓢ) has, “In the tribulation of murmuring thy instruction was with them.” The DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⓢ) has *their prayer*, לַחֲשׁוּ, while the Masoretic text (Ⓜ) has *a prayer*, לַחֲשׁוּ. The word לַחֲשׁוּ means to *whisper*, so some render it as such (YLT, LITV, Parry). Others translate it: *whispered prayer* (HCSB), *only whisper a prayer* (NASB), or *prayerful whisper* (AMP). But just like לַחֲשׁוּ can mean to speak softly, it is sometimes associated with serpent charming or other types of enchantment {Gesenius, HALOT, BDB as well as *margin* ||) so others suggest some sort of enchanted prayer (LBP (Ⓢ), DSSB (Ⓢ), Miller (Ⓢ)). But this is, once again, an interesting point of hermeneutics. In the DSS and in the Masoretic text, the words in Hebrew are *identical* yet they are translated differently into English. The REB changes the meaning even more: “In distress, LORD, we sought you out, chastened by the whisper of your rebuke,” making the whisper the Lord’s. Gesenius explains לַחֲשׁוּ here as “a whispering, i.e. prayers uttered in a low voice.” Thus, Hannah, in 1 Samuel 1:9–16, similarly *poured out her soul before the LORD*, so that prayers are not always audible, but often poured out from the heart. Skinner also provides proof that a simple whisper may be signified, as “the cognate verb in 2 Samuel 12:19 and Psalm 41:7 might be appealed to in support of this view.” Thus, in Psalm 41:7 we have לַחֲשׁוּ, and in 2 Samuel 12:19, we have מִתְלַחֲשִׁים. Alexander explains that the word *whisper* is correct and here is “beautifully expressive of submissive humble prayer.” Calvin says, “The Hebrew word לַחֲשׁוּ signifies a *muttering*. The word therefore must not be taken for a prayer pronounced in words, but for that which indicates that the heart is wrung with sore pains, as

those who are tortured by extreme anguish can hardly speak or express the feelings of their hearts.”

17 Like as a woman with child, [that] draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, [and] crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O LORD.

Like as a woman with child, [that] draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, [and] crieth out in her pangs. The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “And as a woman in labour, when near delivery, crieth in her pangs.” Delitzsch says, “Pregnancy and pangs are symbols of a state of expectation strained to the utmost, the object of which appears all the closer the more the pains increase.” Barnes explains: “The comparison used here is one that is very frequent in the sacred writings to represent any great suffering.” Gill has, “By this simile are set forth the great distresses and afflictions the church of Christ will be in, before redemption and deliverance.” Faussett adds: “An image of anguish accompanied with expectation, to be followed by joy that will cause the anguish utterly to be forgotten. Zion, looking for deliverance, seemingly in vain, but really about to be gloriously saved (Micah 4:9–13; 5:1–3; John 16:21–22).” Jennings says, “Still musing, the prophet likens that time of anguish to travail-pangs [in Matthew 24:8 the word ‘sorrows’ {ὠδίνων} is literally, ‘travail-pains’], and the word suits so well the character of that ‘Great Tribulation’ that dwells upon it. The anguish has increased in its intensity as the hour of the delivery draws near; but there the parallel stops, for all the sufferings of Israel have been absolutely resultless. There has been no deliverance to her land,¹⁹ nor have her earth-dwelling oppressors been brought down.” Kay is brilliant in saying, “The nation [of Israel] had suffered the pains of labour; but in vain: no deliverer was born. And now the pangs were redoubled. Israel,—the outward, historical, Israel,—was enduring the sentence, ‘I will greatly multiply thy sorrow’ (Genesis 3:16).” ¶ *So have we been in thy sight, O LORD.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “So have we been, because we have sinned before thee.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “So have we been to thy beloved.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓢ) has *presence* instead of *sight*. The Lord has seen, all along, both our suffering as well as our placing trust in the arm of flesh rather than in the only one who can save.

18 We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any

¹⁹ Israel became a nation in May 1948, and Jennings died 17 April 1948.

deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.

We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind. “Women in labour,” says Calvin, “as soon as they are free from their pains, break out into joy at the sight of what they have brought forth (John 16:21), and forget all their sorrows.” But here this is not the case. The pain is not followed by the joy of a birth. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Distress swift as the wind has seized us, like a woman with child, who draweth near the time of her delivery.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “On account of the fear of thee, Lord, we conceived and suffered the pangs of child birth, and brought forth the spirit of thy salvation.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “We have conceived, and been as it were in labour, and have brought forth wind.” Rashi (in Rabbi Rosenberg) speaks of the pains that are part of false labor, before a woman is ready to give birth. Henderson writes, “The prophet had in view the false pains which frequently precede actual labour, and disappoint the expectations which they had excited. In this case וְרֵיחַ²⁰ is not to be taken literally, but metaphorically, as denoting *vanity, nothing*.” Likewise, Wade explains *brought forth wind* is “A figure for fruitless effort.” Wade points us to Ecclesiastes 1:14, “I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.” The expression *and vexation of spirit*, וְרֵיחַ רִיחַ, is translated in the ASV, “*and a striving after wind*.” Young, similarly, points us elsewhere in Isaiah: “Behold, they are all vanity; their works are nothing: their molten images are wind [וְרֵיחַ] and confusion” (ISAIAH 41:29). So also we see this very idea of nothingness in other scriptures, such as: “For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind [וְרֵיחַ] that passeth away, and cometh not again” (Psalm 78:39). Mankind must realize that salvation can only come through the Holy One of Israel; else, its only power is to bring forth wind, but never deliverance. This scene is to be contrasted to that in ISAIAH 66:7–9. ¶ *We have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The inhabitants of the world have not brought deliverance: they have not tilled the earth, neither have they been able to perform any miracles.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “For what we did in that land we are not to fall; but all the dwellers in that land are to fall.” The Peshitta (Ⲯ) renders it, “Save us so we are not *eliminated* (BPE) / *perish* (Lamsa) from the earth, nor the inhabitants of the world *fall* (BPE) / *come to an end* (Lamsa).” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “We have not wrought

salvation on the earth, therefore the inhabitants of the earth have not fallen.” DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲯ) has *your deliverance* (יְשׁוּעָתְךָ) while the Masoretic text (Ⲯ) simply has *deliverance* (יְשׁוּעָה). Only God’s power could help Israel be gathered back to her land and protect her territories. The Lord Himself will come to the rescue of Jerusalem in majesty as the nations of the earth turn against her (Zechariah 14:1–5; ISAIAH 66:7–9).

19 Thy dead [men] shall live, [together with] my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew [is as] the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Thou art he who dost quicken the dead, the bones of their dead bodies thou dost raise up. They shall live, and offer praise before thee, all that were cast into the dust, because thy dew is the dew of light (i.e., the early dew) to them who do thy law; but thou wilt deliver the wicked into hell, to whom thou hast given power, for they have transgressed against thy Word.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “The dead shall be raised up again, even they in the tombs shall be raised up: and they in this land shall be filled with joy: for the dew from thee is healing for them; but the land of the ungodly shall fall.” The Peshitta (Ⲯ) renders it, “Thy dead men shall live again, their *corpses* (BPE) / *dead bodies* (Lamsa) shall rise. Those who lie / dwell in the dust shall awake and *sing* (BPE) because your dew is a dew of light Thou shall bring the land of the powerful / giants to naught.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “Thy dead men shall live, my slain shall rise again: awake, and give praise, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is the dew of the light: and the land of the giants thou shalt pull down into ruin.” Part of the supposed controversy surrounding this verse is that the plural (my bodies, גְּבִיִּי) is given instead of the singular. Tradition, as we shall see, has been well established in its Messianic meaning: that the Lord would be resurrected as would His disciples. Bishops Bible translates as: “Thy dead men shall liue, euen as my body shall they rise againe.” Geneva, likewise renders it: “Thy dead men shall liue: euen with my body shall they rise.” LITV renders it, “Your dead ones shall live, my dead body, they shall rise up,” while YLT has: “Thy dead live—My dead body they rise.” Birks says: “A promise of resurrection implies naturally that the speaker is the Lord.” ¶ Elder B. H. Roberts²¹ defends the Authorized Version translation with its Messianic ellipsis in ISAIAH 26:19.

²⁰ That is, *wind, spirit*.

²¹ Elder B. H. Roberts, *Rasha the Jew* (pp. 23–34).

Elder Roberts quotes a number of different explanations of this verse, including this one by Faussett: “‘Together with my dead body—rather, my dead body, or bodies (the Jewish nation personified, which had been spiritually, and civilly dead; or the nation, as a parent speaking of the bodies of her children individually, note ISAIAH 26:9, ‘I’, ‘My’): Jehovah’s ‘dead’ and ‘my dead’ are one and the same. However, as Jesus is the anti-type to Israel (St. Matthew 2:15) English Version gives a true sense, and one ultimately contemplated in the prophecy: Christ’s dead body being raised again is the source of Jehovah’s people ... also being raised (1 Corinthians 15:20–22)’ (*A Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Old and New Testaments*, Jamieson, Faussett and Brown).” Elder Roberts also adds: “My reasons for taking this course [of defending the AV] arose from the consciousness that I knew the passage as presented by the plain meaning of the translators of the Authorized Version, and the text and context taken together, represented the truth in the matter, viz.: That Jehovah was to become incarnate—tabernacle in the flesh—have a body; That Jehovah was in a real body to suffer the pains of all men—and to die; That Jehovah was to be raised from the dead—and with him many of his ancient saints were to be raised from the dead; also ‘the earth would cast out the dead.’” Finally, from Elder B. H. Roberts, I include this: “Another American prophet, King Benjamin, in the second century B. C. prophetically said: ‘Behold, the time cometh, and is not far distant, that with power, the Lord Omnipotent who reigneth, who was, and is from all eternity to all eternity,²² shall come down from heaven, among the children of men, and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay, and shall go forth amongst men, working mighty miracles, such as healing the sick, raising the dead, causing the lame to walk, the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear, and curing all manner of diseases; ... and lo, he shall suffer temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death; for behold, blood cometh from every pore, so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and the abominations of his people. And he shall be called Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and earth, the Creator of all things, from the beginning; and his mother shall be called Mary. And lo, he cometh unto his own, that salvation might come unto the children of men, even through faith on his name; and even after all this, they shall consider him a man, and say that he hath a devil, and shall scourge him, and shall crucify him. And he shall rise the third day from the dead; and behold, he standeth to judge the world; and behold, all these things are done, that a righteous judgment might come upon the children of men’ (Book of Mormon, Mosiah 3:5–10).”

²² See notes on ISAIAH 52:6 as well as *footnote 12* in ISAIAH 26.

¶ *Awake and sing.* Rashi (in Rabbi Rosenberg) says: “All this the Holy One, blessed be He, shall say to them. ‘Awaken and sing,’ is an imperative form.” So also see the Masoretic text (מ), and the DSSB. We seem to hear the voice of the Lord commanding the dead to live and to feel free to shout for joy. It is like the imperative “Receive the Holy Ghost!” Awake! Come forth from the dust! The dust, by the way, is not only an expression for the abode of our carcass after death, but also used as a poetical way of those in the spirit world as well as those in exile or in prison. When they speak from the dust, they speak from the spirit world (see ISAIAH 29, in relation to the Book of Mormon). The DSS 1QIsa^a (Q) has *they shall awake and sing*, קִיצוּ וְרִנְנוּ, while the Masoretic text (מ) has the *imperative*²³ form, *Awake and sing!* (DSSB, *Awake and shout for joy!*) קִיצוּ וְרִנְנוּ. Gray translates as *ring out their joy*. Now, our attention turns drastically to the resurrection of the dead. Several exegetes mention that this verse is the antithesis (e.g., Faussett, Geneva, Barnes) to ISAIAH 26:14.” In the Talmud tradition (Seder Nezikin, Sanhedrin 90b) Rabbi Gamaliel quoted this verse as proof of the resurrection (Talmud, Soncino). Ibn Ezra writes, “Generally, it is believed, that this phrase contains some reference to the resurrection of the dead.” ¶ President Harold B. Lee spoke of the glorious resurrection, “It was to Israel in her days of travail in the wilderness that the Lord gave, through His prophet, a comforting thought that must have been understood to be both a promise as well as a prophecy: ‘Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead’ (ISAIAH 26:19). Nearly 800 years passed before that promise was to be realized when ‘the earth shall cast out the dead.’ This event of such importance to the unnumbered dead occurred at the conclusion of the work and ministry of our Lord and Master and is recorded in these words: ‘And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many’ (Matthew 27:51–53). By whom had this mighty miracle been wrought, and what power had thus been manifested? True, the prophets had foretold a day when the Lord would ‘bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house’ (ISAIAH 42:7), and that He was to bear the sins of many and make intercession for the transgressors (ISAIAH 53:12), but until the Master

²³ Here, the *imperative* form is constructed by adding the ה prefix. See also, AHCL, p. 215.

himself declared the purpose of His mission on earth, it is doubtful that the saints of former days comprehended its full significance.”²⁴ Gill writes, “as sure as Christ’s dead body was raised, so sure shall every one of his people be raised; Christ’s resurrection is the pledge and earnest of theirs; because he lives, they shall live also; he is the first fruits of them that slept: or as in like manner he was raised, so shall they; as he was raised incorruptible, powerful, spiritual, and glorious, and in the same body, so shall they; their vile bodies shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body.” Both believing Jew and Gentile exegete assert that, indeed, these verses can only be understood as pertaining to the resurrection from the dead. ¶ *For thy dew.* Here dew is representative as that force which gives life. In Deuteronomy 32:2, we thus read: “My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass.” So it is that Elijah forbid not only the rain from coming down, but also the dew: “As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word” (1 Kings 17:1b). ¶ *The earth shall cast out the dead* as the dew helps grass break forth through the earth. In the *Discourses of Brigham Young* we read that the Spirit Word, the place where the spirits depart after leaving their earthly bodies, “is on this earth that was organized for the people that have lived and that do and will live upon it (3:372)” (p. 576). So, when Isaiah says that *the earth shall cast out the dead*, we can think of it in terms of both the spirits and the bodies. Young writes: “The shades [i.e., the word of the departed spirits] are in the earth, in Sheol [i.e., the Spirit World]; and the earth... now gives up the shades... This causative usage of the verb with *earth* as subject is reminiscent of the first chapter of Genesis, ‘and the earth caused to go forth...’” Jenour says: “The parching heat of day is succeeded by the refreshing dew which makes the vegetable kingdom revive and flourish; such was the effect of the returning favour of Jehovah, after his wrath toward his people had ceased.”

vv. 20–21. But we must dry our tears of joy and remember that for those who are upon the earth now, there is much tribulation ahead. We must stand in holy places and have a continual prayer in our hearts.

20 ¶ Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.

²⁴ Lee, Harold B. *Ye Are the Light of the World: Selected Sermons and Writings of Harold B. Lee*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1974.

Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Come, O my people; produce for thyself good works, which shall protect thee in the time of distress.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Go my people, enter into thy chambers; shut thy door.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has shut the doors *behind thee*, rather than *about thee*. The meaning is, of course, the same. The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “Go, my people, enter into thy chambers, shut thy doors upon thee.” The memory of resurrected bliss ends, and we come back to the reality of our present earthly terrestrial life. The Prophet Joseph Smith, in relation to this verse, after speaking about the gathering that will take place in the American continent and the “[deliverance] from the overflowing scourge that shall pass through the land,” explains: “But Judah shall obtain deliverance at Jerusalem. See Joel 2:32; ISAIAH 26:20 and 21; Jeremiah 31:12; Psalm 1:5; 10.” The implication here is that a separate deliverance is required for each (once again, see Zechariah 14:1–5). Note how the Lord, in tenderness, calls His people עַמִּי. With the Geneva translators’ notes, I believe that “He exhorts the faithful to be patient in their afflictions and to wait on God’s work.” Ibn Ezra applies it to the time of Sennacherib, which fits perfectly well. But that is only a type and a shadow of greater problems and commotions to come upon the earth. This reminds us of the **Passover** (פֶּסַח) night, once again, where in Exodus 12:11–12 the Lord would *pass over* and not hurt those homes who had obediently kept His word and brushed the lamb’s blood on the posts of their homes or chambers (Exodus 12:7). So will it be in the last days, as we are commanded likewise: “Wherefore, stand ye in holy places, and be not moved, until the day of the Lord come; for behold, it cometh quickly, saith the Lord. Amen” (D&C 87:8). So, while these difficult periods are all about us, let us exclaim, with the psalmist, “In the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast” (Psalm 57:1b). Easton’s Bible Dictionary [*Chamber*] says that “To enter into a chamber is used metaphorically of prayer and communion with God (ISAIAH 26:20).” And well it should be as physical places can do nothing to protect us. ¶ *Hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the curse shall have passed away.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Hide thyself for a little while; until the anger of the Lord is passed.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “Hide thyself a little for a moment, until the indignation pass away.” Bishops Bible has, “Hide thy selfe for a litle whyle, vntill the indignation be ouerpast.” As Alexander points out, the expression *as it were* is not in the Masoretic text (ⲙ). Alexander also writes: “The sufferings of the present

time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” From Gill, we have: “The design of [these words] is, to let the people of God know that there would be times of great trouble and distress, previous to that glorious one before mentioned.” Keith points us to Zephaniah 2:3, “Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD’s anger.” Jenour has: “As upon the approach of a storm of thunder and lightning, people flee to their houses, and close fast their doors; or as the Israelites, when Jehovah smote the first-born of the Egyptians, were commanded not to move out of their house whilst the destroying angel was passing through the land (Exodus 12:22); so God bids his believing people among the Jews, not to be troubled or disquieted on account of the approaching calamities, nor to attempt to avert them; but to have their minds stayed upon him, and to leave the disposition of all events to the wisdom of his providence.” Kaiser agrees with Jenour in comparing the passage to the Passover night and adds: “It has rightly been pointed out that in the call to hide from the terrible apparitions of Jehovah in the rock or in the dust (cf. 2:10, 19) the poem is alluding to the day of Yahweh... [The prophet] is thinking of a powerful storm which will break out over Jerusalem and the nations gathering together outside its gates.” ¶ So, what is the *indignation* of the Lord? It seems to be the difficulties and challenges that will befall the earth as the advent of the Lord’s second coming approaches:²⁵ Also see D&C: 88:89–91. This verse is an allusion to a future time, when *all nations will gather against Jerusalem to battle* (Zechariah 14) and then *shall Jehovah go forth, and fight against those nations*. And the Holy One will stand upon the Mount of Olives, which shall split in half and provide a refuge to His people Judah in Jerusalem and then there will be but one King who shall rule in this earth.

21 For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, ✓ and shall no more cover her slain.

✓ bloods

For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “For behold, the Lord is revealing himself from the place of his Shekinah, to punish the

inhabitants of the earth for their sins.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “For behold the Lord from his sanctuary is about to bring wrath on the inhabitants of this land.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, *visit* instead of the synonym *punish*. The DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⓢ) has *for*, כִּי, rather than *for behold*, כִּי־הִנֵּה, as seen in the Masoretic text (Ⓜ).

This verse is a continuation of the previous one, where the Saints are told that the earth would be in commotion in the end of days. As Young points out, a similar expression is found in Micah 1:3 “For, behold, the LORD cometh forth out of his place, and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth.” ¶ *The earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain*. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And the earth shall disclose the innocent blood that was shed in her, and shall no more cover her slain.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “And the land will disclose the blood on it, and will no longer coyer the slain.” The earth, which has been a witness to every atrocity, will be a witness against those who have defiled her. In Genesis 4:10 we read: “And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground.” Gill writes: “what was hid and covered, or thought to be so, will now be discerned, and brought to light, and just punishment inflicted for it.” Rawlinson well says, “‘There is nothing covered that shall not’ in the last day ‘be revealed, and hid that shall not be known’ (Matthew 10:26). Every murder, however secret, will be brought to light, and every murderer, however unsuspected previously, denounced and punished.” Thompson says, regarding this verse, that the blood is a “cry for vengeance.” We also read: “There is nothing which is secret save it shall be revealed; there is no work of darkness save it shall be made manifest in the light; and there is nothing which is sealed upon the earth save it shall be loosed” (2 Nephi 30:17).

NOTE: ISAIAH 27:1 fits best here, after these last two verses.

27 March 2011

²⁵ The children of Lehi would certainly apply this scripture, also, to the earthly commotions experienced in the American continent associated with the LORD’S crucifixion.

Isaiah 27

ISAIAH 18 is intimately related to ISAIAH 27, both focused on the role that Ephraim would play in the restoration of the sons of Jacob, including Judah, to the Lord. Satan is defeated by the sword of the Lord, a leftover and concluding thought from ISAIAH 26. We are then transported to a pre-millennial time when the Lord restores His Church for the last time. Those within the Church who do not abide will be burnt. The Lord makes a plea for them to take hold of His strength and find peace. All of this is done with a new parable of the vineyard (compare ISAIAH 5). In the last days Ephraim plays a key role in gathering Israel one by one. The joy of the latter-day vineyard is replaced by thoughts of the impending scattering of children of Jacob. The Lord has not permitted the house of Israel to be punished more than was necessary to accomplish the required humility and subsequent repentance. In the last days the children of Israel would be gathered back to their lands—and more importantly—to the temple.

v. 1. *In that day*, יָמֵינוּ, we are transported to the logical conclusion of ISAIAH 26:20–21, where this verse belongs,¹ as a brief excursion back to the millennium. It is at both the beginning and end of the millennium that Satan, the great crooked serpent of the sea is to be banished. Satan is to be bound for a thousand years and at the end of the millennium defeated once again by the forces of good.

1 ¶ IN that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan[✓] the piercing serpent,[✓] even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that [is] in the sea.

✓ or, crossing like a bar [both]

In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “At that time the Lord shall punish (or, ‘visit’) with his great, mighty, and strong sword the king, who has magnified himself as Pharaoh the first, and the kind who has exalted himself as Sennacherib the second.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “In that day God will bring his holy sword, even his great and powerful sword, upon the dragon, the flying serpent.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *large* (BPE) / *hard* (Lamsa) for *sore*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, “In that day the Lord with his hard, and great, and strong sword shall visit leviathan the bar serpent.” Most exegetes see in the piercing serpent, the crooked serpent and the dragon of the sea three distinct nations or evil forces. I wonder if it is not three different descriptions of Satan and those who do his bidding. Wordsworth says, “*Leviathan, the piercing serpent, or flying (or apostate) serpent*; words

used in this [i.e., referring to “Satan and all his agents, the proud and mighty Powers of this world, represented by his symbols and theirs”] spiritual sense in Job 26:13.” Wordsworth also has, “Justin Martyr, c. Tryphon., § 91 and § 112, who regards the ‘Leviathan and piercing serpent’ as a name of Satan himself, and the sword, with which he is slain, as an emblem of Christ.” Govett says “By the punishment of Leviathan ... is evidently intended to be inflicted on Satan, who is in the Revelation² called ‘The great dragon, that old serpent, the devil, and Satan.’” The word לִוְיָתָן that is translated in our KJV as *sore* also means *hard*, *hardened*, *strong*, *heavy* (HALOT, Gesenius). In Leviticus 26:25 (*Rain in due Season*) the Lord used His sword of strength against rebellious Israel. Now Christ smites Satan who is *the prince of this earth*. The setting here seems to be the millennium because we see that *leviathan that crooked serpent* is about to be crushed, thus fulfilling the promise made in the Garden of Eden: “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Genesis 3:15). In Revelation we read: “And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season” (Revelation 20:1–3). Latter-day scriptures contain some additional details. After the Lord’s people are gathered *from the four quarters of the earth* (1 Nephi 22:25b) we read: “And because of the righteousness of his people, Satan has no

¹ I was pleased to find agreement from Ironside, Wade, Jennings, Keith, and Ewald.

² “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (Revelation 12:9).

power; wherefore, he cannot be loosed for the space of many years; for he hath no power over the hearts of the people, for they dwell in righteousness, and the Holy One of Israel reigneth” (1 Nephi 22:26). Right after this we read that “all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people shall dwell safely in the Holy One of Israel” (1 Nephi 22:28b), which is another way of saying that they will have that *perfect peace* spoken about in ISAIAH 26:3. Also, we read, “and Satan shall have power over the hearts of the children of men no more, for a long time” (2 Nephi 30:18). There are other hints in 2 Nephi 30 regarding this chapter of Isaiah, as we shall see below. The Savior added that after every attempt is made to gather His people from the nations of the earth through the voice of servants, angels, His own voice, and the voice of natural disasters and even the sound of a trumpet (D&C 43:24–25); when the “cup of the wrath of mine indignation is full” (D&C 43:26b), then, would come “the great Millennium, of which I have spoken by the mouth of my servants... For Satan shall be bound, and when he is loosed again he shall only reign for a little season, and then cometh the end of the earth” (D&C 43:30b–31). At the end of the millennium, Satan shall again *be loosened for a little season* for the final battle of Gog and Magog where Adam—as a commander in Christ’s army—shall once again triumph over Satan (D&C 88:111–116, Revelation 12:7–9 speaks of the war in heaven). ¶ *Even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that [is] in the sea.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And he shall slay the king that is strong as the dragon that is in the sea.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Upon the dragon, the crooked serpent; he will slay the dragon.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has *whale* rather than *dragon*. In the last days Satan will have dominion over the sea, while in the former days he had dominion over the land (D&C 61:14; Revelation 8:10). Thus, it makes sense that the expression *dragon that is in the sea* be utilized. Since Satan is the director of mystic Babylon, Faussett and Barnes, among others, suggest that the sea mentioned here is the Euphrates River. Leviathan may well also be the crocodile or *wounded dragon* (Pharaoh or Satan) in *Rahab* or Egypt (ISAIAH 51:9). Psalm 74:13–14, as Keith says, also mentions leviathan, a monster of the sea. In the next verse we return to pre-millennial days, or the days spoken of in the Book of Revelation when angel Moroni has, with his great voice—even as a sound of a loud shofar (ram’s horn)—invited all to come unto Christ through the Book of Mormon. “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” (Revelation 14:6–7).

vv. 2–6. *In that day*, יוֹם הַיּוֹם, we are again transported through time, but now to the pre-millennial day. In this chapter we see how the Lord once again speaks tenderly of His vineyard, which here represents His restored Church—and later on we read about the gathering of Israel *one by one*.

2 In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “At that time the congregation of Israel, which is like a vineyard planted in goodly land, shall sing concerning that vineyard.” The Brenton LXX (Ⲯ) translation reads, “In that day there shall be a fair vineyard, and a desire to commence a song concerning it.” The Peshitta (Ⲯ) is missing the adjective *red*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “In that day there shall be singing to the vineyard of pure wine.” In the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲯ) we have חֹמֶר, which may be translated as *red wine* (can also mean *wine, red, fermenting*—Gesenius, HALOT). The Masoretic text (Ⲯ), instead, has חֲמֵץ, *desirous* (Gesenius, HALOT), so the passage would be translated *desirous vineyard*. So also Lowth: “The beloved vineyard—For חֲמֵץ, a great number of manuscripts, and some printed editions, have חֲמֵץ; which is confirmed by the LXX and Chaldee.” It seems that both acceptations for חֲמֵץ could be correct, depending on the context.³ ¶ There are several types of vineyards including those that produce (1) table grapes, (2) raisins, or (3) wine. The latter, in turn, are divided among those that produce red or white wine. ¶ *In that day.* Birks writes: “The day is that of the ingrafting of the olive branches of Israel (Romans 11).”⁴ ¶ *Sing ye*

³ It is of great interest to me how well before the DSS were discovered, the KJV, based on the Masoretic text (Ⲯ), provided the *red wine* translation (leaning on the 1587 Geneva Bible, “vineyarde of redde wine”). The idea of *fine* wine (or *desirable* vineyard), instead, was used by the 1568 Bishops Bible, “vineyarde that bringeth forth the best wine.” More recent translations follow one of three translation traditions: (1) “On that day sing about a desirable vineyard” (HCSB); (2) “In that day sing ye to her, A vineyard of red wine” (Webster); (3) “In that day: A vineyard of wine, sing ye unto it” (ASV). We also have, “At that time, ‘A fermenting vineyard—sing about it!’” (ISV). This is another way of saying that the grapes are for the production of wine.

⁴ Indeed, in Romans 11 we read, in part: “I say then, Hath God cast away his people [i.e., Israel, see Romans 10:21]? God forbid... For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? [Allusion to Ezekiel 37:1–14, valley of dry bones] For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree [see also Jacob 5], wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But

unto her, עֲנֵה לָהּ. Barnes points out: “That is, sing unto, or respecting the vineyard. The word rendered ‘sing’ (עָנָה) signifies properly, ‘answer, respond to,’ and then, sing a responsive⁵ song, where one portion of the choir responds to another (see Exodus 15:21).” Henderson and others argue the opposite view, and suggest that this point of responsiveness does not belong here. And even others argue that these verses only *mentions* the song, but that no part of this chapter includes the song. ¶ *A vineyard*. Gill explains that this vineyard is the “church of Christ under the Gospel dispensation” and is different from that described as relating to apostate—yet always beloved—Israel (ISAIAH 5:5, Hosea 10:1) and suggests that the redness “tincture [which it received is] from the blood⁶ of Christ.” Rawlinson similarly says: “But whereas, on the former occasion [ISAIAH 5], all was wrath and fury, menace and judgment, here all is mercy and loving-kindness, protection and promise. The difference is, no doubt, not with God, ‘with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning’ (James 1:17), but with the vineyard...” ¶ *Of red wine*. In ISAIAH 5:4 we note that the vineyard only produced wild inedible grapes while here it produces the very best or fine red wine (Redak in Rabbi Rosenberg). Such wine perhaps represents a turning unto Christ followed by godly works.

3 I the LORD do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest [any] hurt it, I will keep it night and day.

I the LORD do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest [any] hurt it. The Targum (T) has, “I, the Lord, keep the covenant of their fathers with them, that I may not destroy them; but at the time that they provoked me to

if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins” (Romans 11:1, 15–27).

⁵ See Lowth, also.

⁶ And points us to the patriarchal blessing of Judah, the Savior’s forefather, in Genesis 49:12.

anger, I gave them the cup of their punishment to drink; but their sins were the cause of their punishment.” The LXX (G) reads, “I am a strong city, a city besieged.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “I am the Lord that keep it, I will suddenly give it drink: lest any hurt come to it.” Ironside says, “No longer will Jehovah’s vineyard be let out to unfaithful husbandmen, but He will watch over it Himself.” Young, along the same vein says, “In ISAIAH 5:2 He had stated that He had erected a tower in the vineyard, and now He Himself is watching over the vineyard from that tower.” Redak (in Rabbi Rosenberg) also points out the contrast between “I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it” (ISAIAH 5:6) and here, “I will water it every moment.” Rawlinson makes the same contrast and compares the latter-day vineyard to the Church. When Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well he distinguished the water available from the well from the spiritual water He offered: “But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14). It should be clear that the Lord of the vineyard knows exactly how to water His vineyard. To water every day stands for careful and minute care. The daily care is very real; the watering represents the giving forth of blessings or “rain in due season.” The watering here spoken of is the pouring out of blessings upon His people. (A vineyard that was literally watered daily, unless different portions of a large vineyard were watered, would *die* of root rot or from root asphyxiation.) I truly feel of the Lord’s love and His daily watering and pouring out blessings. ¶ *I will keep it night and day*. The Targum (T) has, “Nevertheless, my Word shall protect them by day and by night.” The LXX (G) reads, “In vain shall I supply her with drink: for by night she will be taken, and by day she will fall (or, ‘by day the wall shall fall,’ Brenton and NETS).” The BPE (S) has, for the second clause, “I will water it by night and visit it by day.” The Lord Himself will keep or watch over this vineyard, latter-day Israel, night and day. While we have been promised that the Church will never fall away again, as individuals we have to secure our salvation by being faithful.⁷ The Psalmist speaks about the protection that

⁷ “Teach [the people] an everlasting hatred against sin and iniquity. Preach unto them repentance, and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ; teach them to humble themselves and to be meek and lowly in heart; teach them to withstand every temptation of the devil, with their faith on the Lord Jesus Christ. Teach them to never be weary of good works, but to be meek and lowly in heart; for such shall find rest to their souls. O, remember, my son, and learn wisdom in thy youth; yea, learn in thy youth to keep the commandments of God. Yea, and cry unto God for all thy support; yea, let all thy doings be unto the Lord, and whithersoever thou goest let it be in the Lord; yea, let all thy thoughts be directed unto the Lord; yea, let the affections of thy heart be placed upon the Lord forever. Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good; yea, when thou liest down at night lie down

comes from the Lord: “Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep” {Psalm 121:4 (1–8)}. We also read this beautiful sentiment from the Lord: “And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you” (ISAIAH 46:4). So the Lord not only blesses us every hour, but is ever mindful of us. I am filled with gratitude as I feel of His tender care.

4 Fury [is] not in me: who would set the briers [and] thorns against me in battle? I would go through[✓] them, I would burn them together.

✓ or, march against

Fury [is] not in me: who would set the briers [and] thorns against me in battle? The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Behold, many might works are before me. Is it not so?” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “There is no wall, or it hath not availed her. Will any one set me to watch a stalk in a field? On account of this warfare I have rejected her.” The Peshitta (Ⲯ) renders it, “You have not been hedged. Who put the briers and thorns in you?” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “There is no indignation in me: who shall make me a thorn and a brier in battle.” In the Masoretic text (Ⲯ) the *and* is implied between *briers* [and] *thorns*, שׁוֹמֵר וְשִׁית, while the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲯ) spells it out, *briers and thorns*, שׁוֹמֵר וְשִׁית.

¶ **NOTE:** The expression *Fury not in me*, חֲמָה אֵין לִי, seems to fit better as that which completes ISAIAH 27:3, where it would mean, as many have interpreted the sentiment, that the Lord is no longer angry at Israel and contrasts this with the vineyard in ISAIAH 5. Gill writes, regarding חֲמָה אֵין לִי: “Against his vineyard he takes so much care of, his church and people, whom he has loved with an everlasting love; they are indeed deserving of his wrath, but he has not appointed them to it, but has appointed his Son to bear it for them...” So now that the Lord makes it clear that He is protecting His vineyard, then it makes all the sense of the words to ask, “Who would dare set briers and thorns against her?” and thus by extension, against the Lord Himself. Regarding *fury*, Kay reminds us of some verses in *Rain in Due Season*: “And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me; Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.” (Leviticus 26:27–28). ¶ *Briers and thorns*. Nägelsbach explains:

unto the Lord, that he may watch over you in your sleep; and when thou risest in the morning let thy heart be full of thanks unto God; and if ye do these things, ye shall be lifted up at the last day” (Alma 37:32b–37).

“Thorns and thistles, which grow from the soil of the vineyard itself, are in opposition to the wild beasts which break in from without, symbols of internal decay, symptoms of the germs of evil still existing in the vineyard itself.” Rawlinson likewise suggests: “The ‘briers and thorns’ are apparently unrighteous members of the Church, who have fallen below their privileges. God asks, ‘Who will set the briers and thorns in array against me?’ in a tone of contempt. ‘Who will dare to do battle against me with such weak material?’ And then he adds a forecast of the result in such a case: ‘I would move forward; I would burn them all together’ (compare with ISAIAH 10:17).” Gill proposes various possibilities for the briers and thorns, including: “...for the hurt and mischief they do, and the grief and trouble they give to the people of God, as hypocrites and false teachers, and all such as are of unsound principles, and bad lives and conversations, and which are very offensive to the Lord; and therefore, though there is no fury in him against his vineyard, the church, yet there is against those briers and thorns, wicked men, whom he accounts his enemies, and will fight against them in his wrath, and consume them in his fury; see 2 Samuel 23:6.” Rosenberg shares a number of Rabbinic views, including this one: “Therefore God says, ‘I have no wrath’ to mete out upon Israel, for I had wrath against Israel, the vineyard ‘that would give Me thorns and briers’ instead of grapes... [Redak quoting his father, Rabbi Joseph Kimhi].” Redak says: “The prophet compares [Israel] to a plant that strikes roots below and blossoms from above” (in Rabbi Rosenberg).⁸ ¶ *I would go through them, I would burn them together.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “If the house of Israel would set their face to do my law, I would send my anger and my fury among the nations, who are waging war against them, and I would destroy them, as the fire destroyeth the briers and the thorns together.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads,

⁸ Jacob, after sharing Zenos’ *allegory of the tame and wild olive trees*, teaches: “And how merciful is our God unto us, for he remembereth the house of Israel, both roots and branches; and he stretches forth his hands unto them all the day long; and they are a stiffnecked and a gainsaying people; but as many as will not harden their hearts shall be saved in the kingdom of God. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I beseech of you in words of soberness that ye would repent, and come with full purpose of heart, and cleave unto God as he cleaveth unto you. And while his arm of mercy is extended towards you in the light of the day, harden not your hearts. Yea, today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts; for why will ye die? For behold, after ye have been nourished by the good word of God all the day long, will ye bring forth evil fruit, that ye must be hewn down and cast into the fire? Behold, will ye reject these words? Will ye reject the words of the prophets; and will ye reject all the words which have been spoken concerning Christ, after so many have spoken concerning him; and deny the good word of Christ, and the power of God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, and quench the Holy Spirit, and make a mock of the great plan of redemption, which hath been laid for you?” (Jacob 6:4–8). It seems, then, that the *foolish virgins* (Matthew 25:1–13) in the kingdom of God will be burn together with those who altogether refuse to listen and be gathered in.

“For this cause therefore the Lord hath executed all that he determined. I am about to be burned up.” The Peshitta (S) renders it, “I will blow against *him* (Lamsa, ‘vineyard’) from near and burn them together. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Shall march against it, shall I set it on fire together?” In the DSS 1QIsa^a (Q) we have *and set on fire* אֶצִּיתָנָהּ, while the *and* is not present in the Masoretic text (M), אֶצִּיתָנָהּ. The Lord will burn those who reject His gospel. In 2 Nephi we read: “For the time speedily cometh that the Lord God shall cause a great division among the people, and the wicked will he destroy; and he will spare his people, yea, even if it so be that he must destroy the wicked by fire” (2 Nephi 30:10).

5 Or let him take hold of my strength, [that] he may make peace with me; [and] he shall make peace with me.

The Targum (T) has, “If (the Royal Polyglot and the Biblia Magna, Hebrew, have evidently the right reading, אֶלֶּא⁹) they would lay hold on the words of my law, peace would be made with them; henceforth peace would be enduring, according to the Targum (T) if based on obedience to Scripture. The LXX (G) reads, “Let the inhabitants therein cry aloud, ‘Let us make peace with him. Let us make peace.’” The Lamsa Peshitta (S) has, “Or let Israel take hold of my strength, and I will make peace for him, peace will I give him.” The BPE (S) once again makes *no* reference to Israel, and ties the first clause of this verse, “Unless he takes hold of my strength,” to ISAIAH 27:4. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Or rather shall it take hold of my strength, shall it make peace with me, shall it make peace with me?” A number of exegetes suggest that יִחַזַק בְּמַעֲוֵי let him take hold of my strength, stands as an allusion to the protection afforded by the horns of the altar [מִזְבֵּחַ] of burnt offering. Two examples are 1 Kings 1:50; and 2:28. Henderson writes that this “is a mode of expression borrowed from the practice of fleeing to, and laying fast hold of altars, &c. as asylums or places of refuge.” ¶ Or, אִם. Gesenius explains that אִם can include an elliptical expression for *unless*. Using an example from *Rain in Due Season*, Delitzsch (so also Kay) explains: אִם with a voluntative following [means]

‘unless,’ as in Leviticus 26:41¹⁰.” Gesenius, Barnes and BPE (S) here translate אִם as *unless*, which gives the correct sense. Spanish versions NBLH and LBLA translate אִם as *a no ser que* (i.e., unless). Another common rendering, one which also gives the correct sense of אִם in this verse, is *or else* (AMP, ASV, GW, ISV, JPS, RV). Thus, not only are those who take hold of the Lord’s strength not burnt, but they also partake of His peace. Rashi would translate אִם as *if* (and would do the same in Exodus 21:36, *or if* {KJV, ASV, LITV, JPS}, *if, however* {HCSB, contrast with GW}) and render it, “If My people grasp My fortress i.e., My Torah, that they seek no other fortress but My fortress...” (Rabbi Rosenberg). See also אֶלֶּא in the Targum Jonathan (T) in this place. And lay hold not only of the Torah, but also all of the Holy Scriptures The *word of God* (the *rod of iron*, 1 Nephi 11:25) permits us to come to the *Word of God* (Messiah, see ISAIAH 40:8) as Christ is the source of our strength. Gill writes, “The sense is, let the people of God, any and everyone of them, when afflicted and chastised by him particularly, and are ready to conclude that he is wroth with them, and is dealing with them in hot displeasure; let such look to Christ, and lay hold, and a strong hold, on him by faith, which will be greatly to their advantage and support.” Wordsworth, also leaning on Gesenius, says, “Let him take hold of My strength (let him stay himself on Me as his support).” In other words, this is a call to שׁוּבוּ, *to turn or return* and follow Christ.

¶ [That] he may make peace with me; [and] he shall make peace with me. Gill says, “The phrase is doubled for the certainty of it.” Rawlinson writes, “The reiteration constitutes an appeal of extreme earnestness and tenderness.” Wildberger suggests: “To find shelter with Yahweh means that a person achieves שְׁלוֹם ... Does this verse intend to say: the enemies of Israel should hurry up and make peace with Yahweh? Hardly; it is more likely that it is intended as an indicative statement: They will get peace as a result. This means that the peace is not actually the ‘work’ of those who are seeking protection, but the result of their having turned toward Yahweh. Jerusalem, most specifically, the temple, is the place where שְׁלוֹם (peace) dwells.”

⁹ According to the Targum Lexicon, אֶלֶּא can mean *but, only, except, moreover, besides, unless*. The idea seems to be that peace can only be had if they hold on the iron rod—or to the horns of the altar.

¹⁰ In Leviticus 26:41 (*Rain in Due Season*) we see אִם-אִם translated as *if then*. For instance: “I also walked contrary unto them, and brought them into the land of their enemies: *if then* their uncircumcised heart be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity” (ASV, *emphasis added*).

6 He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.

He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root:

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “They shall be gathered from the midst of their captivity, and return to their country; there children shall be born to the house of Jacob.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “They who are coming are children of Jacob.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, “When they shall rush in unto Jacob.” Simeon speaks of the great persecution endured by Judah “being despised of all” so that “The possession of landed property has been, till of late,¹¹ universally denied them; so that they could never ‘take root’ in any place, or be established in any country under heaven.” ¶ *Them that come / days that come,* **הַיָּמִים הַבָּאִים**. The term **הַיָּמִים**, come (**בֹּא**), many exegetes and translators give as elliptical for “days that come,” as the word *days* is only implied. Delitzsch (*also see* Henderson) explains, “We may see from **הַיָּמִים** (*acc. temp.* as in Ecclesiastes 2:16, equivalent in meaning to ‘Behold, the days come,’ Jeremiah 7:32, etc.), that the true language of prophecy commences again here.” Thus Bishops Bible has, “The dayes are coming that Iacob shall take roote, Israel shalbe greene and florishe, and the world shalbe filled with fruite.” We also have: “Hereafter, Iakob shall take roote: Israel shall florish and growe, and the world shall be filled with fruite” (Geneva); “In days to come shall Jacob take root; Israel shall blossom and bud; and they shall fill the face of the world with fruit” (ASV). ¶ *To take root.*¹² Barnes explains: “This language is derived from the vine, as the shoots or cuttings of the vine take root and flourish. To take root, therefore, is an emblem denoting that the descendants of Jacob, or the people of God, would increase and prosper.” Indeed, we know that through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, that all the families of the earth would be blessed: “And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:3). Kay has: “Israel, so long cut off from the Fountain of Life,—a mere dry rod,—shall be like

Aaron’s rod which ‘budded ... and bloomed blossoms.’” Young says, “In the missionary proclamation of the Gospel this truth finds its fulfillment.” And when it comes to fruit—when looked upon from this missionary in this view—certainly it fell upon Ephraim (with the help of Manasseh) to gather this fruit. So we read in Genesis, “Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall” (Genesis 49:22). We might say, indeed, that not only did the branches grow over the wall to be planted in the American continent, but that also they grew back over the wall again, and not just one wall, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to every people—and every person—upon this earth. All who do not wish to be burned are invited to join Israel, both those who are direct descendants as well as those who have been grafted in or adopted. ¶ Vineyards have to be heavily pruned if they are to yield good grapes with a high degree of sugar. This is done in the winter, when the leaves fall off, and depending on the size of the vineyard, may last about two and a half months. Of the wood that is removed (*sarmiento* in Spanish) a very small amount may be used for plant propagation while the greatest percentage is simply burnt. ¶ *Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.* (*Also see* ISAIAH 32:15; D&C 49:24.) The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “They of the house of Israel shall be fruitful, and they shall multiply; their children’s children shall fill the face of the world.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Israel shall bloom and blossom; and the world shall be filled with his fruit. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, “Israel shall blossom and bud, and they shall fill the face of the world with seed.” Gray makes an astute observation, however, that buds come *before* the blossom, and indeed, the Hebrew (HALOT) would permit the translation **יָצִיץ וּפָרַח** of to be *bud and blossom* instead, as well as *bud and “put out new shoots”* (HALOT). A number of interesting translations include: “Israel will put out buds and flowers” (BBE); “Israel shall blossom and send forth shoots” (AMP, also see ESV, ISV, NASB); and “[Israel] will blossom and bear fruit that covers the earth” (CEV). Kimhi explains, “*Filled with fruitage.* The blessing conferred upon Israel will be enjoyed by the whole world” (in Slotki/Rosenberg). Ironside says, “[Israel] will be a means of blessing to the whole earth as God has intended from the beginning—a nation of priests,¹³ through whom God will make known His salvation to the ends of the earth.” People would be gathered into the Church from every quarter of the earth and produce much good fruit. ¶ *Face of the world,* **פְּנֵי-תֵבֵל**.

Alexander says, “**תֵּבֵל** does not mean the land of Israel,

¹¹ Simeon wrote in 1832, when the Holocaust with all its attendant horrors would pain Judah.

¹² From a horticultural perspective, this is an interesting concept. In our vineyard in Chile, we would plant the choice canes that were pruned in a nursery until they took root, at which point they were transplanted to the various portions of the vineyard to replace decaying or missing vines. Because of phylloxera, in other nations such cuttings must first be grafted into a resistant rootstock. The point here is that prunings or cuttings from vineyards and other types of fruit trees are used for plant propagation. And that these plants are not viable until they take root (i.e., roots grow out of the cuttings).

¹³ Allusion to Exodus 19:5–6, where we read about “a peculiar treasure” and “a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.”

but the world.” Gesenius explains regarding תִּכְלָה: “A poetic word—(1) *fertile and inhabited earth, the habitable globe*.” Indeed Israel is scattered and intermixed with all of the world and through the ingathering bring back fruit from the entire world. Barnes correctly writes: “The sense is, that the people of God would so increase and flourish that the true religion would ultimately fill the entire world.” Not long after I joined the Church I heard Elder McConkie teach: “The gathering place for Peruvians is in the stakes of Zion in Peru, or in the places which soon will become stakes. The gathering place for Chileans is in Chile;¹⁴ for Bolivians it is in Bolivia; for Koreans it is in Korea; and so it goes through all the length and breadth of the earth. Scattered Israel in every nation is called to gather to the fold of Christ, to the stakes of Zion, as such are established in their nations. Isaiah prophesied that the Lord ‘shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root; Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.’ The Lord’s promise is: ‘Ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel.’ (ISAIAH 27:6, 12). That is to say—Israel shall be gathered one by one, family by family, unto the stakes of Zion established in all parts of the earth so that the whole earth shall be blessed with the fruits of the gospel. This then is the counsel of the Brethren: Build up Zion, but build it up in the area where God has given you birth and nationality. Build it up where he has given you citizenship, family, and friends. Zion is here in South America and the Saints who comprise this part of Zion are and should be a leavening influence for good in all these nations.”¹⁵

vv. 7–13. Israel’s enemies have been punished more severely than she has. Part of her punishment, however would require scattering over the surface of the earth. Jerusalem would yet be left desolate. In the last days a new gathering would take place—one much greater than the return of Judah to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity. This gathering, instead, would not only be geographical in nature, but a spiritual one. The gathering spot would be the temple; the House of the Lord (see ISAIAH 2:2; 18:7).

7 ¶ Hath he smitten him, as he smote[✓] those that smote him? [or] is he slain

¹⁴ For years this caused me much pain as I so much wished to go back to the land of my birth, to my beautiful Chile. I have been greatly blessed of the Lord in that I was able to return to Chile with my lovely Principessa and eternal companion in 2014. I have much to be grateful, however, for the time I spent in California, especially the 34 years I worked for the University of California.

¹⁵ McConkie, Bruce R. Come: Let Israel Build Zion, *Ensign* (CR), May 1977, p.115.

according to the slaughter of them that are slain by him?

✓ according to the stroke of

Hath he smitten him, as he smote those that smote him? The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “He shall not, as he smote, be so smitten.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓢ) has the *Lord* smiting, and the *oppressor* being smitten, while the BPE (Ⓢ) specifies no such thing. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “Hath he struck him according to the stroke of him that struck him?” Henderson explains: “In such appeals, the interrogatory ¶, and the corresponding particle Ⓢ,¹⁶ have the force of a strong negative. As McFadyen says: “Hath he (Jehovah) smitten him (Israel), as he (Jehovah) smote those (the foreign oppressors) that smote him (Israel)? Or was he (Israel) slain according to the slaughter of them that are slain by him?” ¶ This is not to say that the children of Israel have not been smitten. For instance, *The Historical Atlas of Judaism* (Barnes and Bacon, 2009) contains a small fraction of the sufferings of Judah and it is enough to make me almost ill. When one adds the sufferings of those who are part of the Ten Tribes of Israel as well as others who have been broken off Israel, such as the natives of the American continent, and their sufferings, all of this constitutes a bleak picture indeed. At the end, however, a remnant remains and will be mixed with the nations of the earth and will be gathered. Calvin makes an important observation in all of this: “The Lord often employs the agency of wicked men in chastising us.” ¶ [Or] is he slain according to the slaughter of them that are slain by him? The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “Nor, as he slew, shall he be so slain.” Not a direct translation, but one that gives its signification has, “I, the LORD, didn’t punish and kill the people of Israel as fiercely as I punished and killed their enemies” (CEV).

8 In measure, when it shooteth forth,[✓] thou wilt debate with it: he stayeth[✓] his rough wind in the day of the east wind.

✓ or, thou sendest it forth

✓ ✓ or, when he removeth it [with]

One translation of this difficult verse is: “In measure, when thou sendest her away, thou dost contend with *her*; he hath removed her with his rough blast in the day of the east wind” (RV, cf. ASV). ¶ *In measure, when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it*: The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “With the measure wherewith thou didst measure¹⁷

¹⁶ Ⓢ, i.e., or.

¹⁷ According to Stenning and Chilton’s Targum (Ⓣ) translations, “with the measure you were measuring with.”

they shall measure unto thee.¹⁸ The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Having fought and disgraced them he will let them go.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) renders it, “With that measure with which he has measured you, so judge him (BPE) / you will judge him (Lamsa).” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “In measure against measure, when it shall be cast off, thou shalt judge it.” ¶ *In measure*. Nägelsbach explains: “מִסָּאָה is by all means a definite measure of grain, and according to the statements of the ancients, the third part of an ephah. But this signification suits admirably. The translation *in measure* is of course not literal. It should be: with a measure of a מִסָּאָה by putting away thou punishest her. The meaning accordingly is that the Lord ordains only a small measureful of punishment for Israel... the expression ‘small measure’ involves necessarily the idea of clemency.” Wesley says, “*In measure*—With moderation.” Barnes has in part: “The word used here is probably a contraction of מִסָּאָה סָאָה literally, ‘measure by measure,’ i: e., ‘moderately,’ or in moderation. So the rabbis generally understand it. The idea is ‘small measure by small measure,’ not a large measure at a time; or, in other words, moderately, or in moderation. It refers, I suppose, to the fact that in inflicting judgment on his people, it had not been done with intolerable severity. The calamity had not been so overwhelming as entirely to cut them off, but had been tempered with mercy.” Calvin quotes Jeremiah, “O LORD, correct me, but with judgment” (Jeremiah 10:24a). ¶ *When it shooteth forth*. The margin ||, rather, renders it, “when thou sendest her¹⁹ forth.” Kaiser says, this is “the image of the driving out of a woman.” Cowles’ says, “‘In sending her (*i.e.*, his people) away,’ ...the word being admirably taken out of the legal phrase for divorcing, putting away, an unfaithful wife.” This notion of sending away or sending to exile is found in most modern translations of בְּשִׁלְחָהּ. We have this same expression in ISAIAH 50:1, שְׁלַחְתִּיהָ, from (שָׁלַח, “to dismiss, send away” HALOT). ISAIAH 50:1 reads: “Thus saith the LORD, Where is the bill of your mother’s divorcement, whom I have put away (שְׁלַחְתִּיהָ)? or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away (שְׁלַחְתִּיהָ).” Jeremiah, returning to the notion in ISAIAH 27:7, and the notion of *in measure*, greatly clarifies this passage—in terms of how the Lord treats His people in contrast to her enemies: “Fear thou

not, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD: for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in *measure* (לְמִשְׁפָּט) from שָׁפַט, *to judge*); yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished” (Jeremiah 46:28, *also see* Jeremiah 30:11). A similar sentiment is found in Psalm 118:18, “The LORD hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death.” Jennings says: “... we must bear in mind the peculiar place that people [Israel] has amid the nations of the earth. It is the only one with which He has entered into a blood-based covenant relationship, as He says: ‘You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.’ (Amos 3:2); that is, I will chasten you because I take a tender interest in you as a father in the child he punishes.” ¶ *Thou wilt debate*. As Wesley and others explain, *contend* תִּתְּרִיבְנָה. I particularly like the translation: “Thou didst contend with them by banishing them, by driving them away” (NAS77). The Lord, out of love, only exacted the smallest consequence that would lead Israel to be reformed. And He did this little by little, measure by measure. At the end, because Israel would not be easily corrected, the Lord had to send her away as an unfaithful wife. Even so, in the latter-days he would take her back in forgiveness. ¶ *He stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind*. Wade, Young and others make mention this wind as the *Sirocco*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Thou didst send forth and oppress them. He meditated a word against them. He prevailed (or, ‘was angry’) against them in the day of wrath. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Thou hast not been visiting with this severe wind, to destroy them utterly with a blast of anger.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) renders it, “According to that which his violent spirit has devised in the day of commotion (BPE) / in fierce anger on a day of blasting heat (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “He hath meditated with his severe spirit in the day of heat.” The Geneva Bible notes have: “That is, you will not destroy the root of your Church, though the branches of it seem to perish by the sharp wind of affliction.” So also Wesley, who says, *stayeth*, thus “mitigate[ing] the severity of the judgment.” HALOT instead suggests that הִנָּה means *drive away*. Most translate this clause similarly to Geneva, “When he bloweth with his rough winde in the day of the East winde,” or ASV, “He hath removed *them* with his rough blast in the day of the east wind.” That is, the Lord sent Israel away with His strong wind. It was through the power of an east wind that the Lord was able to make a way for the escape of the children of Israel. “And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided” (Exodus 14:21, *see also* Genesis 41:6; Job 27:21; Jeremiah

¹⁸ The Targum (Ⲯ) seems to have the sense of Matthew 7:2, “For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.”

¹⁹ בְּשִׁלְחָהּ. [“driving her away” (HCSB); “Thou sendest her away” (RV, JPS); “by sending her away” (LITV).]

18:17; Ezekiel 17:10; Hosea 13:15; Jonah 4:8). We also read how personal an act this was: “And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea” (Exodus 15:8). Gill has, “When afflictions, like a blustering and blasting east wind, threaten much mischief, and to carry all before them, Jehovah, from whom they have their commission, and who holds the winds in his fist, represses them, stops the violence of them, and gradually abates the force of them, and quite stills them, when they have answered the end for which they are sent.” Calvin says, “We know that each country has its own particular wind that is injurious to it.” As I read this, a radio ad has been playing about the Mahan caused by the Santa Ana winds of Southern California.²⁰

9 By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this [is] all the fruit to take away his sin; when he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder, the groves and images[✓] shall not stand up.

✓ or, sun images

By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged. The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “By means of this the iniquity of Jacob will be removed.” The Peshitta (ܣ) uses the term *forgive* rather than *purge*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “Therefore upon this shall the iniquity of the house of Jacob be forgiven.” For **יָכַפֵּר**, *purged*, HALOT has *to atone*, from the root **כָּפַר** (also see Horsley, LHI, ISV). So we read, “Therefore by this the guilt of Jacob will be atoned for, and this will be the full fruit of the removal of his sin &c.” (ESV). Gill explains: “Not that afflictions are atonements for sin, or give satisfaction to divine justice for it; but they are the means of bringing the Lord’s people to a sense of their sins, and to repentance and humiliation for them, and confession of them ...” Young says (regarding **יָכַפֵּר**), “As may be seen by a comparison with ISAIAH 6:7²¹, this word

really means *expiated* or *atoned*. At the same time, the present context shows that it is here employed by metonymy for the effect, namely, purification or purgation. The thought is found also in Proverbs 16:6, ‘By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD *men* depart from evil.’ In other words, the prophet is not stating that the exile provided an atonement for the iniquity of Israel, but merely that by means of the exile, there was purification.” Wordsworth speaks about this purging by quoting Zechariah: “And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, *It is my people*: and they shall say, *The LORD is my God*” (Zechariah 13:9, emphasis added). ¶ *And this [is] all the fruit to take away his sin.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And *thus it shall be* with all the works of the perverseness of their sins.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And this will be to him a subject of thanksgiving, when I take away his sin.” The Peshitta (ܣ) has, “With all this fruit his sin will be removed.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “And this is all the fruit, that the sin thereof should be taken away.” In ISAIAH 5:5 the Lord *takes away* [יִסְרֹף] the protective hedge from Israel; here, He *takes away* [יִסְרֹף] Israel’s sin. Horsley translates this verse as follows: “Yet with all this, the iniquity of Jacob shall be expiated, And this is the whole fruit, the removal of his sin. When he maketh all the stones of the altar as fine dust, The groves and the images, being broken to pieces, shall rise no more ... The end and purpose and the effect of all God’s judgments will be the recovery of his people from their sin.” ¶ *When he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder, the groves and images shall not stand up.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Namely, that they shall make all the stones of the (*idolatrous*) altar like chalk stones that are beaten asunder; the groves and the sun-images shall not be raised up again.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “When they grind to powder all the hewn stones of their altars, and their groves no longer remain, and their idols hack’d to pieces like a forest are far away.” The Peshitta (ܣ) has *pulverized* (BPE) / *broken in pieces* for “beaten in sunder.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “When he shall have made all the stones of the altar, as burnt stones broken in pieces, the groves and temples shall not stand.” The ASV has a more literal rendition: “that he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder, *so that* the *Asherim* [אַשְׁרִים]²² and

²⁰ In Wikipedia we read: “The Santa Ana winds are strong, extremely dry offshore winds that affect coastal Southern California and northern Baja California in autumn and winter. They can range from hot to cold, depending on the prevailing temperatures in the source regions, the Great Basin and upper Mojave Desert. The winds are known for the hot dry weather (often the hottest of the year) that they bring in the fall, and are infamous for fanning regional wildfires.” (URL accessed 25 April 2012).

²¹ **יָכַפֵּר**, “And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin *purged*” (ISAIAH 6:7).

²² Many of the exegetes reject chapters or portions of chapters of Isaiah as being part of what Isaiah wrote. Here, Even Cheyne, considered among the critics, ridicules the possibility of this chapter coming from someone in a later time period: “*That Ashérâhs...*” The mention of the symbols of Ashérâh is not what we should expect from a writer living during the Babylonian exile.”

the sun-images shall rise no more.” Horsley writes: “*When he maketh*] At the same time that the temple of Jerusalem and its altar are demolished, idolatry with that very event shall receive its mortal wound.” Alexander—even though he does not agree with it himself—says: “Some refer the suffix in **בְּשׁוֹמוֹ** [KJV, *when he maketh*, LHI breaks down as *when make him*, **בְּ שֵׁם הָאֵל**] to Jehovah, or to the enemy, and the whole clause to his demolition of the altar at the conquest of Jerusalem.” I like what Horsley²³ has to say in that it becomes clear that “When he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder.” Most exegetes attribute this to Judah destroying her own altars.²⁴ Rather, the effect of the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem would bring about Judah’s rejection of her idols. Only after the temple is pulverized do we have the desired reform: “The groves and images shall not stand up” anymore. Judah indeed realized that she could not lean on her **אֲשֵׁרִים** after the first temple was destroyed (at the time they were carried captive into Babylon). The notion of this verse is not that Judah would show her repentance by pulverizing her idols as most have supposed, but rather, after the altar of the temple²⁵ and the temple itself where pulverized, then Judah would realize that she could not lean of her **Asherim** or other idols—whether those made out of wood, or those related to apostate religion. Gill has, “The sin of idolatry seems to be particularly designed by what follows; unless the sin of the present Jews, in their disbelief and rejection of the Messiah, should be rather intended; which, through their long affliction, they will be convinced of in the latter day, and it will be taken away from them, and be purged and expiated through the atoning sacrifice of Christ, the Saviour and Deliverer, they will embrace (Romans 11:25).”

²³ Also, apparently, Gesenius (*see* Henderson).

²⁴ As Wordsworth well points out, this did happen during the time of Josiah, where “in his Reformation ... he brake down the idolatrous images (2 Kings 23:6; 7–14; 2 Chronicles 34:3–7). This, however, was a very temporary reformation that only lasted a few years and it took place a few decades before the Babylonian captivity.

²⁵ One of the altars in Solomon’s temple was made out of bronze, and the other out of stone (1906 *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Altar, **מִזְבֵּחַ**): “The chief Altar of the temple was ever ... of stone. Upon this Altar the daily sacrifices were offered thereafter, while the bronze Altar was reserved for the king. This stone Altar is called ‘the great Altar’ (2 Kings 16:15).” And also of interest: “Both Josephus and the Mishna state that the altar [in Herod’s temple] was built of unhewn stones.” Delitzsch explains under ISAIAH 33:12—the effects of “the totality of the destruction: they will be so completely burned up, that nothing but ashes will be left, like the lump of lime left at the burning of lime.”

10 Yet the defenced city [shall be] desolate, [and] the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness: there shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down, and consume the branches thereof.

Yet the defenced city [shall be] desolate, [and] the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “But the city that was fortified shall sit solitary: she shall totter, and be forsaken like a desert.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “The folded flock shall be disconsolate, like a flock which hath been forsaken.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *fortified city* (BPE) / *strong city* for *defensed city*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲫ) has, “For the strong city shall be desolate, the beautiful city shall be forsaken, and shall be left as a wilderness.” Rather than *yet*, ASV, HCSB, LITV, NASB, YLT and many others translate **כִּי** as *for*. Wesley has: “*Yet—Yet* before this glorious promise be fulfilled, a dreadful and desolating judgment shall come. The city—Jerusalem and the rest of the defenced cities in the land.” There would be more than one total desolation of Jerusalem. ¶ *There shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down, and consume the branches thereof.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The just shall wage war against her, and plunder her treasures, and make an end of her hosts, so that none shall go forth.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And for a long time the country shall be for a pasture, and flocks shall there take their rest.” Instead of *branches* the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *grass* (Lamsa) / *tender grass* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲫ) has, “There the calf shall feed, and there shall he lie down, and shall consume its branches.” Delitzsch says, “So desolate does Jerusalem lie, that in the very spot which once swarmed with men a calf now quietly eats the green foliage of the bushes that grow between the ruins.” The idea of a desolate city being represented as only good for animal pasture is also found in ISAIAH 7:25, Ezekiel 25:5; Zephaniah 2:14–14 and elsewhere.

11 When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come, [and] set them on fire: for it [is] a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour.

When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Their armies shall be cut off; and they shall be confounded on account of their works, *which* shall be broken.” The LXX (Ⲯ)

reads, “And after a time there will be no verdure in it, by reason of its being parched up.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Its harvest shall be destroyed with drought.” This verse may, in part, be an allusion to ISAIAH 18:5 where we read: “For afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower, he shall both cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks, and take away [and] cut down the branches.” But in this verse, why are the branches withered? Perhaps, from lack of care, the vine is now dead and the branches are simply snapped off, and not the branches only, but the whole vine makes for magnificent fire wood. Grapevine wood are especially good to give warmth but not for much else.²⁶ Yet another figure used in Holy Writ is that of a pruned vine, where the branches cannot sustain life and are ready to be burnt when separated from Christ: “I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned” (John 15:1–6). These prunings are sometimes taken to homes to burn, and are sometimes burned by the side of the vineyard. ¶ Jenour says, “This passage illustrates the meaning of our Lord’s words, Luke 23:31. ‘If, says he, they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the

dry?’ That is, if my heavenly Father permits me, who am holy and innocent, to suffer such things, what shall be done to Jerusalem and its inhabitants who, because of their sins, are fitted for destruction, as a dry and rotten tree is fit only to be burnt?” Faussett has: “Boughs ... broken off—so the Jews are called (Romans 11:17, 19–20).” And not the Jews only, but all of the house of Israel. ¶ *The women come, [and] set them on fire: for it [is] a people of no understanding:* The Targum (T) has, “Women shall enter the house of their idolatry, and teach them, because they are a people of no understanding.” The LXX (G) reads, “O ye women who are coming from a goddess attend! For this is not a people, who have understanding.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Women shall come and teach it: for it is not a wise people.” Redak suggests that Israel is the people of no understanding because of their apostasy (in Rabbi Rosenberg). Alexander says, “Women are mentioned, not in allusion to [their weakness], but because the gathering of firewood in the East is the work of women and children.” ¶ *For it [is] a people of no understanding* [כִּי לֹא עָם בִּינּוּת]. Rawlinson has: “It was folly, madness, to turn away from Jehovah, and go after other gods. Only through having ‘no understanding’ could Israel have been so foolish. (compare Deuteronomy 32:28; 2 Kings 17:15; Jeremiah 4:22).” This is similar the complaint of ISAIAH 1:3, “The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.” Also, a similar sentiment is expressed through the writings of Jeremiah: “Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not” (Jeremiah 5:21). Wildberger says, “In this context, בִּינָה (insight) must be interpreted in a religious sense ... this people can be said to have departed from knowledge of God and from the fear of God. The inhabitants of the city do not understand God’s ways and are not aware of what his promises are all about.” ¶ *Therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour.* The Targum (T) has, “Therefore He that made them shall not have mercy on them, and he that created them shall show them no favour.” The LXX (G) reads, “Therefore he who made them will not have pity on them; nor will he who formed them shew them any favour.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Therefore he that made it, shall not have mercy on it: and he that formed it, shall not spare it.” This is of the broken off wood that will not hold on to the Savior.

²⁶ This idea is made manifest in Ezekiel: “And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, what is the vine tree more than any tree, or than a branch which is among the trees of the forest? Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon? Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel; the fire devoureth both the ends of it, and the midst of it is burned. Is it meet for any work? Behold, when it was whole, it was meet for no work: how much less shall it be meet yet for any work, when the fire hath devoured it, and it is burned? Therefore thus saith the Lord God; As the vine tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And I will set my face against them; they shall go out from one fire, and another fire shall devour them; and ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I set my face against them. And I will make the land desolate, because they have committed a trespass, saith the Lord God” (Ezekiel 15:1–8). In this verse Ezekiel speaks of the vine-tree עֵץ־הַנֶּחֱסֵן (some translate as grapevine (AMP, CEV, ERV), as do most Spanish translators (who use vid, a word associated with the grapevine, cultivated or wild). Since one cannot say that grapevines are useless, perhaps it is speaking of the wild grapevine or other vines that do not produce edible fruit) and contrasts it to the wood cuttings (See Gesenius and HALOT, זֶמֶר) of the trees of the forest (הָעֵצִים הַיְּבֵשִׁים). The latter are useful while the cuttings of the vines are only good for burning. Grapevine branches are only useful while they are attached to the living plant (or when they are used as scions for plant propagation).

12 And it shall come to pass in that day, [that] the LORD shall beat off from the channel of the river unto the stream of

Egypt, and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel.

And it shall come to pass in that day, [that] the LORD shall beat off from the channel of the river unto the stream of Egypt. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And it shall come to pass at that time, that the slain of the Lord shall be cast from the bank of the river Euphrates into the river of Egypt.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “But it shall come to pass in that day, that God will hedge them about from the channel of the river even to Rinocorouron.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has, for the second clause, “shall stir up the people (Lamsa) / shall thresh from the fountain or head (BPE) of the river Euphrates (Lamsa) / river (BPE) to the river of Egypt (Lamsa) / torrent of Egypt (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲫ) has, “And it shall come to pass, that in that day the Lord will strike from the channel of the river even to the torrent of Egypt.” In the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲫ) we have the masculine for channel {flow (Gesenius) / floodwaters (LHI)} מִשְׁבַּל, while the Masoretic text (Ⲫ) has the feminine ending, מִשְׁבַּלִּית.

As usual, HA-NAHAR, נַחַר, or *the river*, stands for *Euphrates*. Regarding Egypt, Wade speaks of the prophecy’s earlier fulfillment, “Jews took refuge in Egypt after the capture of Jerusalem in 587; and their numbers eventually increased so greatly that a translation of the Hebrew scriptures [the LXX Ⲯ] was required to meet their needs, and was begun in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus (285–246).” Regarding ISAIAH 27:12–13, Skinner writes: “A prophecy of the restoration of the dispersed of Israel.” The whole idea is for a large harvest, and this is made easier to understand by some of the other translations: “And it shall come to pass in that day, that Jehovah will beat off *his fruit* from the flood of the River unto the brook of Egypt” (ASV); “And it shall be in that day that the Lord will thresh out His grain from the flood of the River [Euphrates] to the Brook of Egypt” (AMP); “And in that day shall the Lorde make a threshing, from the midst of the riuer Euphrates, vnto the riuer of Egypt” (Bishops); “And in that day shall the Lord thresh from the chanell of the Riuer vnto the riuer of Egypt” (Geneva). Delitzsch has: “The Euphrates and the brook of Egypt, i.e., the Wady el-Arish, were the north-eastern and south-western boundaries of the land of Israel, according to the original promise (Genesis 15:18; 1Kings 8:65).” This is indeed an interesting expression, as it leaves no doubt that it is Israel that is being gathered. The land mentioned is given as symbolism for every corner of the earth. Indeed, the promise was made in such places as Deuteronomy 30:1–6; ISAIAH 11:12 and Ezekiel 37:15–28, that Israel would be gathered. The gathering of Israel is one of the most sublime and constant messages of the Old Testament. Redak here sees an allusion to the

gathering of the Lost Tribes as well as Judah and Benjamin (in Rabbi Rosenberg). ¶ *Beating*, יִחַבֵּט.

Some translators have focused on the harvest of grains motif and thus utilize words like *threshing* and *winnowing* for translating יִחַבֵּט (from חָבַט), e.g.,

Ruth 2:17, יִחַבֵּט (יִחַבֵּט). Wesley explains: “[Beating] is a metaphor from grain which was beaten out with a rod or staff, and then carefully gathered and laid up.” Others have suggested the harvest of fruit, such as grapes or olives (Deuteronomy 24:20; ISAIAH 17:6; 24:13) and thus speak of picking or beating these off the trees.

Cheyne explains that the word *beating* יִחַבֵּט suggests “a more careful plan than threshing.” This is indeed a beautiful sentiment, as the idea is that every individual in a very personal way will receive a warning voice and an invitation to embrace the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Barnes has: “The use of these words here shows that the image is taken from the act of collecting fruit or grain after harvest; and the expression means, that as the farmer gathers in his fruit, so God would gather in his people. In the figure, it is supposed that the garden or vineyard of Yahweh extends from the Euphrates to the Nile; that his people are scattered in all that country; that there shall be agitation or a shaking in all that region as when a farmer beats off his fruit from the tree, or beats out his grain; and that the result would be that all those scattered people would be gathered into their own land.” Gill writes: “alluding either to the beating off of fruit from a tree, or to the beating out of grain from the ear; and signifies the separating of the Lord’s people in the effectual calling from the rest of the world; as the fruit beaten off is separated from the tree, and corn beaten out is separated from the ear and chaff; for this beating off does not intend judgment, but mercy; and is done not by the rod of affliction, but by the rod of the Lord’s strength sent out of Zion, even the Gospel, the power of God to salvation; which, in the ministration of it.” Amos has, “For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn²⁷ is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth” (Amos 9:9).²⁸ These are them that leave Babylon and enter Zion or The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. ¶ *And ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And ye shall be brought near one to the other (or, ‘one to the side of the other’), O ye sons of Israel.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Therefore gather ye the sons of Israel together one by one.” The BPE (Ⲫ) follows the

²⁷ Not maize, but rather *grains*.

²⁸ Faussett explains this verse in Amos: “I will cause the Israelites to be tossed about through all nations as corn is shaken about in a sieve, in such a way, however, that while the chaff and dust (the wicked) fall through (perish), all the solid grains (the godly elect) remain (are preserved), (Romans 11:26; compare Note, see on Jeremiah 3:14).”

Masoretic text (מ) while Lamsa (ס) instead of *gathered one by one* renders it *gathered one to another*. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “And you shall be gathered together one by one, O ye children of Israel.” Regarding לְאֶחָד אֶחָד, *one by one*, several translations have been proposed, but the best is that we have in the Authorized Version, or as Calvin explains: “I will gather you, not in companies nor in great numbers, but one after another.” Young has, “The gathering will not be by a mighty influx, but one by one.” Elder McConkie explained: “Israel—his chosen ones—shall be gathered in from their long dispersion; though they have been scattered in all the nations of the earth, yet they shall come out of darkness into the marvelous light of Christ when the Lord raises an ensign to the nations. ‘Ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel . . . and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.’ (ISAIAH 27:12–13)”²⁹ ¶ The Bible is full of promises about this Holy gathering (see *Rain in Due Season* introduction). And so is the Book of Mormon: “And then shall the remnants, which shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth, be gathered in from the east and from the west, and from the south and from the north; and they shall be brought to the knowledge of the Lord their God, who hath redeemed them” (3 Nephi 20:11–13, see also Zechariah 8:7–8). Furthermore we read: “And I will remember the covenant which I have made with my people [now speaking of Judah]; and I have covenanted with them that I would gather them together in mine own due time, that I would give unto them again the land of their fathers for their inheritance, which is the land of Jerusalem, which is the promised land unto them forever, saith the Father” (3 Nephi 20:29).

13 And it shall come to pass in that day, [that] the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

And it shall come to pass in that day, [that] the great trumpet shall be blown. The LXX (G) reads, “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be sounded.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “And it shall come to pass, that in that day a noise shall be made with a great trumpet.” Barnes writes: “This verse is designed to describe in another mode the same fact as that stated in ISAIAH 27:12, that Yahweh would re-

collect his scattered people.” Gill says regarding the first part of this clause, וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם, “When the Lord is about to do the above things... The Talmudists (T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 110. 2. Midrash Kohelet. fol. 68. 3.) apply this text to the world to come, or times of the Messiah, when the ten tribes shall be returned.” ¶ *Great trumpet*, בְּשׁוֹפָר גָּדוֹל. Or rather, *with great shofar*, or ram’s horn. This is the same shofar (שׁוֹפָר, or trumpet) we read about in ISAIAH 18:3 where dispersed Israel is called to return unto the Lord: “All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye.” Kimhi says, “The blowing of the *shofar* is a signal for assembly and return to God” (in Slotki/Rosenberg). Jennings points us to Matthew 24:31, calling all her outcasts back: “And He shall send forth His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, and from one end of heaven to the other.” Faussett has: “**great trumpet**—image from the trumpets blown on the first day of the seventh month to summon the people to a holy convocation (Leviticus 23:24). Antitypically, the gospel trumpet (Revelation 11:15; 14:6³⁰) which the Jews shall hearken to in the last days (Zechariah 12:10; 13:1).” In Matthew 24:31 we observe: “And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” ¶ Now this is an interesting relation I will share here. I attended a fireside where we heard Sarah Grimes speak to the Modesto 12th Spanish Branch upon returning from the Osorno, Chile Mission (April 2012). She related to us a story about a convert she knew who had frequent visits from an angel with a trumpet in his mouth. When she received the lessons from the Elders, they showed her a copy of the Book of Mormon—the one that has angel Moroni blowing a trumpet. She asked in surprise, “What are you doing with *my* angel?” After gaining a testimony of the one and true Church she never saw those apparitions again. ¶ *And they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt.* These lands are outside what was mentioned as the land proper to be inherited by Israel and thus represents the idea of gathering from the four quarters of the earth (see ISAIAH 27:12). The Targum (T) seems a clearer continuation of the Masoretic (M) text here, with strong allusions to the gathering of the Lost Tribes: “And they shall come, who had gone into captivity in the land of Assyria, and those who were cast into the land of Egypt.” The LXX (G) reads, “And those shall come who are perishing in the land of Assyria, and they who are perishing in

²⁹ McConkie, Bruce R. *The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary*, 4:350.

³⁰ Angel Moroni, also quoted earlier in this chapter.

Egypt.” The Peshitta (S) has instead of *perish* in the land of Assyria, *scattered* (Lamsa) / *dispersed* (BPE) in the land of Assyria; and instead of *outcasts* in the land of Egypt, *lost* (Lamsa) / *disappeared* (BPE) in the land of Egypt. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And they that were lost, shall come from the land of the Assyrians, and they that were outcasts in the land of Egypt.” ¶ So why is Asshur (אַשּׁוּר, i.e., Assyria) mentioned here instead of Babylon? Because it would be the ten tribes that would be gathered one by one, and it was Assyria who took them away captive; while Judah was taken captive by Babylon. Judah, in contrast, would be restored in a day. This will happen at the time when Judah will look at Him whom they have pierced and recognize the promised Messiah (Zechariah 13:6). ¶ In the Bishops Bible we have, “In that day shall the great trumpe be blowne, so that they which were *lost* in the lande of Assyria &c.” Also see ABP {LXX (G)}, AMP, DRB, ESV, HCSB, JPS, LBP). Others have *those wondering* (BBE), *dragged away* (CEV) and *exile[d]* (GNB). All make the allusion to the scattering of Israel clear. Gray says, regarding הָאֲבָדִים, “away from home in a strange and unfamiliar land,” and translates Ezekiel 34:4b–5a, “**The outcast** (הַגִּבְרִית) ye brought not back (home), and **the lost** (הָאֲבָדִים) ye sought not, and they were scattered from having no shepherd, and became food for all the beasts of the field,” and continues with Ezekiel 34:12–16, “As a shepherd seeketh out his flock..., so will I seek out my sheep, and rescue them from all the places wither they have been scattered; and I will bring them out from all the peoples, and collect them from all the lands, and bring them to their ground (KJV has, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land); and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel. There shall they lie down in a good home-stead ... I myself will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down.... The lost (הָאֲבָדִים) I will seek, and the outcast (הַגִּבְרִית) will I bring back (home).” Hosea, in regards to Ephraim, or the northern tribes, says: “O Israel [speaking of Ephraim in contraposition to Judah], return unto the LORD thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity [Ephraim is invited to return, or repent]. Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips. [Ephraim recognizes her faults and asks for forgiveness] Asshur shall not save us [אַשּׁוּר, Asshur, that is Assyria, Ephraim now recognizes, will not be able to save her—another form of idolatry is leaning on strong nations rather than on the Lord]; we will not ride upon horses [another allusion, as horses stand for strength, Ephraim recognizes that she cannot lean upon horses any more

than she can lean upon Asshur]: neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods [Ephraim recognizes that her idol gods can do nothing for her]: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy [Ephraim represents herself as the fatherless here, and recognizes that her only true strength comes from the Lord]. I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him. [The Lord is here accepting of Ephraim’s repentance] I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. [A horticultural figure is given both as Israel putting forth roots and the Lord watering her with daily dew or care] His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. [Ephraim shall greatly grow and give much fruit] They that dwell under his shadow shall return [this particular shadow seems to be the one offered by the Lord to those who return—and also seems to represent the shadow of protection offered by His Church through Ephraim, to the rest of the tribes of Israel, in the last days]; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. [Representing the blessings and fruitfulness of those who turn to Christ and live] Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? [All sort of idols are rejected, those of wood and all others, ready to make peace with the Lord (see ISAIAH 27:5)] I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found. [Representing the Savior, or the green tree] Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? [the lack of understanding of former days is gone] for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.” (Hosea 14:1–9). ¶ And Keith makes comment much like mine, about ISAIAH 27:12–13: “It is ... of the ten tribes of Israel that the text seems specially to speak; it is of them that it is said that their return will be one by one.” ¶ *And shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem* [בְּהַר הַקֹּדֶשׁ בִּירוּשָׁלַם]. The LXX (G) reads, “And shall bow themselves down before the Lord, on this holy mountain in Jerusalem.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has *adore* instead of its synonym, *worship*. Once again we must turn to ISAIAH 18, and its most triumphal verse: “In that time shall the present be brought unto the LORD of hosts of a people scattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, the mount Zion” (ISAIAH 18:7). This stands for Israel being gathered to the holy temples, including Judah’s gathering to the House of the Lord that once again will be built in Jerusalem. “This is the great and central purpose of the return,” Young explains. “It is that the

dispersed ones may worship the Lord.” The return will be both a physical and a spiritual phenomenon. Barnes writes: “Their temple shall be rebuilt; their city shall be restored; and in the place where their fathers worshipped shall they also again adore the living God. This closes the prophecy which was commenced in ISAIAH 24; and the design of the whole is to comfort the Jews with the assurance, that though they were to be

made captive in a distant land, yet they would be again restored to the land of their fathers, and again worship God there.”

30 April 2011

Isaiah 28

ISAIAH 28 and 29 are intimately connected. Ephraim is drunk—but not just with wine or hard liquor (ISAIAH 29:9)—but with *false doctrine*. ISAIAH 28 has dual fulfillments, both to the children of Israel living at the time of Isaiah and shortly thereafter, as well as to the latter days. The Lord would deal with both Ephraim and Judah in His own wise way, as mentioned by Kay, for He “is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working” (ISAIAH 28:29). Various references to the Messiah are found here as well as to the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Lord gives more knowledge to those who accept what has already been given to them. Great calamities will threaten the earth in the last days. Spiritual bondage comes to those who will not accept the peace the Lord offers through His Gospel. A parable of a planter is given to show how the Lord will correct as needed, in order to guide His children back to the truth.

vv. 1-8. Ephraim is drunk. In former times it would be through the instrumentality of Asshur that Ephraim would be castigated. When it comes to crowns, the only true crown would be that of the Savior. After a rejoicing thought about the Messiah, Isaiah turns his attention to the calamities to befall Judah.

1 ¶ WOE to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty [is] a fading flower, which [are] on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome ✓ with wine!

✓ broken

WOE to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty [is] a fading flower. The Targum (ⓧ) has, “Woe that he gave a crown to the proud and foolish prince of Israel, and that he gave a diadem to the wicked of the house of the sanctuary of His praise.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “Ah! the crown of haughtiness! The mercenaries of Ephraim! That flower which hath fallen from the glory” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has, for the final clause, “the shameful diadem of the *strength* (Lamsa) / *power* (BPE) of his *glory* (Lamsa) / *boasting* (BPE).” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, for the last clause, “And to the fading flower the glory of his joy.” LHI here translates אִי as *Ah!* (see ISAIAH 18).

This concept of a fading flower is developed to its ultimate beauty in ISAIAH 40:6–8, where the glory of man—or a fading flower—is contrasted to the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. The *glorious beauty* of Ephraim is nothing but temporal and fleeting. In ISAIAH 28:7 we see that all have given themselves to drunkenness. Rawlinson has, “The ‘drunkards of Ephraim,’ or of the ten tribes, were at once intoxicated with wine (Amos 4:1; 6:6) and with pride (Amos 6:13). As the external aspect of affairs grew more and more threatening through the advances of Tiglath-Pileser and

Shalmaneser, they gave themselves up more and more to self-indulgence and luxury, lay upon beds of ivory, drank wine from bowls, feasted to the sound of the viol, and even invented fresh instruments of music (Amos 6:4–5). At the same time, they said in their hearts, ‘Have we not taken by our own strength?’ (Amos 6:13). They persisted in regarding themselves as secure, when even ordinary political foresight might have seen that their end was approaching.” ¶ This drunkenness, as we have already pointed out, is not just the imbibing of alcohol but also the drinking in of false doctrines. Ironside says, “Drunkenness, in Scripture, is often used to illustrate or represent the effects of spiritual intoxication brought about by refusing obedience to the Word of the Lord and giving heed to false teaching.” Jennings wrote of his fellow religious professors: “It is ever the characteristic mark of the ‘last days;’ so today, under cover of a formal religion called ‘church-membership,’ the mass of Christian professors are ‘lovers of pleasure, rather than lovers of God’ (2 Timothy 3:4), and there is again, alas, that same spiritual torpor as wine produces on the brain.” Jenour, leaning on Vitranga, speaks of the false or childish doctrines that would lead the people to reject the very Christ. It was Ephraim, through Jeroboam, who made false temples and ordained false priests after the Israeli civil war: “And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David: If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah. Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan. And he made an house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi. And

Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he offered upon the altar. So did he in Bethel, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made. So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Bethel the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own heart; and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel: and he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense” (1 Kings 12:26–33). ¶ As a result of these and subsequent actions, Asshur would take Ephraim captive. The Prophet, however, is getting ready to introduce a future apostasy, one that was just as sinister, and one which would take place before the coming forth of the Book of Mormon: “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears” (2 Timothy 4:3). Isaiah, then, managed to weave together the present situation with Asshur, and the great apostasy. Delitzsch says, “The epithet נָבֵל (fading: possibly a genitive, as in ISAIAH 28:4), which is introduced here into the midst of this picture of splendour, indicates that all this splendour is not only destined to fade, but is beginning to fade already.

¶ Which [are] *on the head* [עַל-רֹאשׁ] of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine! The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “They who are at the head of the valley of fatness are smitten with wine.” The LXX (Ⓦ) reads, “On the top of the fertile mountain! Ye who are drunk without wine!” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “Who were on the head of the fat valley, staggering with wine.” Barnes writes, “The allusion in this verse to the ‘crown’ and ‘the fading flower’ encircling Samaria, Grotius thinks is derived from the fact that among the ancients, drunkards and revellers were accustomed to wear a crown or garland on their heads, or that a wreath or chaplet of flowers was usually worn on their festival occasions.” Lowth explains: “That this custom of wearing chaplets in their banquets prevailed among the Jews, as well as among the Greeks and Romans, appears from the following passage of the book of Wisdom: ‘Let us fill ourselves with costly wine and ointments, And let no flower of the spring pass by us: Let us crown ourselves with rose-buds before they are withered’ (Wisdom 2:7–8).” Delitzsch writes: “Samaria stood upon a beautiful swelling hill, which commanded the whole country round in a most regal way (Amos 4:1; 6:1), in the centre of a large basin, of about two hours’ journey in diameter, shut in by a gigantic circle of still loftier mountains (Amos 3:9). The situation was commanding; the hill terraced up to the very top; and the surrounding country splendid and fruitful (Ritter, *Erdkunde*, xvi. 660, 661).” Let us also remember that in

ISAIAH 7:9 Ephraim is condemned because her *head* (רֹאשׁ) was a man and *not* the Lord.

2 Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, [which] as a tempest of hail [and] a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand.

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Behold plagues (the Royal Polyglot reads נִסֵּי וּמוֹת, ‘behold how’ &c.), strong and mighty, are coming from the Lord: like a storm of hail, like a whirlwind, like a storm of mighty waters, overflowing, thus (Royal Polyglot כִּי, ‘when’) the nations shall come upon them, and shall lead them into captivity to another land on account of the sins which are in their hands.” The LXX (Ⓦ) reads, “Behold the wrath of the Lord is a harsh and terrible thing. Like a tempest of hail furiously driven when there is no shelter, like a mighty deluge sweeping a country.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) renders the last clause, “I will give rest to the earth through your hand.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “Behold the Lord is mighty and strong, as a storm of hail: a destroying whirlwind, as the violence of many waters overflowing, and sent forth upon a spacious land.” The Masoretic text (Ⓜ) has *Lord* (Adonai) אֲדֹנָי, rather than *LORD* (YHWH) יְהוָה, as is found in the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⓢ). ¶ Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one. As Gill says, “That is, a powerful king, with a mighty army, meaning Shalmaneser king of Assyria; whom the Lord had at his beck and command, and could use at his pleasure, as his instrument, to bring down the towering pride of Ephraim, and chastise him for his sensuality.” ¶ [Which] as a tempest of hail [and] a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing. The expression *a flood of mighty waters overflowing* reminds us of Asshur: “Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks” (ISAIAH 8:7). Rawlinson further explains: “The fearfully devastating force of an Assyrian invasion is set forth under three distinct images—a hailstorm, a furious tempest of wind, and a violent inundation—as though so only could its full horror be depicted. War is always a horrible scourge; but in ancient times, and with a people so cruel as the Assyrians, it was a calamity exceeding in terribleness the utmost that the modern reader can conceive. It involved the wholesale burning of cities and villages, the wanton destruction of trees and crops, the slaughter of thousands in battles and sieges, the

subsequent massacre of hundreds in cold blood, the plunder of all classes, and the deportation of tens of thousands of captives, who were carried into hopeless servitude in a strange land.” ¶ *Shall cast down to the earth with the hand.* Barnes has: “Septuagint: βίη *bia* - ‘Force,’ ‘violence.’ This is its meaning here; as if it were taken in the hand, like a cup, and dashed indignantly to the ground.”

3 The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under feet: ✓

✓ with feet

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “The crown of the pride of the foolish prince of Israel shall be trodden down with feet.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “In this land it will put a stop to the labour of hands; and with the feet shall be trampled down the crown of your pride, mercenaries of Ephraim.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “The crown of pride of the drunkards &c.” In other words, Ephraim should be brought down in her pride despite the crown of beautiful flowers mentioned in ISAIAH 28:1, 4. Gill notes: “Not only cast down with the hand, but trampled upon with the feet; showing their utter destruction, and the contempt with which they should be used.”

4 And the glorious beauty, which [is] on the head of the fat valley, shall be a fading flower, [and] as the hasty fruit before the summer; which [when] he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he eateth ✓ it up.

✓ swalloweth

And the glorious beauty, which [is] on the head of the fat valley, shall be a fading flower. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And the diadem, which he gave to the wicked of the house of the sanctuary of His praise, which is on the head of the valley of fatness.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And the flower which hath dropped from the hope of the Glory, on the top of the lofty mountain.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) renders it “And the shameful diadem, the *strength* (Lamsa) / *power* (BPE) of his *glory* (Lamsa) / *boasting* (BPE) which dominates at the entrance (Lamsa) / *is found in the best* (BPE) of the fertile valley.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “And the fading flower the glory of his joy, who is on the head of the fat valley.” ⓂⓂⓂ is correctly translated, as *first fruits*, from ⓂⓂⓂ. Others translate more specifically as early figs, but *fig trees* are ⓂⓂⓂ. I suppose the latter translation assumes an elliptical associated with

ⓂⓂⓂ, as we see below. For instance, the ASV has: “And the fading flower of his glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley, shall be as the first-ripe fig before the summer.” There are various early crops that are harvested before the full summer comes in, such as strawberries, cherries and the first figs. Fig trees are very interesting in that they provide a double crop. In Spanish, the first and more delicious crop, *brevas* (but albacora from Hebrew ⓂⓂⓂ *bicur* and Arabic *alabakura* (see María Moliner, below), is differentiated from the second, *higos*. In María Moliner we read the first acceptance for *albacora*¹: “(del árabe and. ‘albakúra’) f. *Breva (higo de la primera cosecha).” In Nahum we read: “All thy strong holds *shall be like* fig trees [ⓂⓂⓂ] with the *firstripe* [ⓂⓂⓂ] *figs*²: if they be shaken, they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater” (Nahum 3:12). ¶ *[And] as the hasty fruit before the summer; which [when] he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he eateth it up.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Shall be as the first ripe fig before the summer, which, when one sees it (literally, ‘when he seeth’ ‘on looking at it’), no sooner is it in the hand (literally, as if it were in his hands), that one devours it.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Shall be like the early fruit of a fig tree, which he who seeth it will wish to devour, before he can get it into his hand.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *early* (BPE) / *first* (Lamsa) fruits rather than *hasty fruit*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “Shall be as a hasty fruit before the ripeness of autumn: which when he that seeth it shall behold, as soon as he taketh it in his hand, he will eat it up.” The CEV paraphrase offers, “It will be gobbled down like the first ripe fig at harvest season.” ⓂⓂⓂ *While it is yet*. Henderson writes: “While the others [latter fig crops] hang long upon the tree after they become ripe, the boccora drops immediately on the tree being slightly shaken by the hand, or even of itself, Jeremiah 24:2; Hosea 9:10; Micah 7:1. It is from these circumstances the prophet here borrows his image, in order to shew how suddenly and easily Samaria should be taken. A three years’ siege must have been reckoned short in ancient times, since that of Tyre, under ebuchadnezzar, lasted thirteen, and that of Askalon twenty-nine years.” This idea of a short siege is mentioned by almost all of the exegetes, but I prefer Alexander’s comments: “The immediate eating of the fruit is only mentioned as a sign of eagerness or greediness³. Vitringa understands the simile as meaning that Samaria when taken would be instantly destroyed,

¹ Alexander has, “This name of the early fig is still retained not only in Arabic, but in Spanish, into which it was transplanted by the Moors.

² This second *figs* is not in the text, so it should also be in italics.

³ Archaic expression for someone who enjoys eating.

as the first ripe fruit is eaten and not stored away...

בְּעוֹד ... does not literally mean *as soon as*, but *while yet*, which renders the expression stronger still, as strictly denoting that he eats it while it is yet in his hand.” Certainly, if Samaria and the northern tribes are represented by the *breva*, or the early fig, Jerusalem and Judah are well represented by the *higo* or late fig. They would both be taken. In terms of history at that time, the first would be completely devoured in terms of the exile experience, but mixing metaphors, the latter would be *stored away* for seventy years and some of her peoples returned to the homeland.

5 In that day shall the LORD of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people,

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “At that time, the Messiah of the Lord of hosts shall be for a crown of rejoicing, and for a crown of praise to the remnant of his people.” Here is the *Hosea Principle*, where the Lord cannot speak of the evils that will befall his people Israel without very soon telling us how in the last days these things will happily change. These words have a thrilling tone to them. The fading glory of the crown of Ephraim is now replaced by the crown of glory, the crown of beauty, the crown of the King Messiah, of Jesus the Christ. Rabbi Rosenberg says, “The Rabbis, too, interpret this passage as referring to Messianic times, as is evidenced by their interpretation of **וְלִצְפִּירֶת תְּפאָרָה** [and for a diadem of beauty] for those who hope for His glory, i.e., those who hope for God’s glory in Messianic times (Redak).”

¶ *In that day, בְּיוֹם / Unto the residue of his people.*

The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “In that day the Lord of Hosts will be the crown of hope—the diadem of glory to the remnant of the people.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) uses *remnant* instead of *residue*. Most Jewish and Gentile authors think this as the residue of Judah, the tribes to remain after Ephraim would be captured by Asshur. Instead, it refers to the remnant of the children of Israel that the Lord would recover in the last days. The expression *in that day בְּיוֹם* strengthens the view that the latter days are referred to, rather than the temporary righteousness of Judah under King Hezekiah. Skinner well says, “It means a converted remnant ... The writer is here looking beyond the whole series of national judgments, and the insertion of the promise is evidently suggested by the contrast between the false glory that has vanished and the true glory which shall endure.” ¶ *Shall the LORD of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty.* The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has *garland of joy* instead of *diadem of beauty*. Instead of wanting an earthly king as demanded by the children of Israel in the

days of Samuel, the Christ King will be the glory of Israel, even a diadem of beauty. The Targum tradition (Seder Nezikin, Sanhedrin 111b) has this: “R. Eleazar said in R. Hanina’s name: The Lord shall be a crown upon the head of every righteous man, as it is written, In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory [zebi], and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people etc. What is meant by for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty? — To those who obey His will and hope for His salvation. I might think, this applies to all; therefore Scripture states, unto the residue of his people, [meaning] unto those who make themselves as a remnant. And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate. ‘And for a spirit of judgment’ — this means, to him who rules over his [evil—GB] inclinations; ‘and to him that sitteth in judgment’: i.e., to him that renders an honest judgment according to the truth thereof; ‘and for strength’ — viz., to him that prevails against his evil inclinations; ‘that turn the battle’ — to those who engage in the battle of the Torah; ‘to the gate’ — to those who repair morning and evening to the synagogue and house of study” (Talmud, Soncino). Barnes says, “This reign of Yahweh shall be to *them* better than palaces, towers, walls, and fruitful fields, and shall be a more glorious ornament than the proud city of Samaria was to the kingdom of Israel ... [crown of glory] A beautiful garland. The phrase stands opposed to the wreath of flowers or the diadem which was represented ISAIAH 28:1, 3 as adorning the kingdom and capital of Israel. Yahweh and his government would be to *them* their chief glory and ornament” (emphasis added). As I read these words from Barnes I see, with thrilling gratitude, that this prophecy has been fulfilled in me as partly a descendant of Ephraim (maternal side), and partly a descendant of Judah (paternal side). And this reminds me of something that happened only a few weeks ago in our Gospel Doctrine class. This year (2012) our subject of study is the Book of Mormon. We were reading the words of Enos in the Modesto 12th Spanish Branch: “And after I, Enos, had heard these words, my faith began to be unshaken in the Lord; and I prayed unto him with many long strugglings for my brethren, the Lamanites. And it came to pass that after I had prayed and labored with all diligence, the Lord said unto me: I will grant unto thee according to thy desires, because of thy faith. And now behold, this was the desire which I desired of him—that if it should so be, that my people, the Nephites, should fall into transgression, and by any means be destroyed, and the Lamanites should not be destroyed, that the Lord God would *preserve a record of my people*, the Nephites; even if it so be by the power of his holy arm, that it might be brought forth at some future day unto the Lamanites, that, perhaps, *they might be brought unto salvation*—For at the present our

strugglings were vain in restoring them to the true faith. And they swore in their wrath that, if it were possible, they would destroy our records and us, and also all the traditions of our fathers. Wherefore, I knowing that the Lord God was able to preserve our records, I cried unto him continually, for he had said unto me: Whatsoever thing ye shall ask in faith, believing that ye shall receive in the name of Christ, ye shall receive it. And I had faith, and I did cry unto God that *he would preserve the records*; and he covenanted with me that he would bring them forth unto the Lamanites in his own due time” (Enos 1:11–16, emphasis added). The Spirit wrought upon me with much strength as we read those words in class and I was moved to ask class members: “What records were these, and to whom were they particularly written for?” While some had a bit of a blank stare for a moment, others caught the spirit of the moment and said, “The Book of Mormon... and to us, who are the very descendants of the Lamanites spoken about. Enos was praying for us!”⁴

6 And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.

And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment. The Targum (ܬ) has, “For a word of true judgment (literally, ‘judgment of truth’) to them that sit in the house of justice, in order that they should judge according to truth.” The LXX (ϸ) reads, “They shall be left for the spirit of Justice.” The Peshitta (ܣ) has *spirit of justice* instead of *spirit of judgment*. Also, *in that day* ܒַּיּוֹם, of ISAIAH 28:5, the remnant would be filled by a spirit of judgment and would judge with righteousness. Delitzsch says, “There would be an end to unjust judging and powerless submission.” ¶ *And for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.* The Targum (ܬ) has, “And to give victory to them that are going forth into battle, to bring them back in peace to their homes.” The LXX (ϸ) reads, “To administer justice and destroy the power of the opposers.” The Peshitta (ܣ) renders it “And for strength to those who at the gate are able to resist the battle.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And strength to them that return out of the battle to the gate.” The Masoretic text (M) has the *locative* ִּי⁵ ending that

⁴ I sometimes have very poignant moments as I prepare to teach. And it also has happened to me, often, that the Spirit is manifested in a very special way in our classes with additional information that I had not considered as I prepared. Every Priesthood, Sunday school, Seminary and Institute class can be a sort of *School of the Prophets* experience if we bring the right spirit with us.

⁵ Andersen, F. I., & Forbes, A. D. (2006; 2006). *A Systematic Glossary to the Andersen-Forbes Analysis of the Hebrew Bible*. Logos Bible Software.

here does not indicate *feminine gender* but rather the direction of the movement, שַׁעַר, *to the gate*, in contrast to the DSS 1QIsa^a (Q), where we just find שַׁעַר, *[at the] gate* (DSSB). Henderson explains: “‘to the gate,’ i.e. of the enemy; not only repelling his attack in Judaea, but driving him back into his own fortified places. (Compare 1 Samuel 17:52.)”

7 But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble [in] judgment.

But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink. The Targum (ܬ) has, “But verily these are drunk with wine, they are swallowed up of old wine: the priest and the scribe are drunk, in old wine are swallowed up: on account of wine they have erred.” The LXX (ϸ) reads, “For by wine these were made transgressors; they were led astray by strong drink. Priest and prophet were stupefied with strong drink.” The Peshitta (ܣ) has *gone astray* rather than *have erred*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “But these also have been ignorant through wine, and through drunkenness have erred: the priest and the prophet have been ignorant through drunkenness.” The Masoretic text (M) has *But these also*, וְגַם אֵלֶּה, while the MSS 1QIsa^a (Q) is missing the *vav* and renders it *These also*, גַּם אֵלֶּה. After condemning Ephraim, and stopping to briefly celebrate the times of King Messiah, the Prophet now turns his attention to Judah (see also ISAIAH 28:14, where Jerusalem is mentioned by name). This mutual censure is seen frequently. For instance, in Ezekiel 23 the Lord speaks of two sensual sisters—Aholah, representing Samaria; Aholibah, Jerusalem—as being guilty of apostasy. Such a state of apostasy was to be found both in pre-exilic Judah and Ephraim, as well as the latter days when counterfeit doctrine would prevail. Jennings explains that they were “intoxicated with the falsehood they preach.” Kay has, “Isaiah’s contemporary, Micah, represents the prophets as ‘making God’s people to err,’ by ‘prophesying to them of wine and strong drink’ (Micah 2:11; 3:5),—promising them an interrupted course of worldly prosperity.” Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained: “Truly this is the day of which Isaiah spoke: ‘The priest and the prophet have erred, . . . they are out of the way, . . . they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.’ And

then with reference to the spiritual food they offer their congregations, he acclaimed: ‘All tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean’ (ISAIAH 28:7–8).⁶ So also in the Book of Mormon we see such instances of apostasy: “And now Abinadi said unto them: Are you priests, and pretend to teach this people, and to understand the spirit of prophesying, and yet desire to know of me what these things mean? I say unto you, wo be unto you for perverting the ways of the Lord! For if ye understand these things ye have not taught them; therefore, ye have perverted the ways of the Lord” Mosiah 12:25–26). ¶ *They are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble [in] judgment.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “They are turned after sweet food; their judges have erred.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “They were gorged with wine—they were agitated by drunkenness; they reeled to and fro.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲥ) has, “They are overcome with wine, they stagger with strong drink, they err in judgment with drunkenness, they eat immoderately.” The BPE (Ⲥ) has, “They stagger because of drink that causes drunkenness; they are lost because of gluttony.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, beginning with the second clause, “They have gone astray in drunkenness, they have not known him that seeth, they have been ignorant of judgment.” This stumbling in judgment, then, is more than inebriation, but a stumbling in spiritual discernment. ¶ *In vision* ⲃⲣⲁⲓⲁ, from ⲣⲁⲓⲁ, *too see* (Gesenius). Also see 1 Samuel 9:9.

8 For all tables are full of vomit [and] filthiness, [so that there is] no place [clean].

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Because all their tables are full of polluted and loathsome food: they have not a spot free from rapine.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “This is oracling! A curse shall devour their counsel; for their counsel is for the sake of gain.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, for the last clause, “So that there was no more place.”

¶ ⲃⲗ-ⲥⲗⲁⲛⲟⲩ *all tables*. Kay begins to tie this chapter to the coming one, “There is little indication of penitential sorrow having laid hold of the people... They ‘honoured the Lord with their lips,’ though ‘their heart was far from Him’ (ISAIAH 29:13)... Thus their outward reform became to most of them like a draught of spiritual intoxication.” Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained that these tables of vomit and filth are

reflective of false doctrines that abound outside of the restored Church.⁷

vv. 9–13. The question is asked regarding who is able to receive true doctrine and revelation. And how will such be received when it is received. The humble will accept revelation from God rather than lean on man’s teachings. The Lord instructs us through the Spirit, little by little, as we are able to bear it. The hearing of the word brings to pass much good, including entering into the rest or peace of the Lord. Yet many are not willing to accept this invitation and thus remain in spiritual bondage.

9 ¶ Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? ~ [them that are] weaned from the milk, [and] drawn from the breasts.

✓ the hearing?

Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine [ⲛⲃⲓⲛ ⲥⲙⲟⲩⲉⲃⲁ]? Of

ⲥⲙⲟⲩⲉⲃⲁ Horsley explains that “This is a general word for the whole matter of Divine revelation, consisting of doctrine, precept, prophetic warning, promises and threatenings.” Alexander has, “ⲥⲙⲟⲩⲉⲃⲁ properly denotes something heard, and here means that which the Prophet heard from God and the people from the Prophet; in other words, divine revelation, whether general or special.” The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “To whom was the law given? And to whom was the command given to understand wisdom? Was it not to the house of Israel, who were beloved above all nations, and beloved above all the kingdoms?” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “To whom, [say they] have we announced evils? And to whom have we announced a message?” For *doctrine* the Peshitta (Ⲥ) has *report* (Lamsa) / *message* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has *understand the hearing* for *understand doctrine*. The question at hand is to whom the Spirit of God can teach knowledge to, given such a great apostasy. As we see below, the context of this verse is strictly associated with the learning of doctrine line upon line, as individuals show they are able to do so. The Prophet Brigham Young taught “The Gospel may be preached to an individual, and the truth commend itself to the conscience of that person, creating but a little faith in its truth, to which there may be an addition made. If persons can receive a little, it proves they may receive more. If they can receive the first and second principles with an upright feeling, they

⁶ Bruce R. McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man*, pp. 75–76.

⁷ Bruce R. McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man*, p.693

may receive still more, and the words of the Prophet be fulfilled. He, seeing and understanding the mind of man, and the operations of the different spirits that have gone abroad into the world, and knowing the ways of the Lord, and the vision of his mind being opened to those things we call mysteries, said—‘Whom shall he teach knowledge? And whom shall he make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.’ That is, He gives a little to His humble followers today, and if they improve upon it, tomorrow He will give them a little more, and the next day a little more. He does not add to that which they do not improve upon, but they are required to continually improve upon the knowledge they already possess, and thus obtain a store of wisdom. It is plain, then, that we may receive the truth, and know, through every portion of the soul, that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, that it is the way to life eternal; still there may be added to this, more power, wisdom, knowledge, and understanding.”⁸

¶ [Them that are] weaned from the milk, [and] drawn from the breasts. The LXX (6) reads, “—we who have been weaned from milk, we who have been withdrawn from the breasts?” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, for the second clause, “that are drawn away from the breasts.” The idea here is that when men are ready, the Lord is ready to reveal more. But they first have to be weaned from the breasts, i.e., from the spiritual milk: “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?” (1 Corinthians 3:1–3). ¶ Brigham Young explained: “The Lord gives us little by little, and is ever willing to give us more and more, even the fullness; when our hearts are prepared to receive all the truths of heaven. This is what the Lord desires, what he would delight in doing, for his children.”⁹ Jennings explains that “It shall be so simple that even infants with nothing but the ability of listening shall be able to understand it; yet that very simplicity will stumble the wise and prudent who in their pride will be blind to its perfections.” Indeed, we shall see in ISAIAH 29 “the boy that driveth the plow [i.e., Joseph Smith] to know more of the Scriptures” than the professors of religion spoken about by Jennings and William Tyndale.

⁸ Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses* 2:1–2a. Also, compare to JD 9:167a.

⁹ Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses* 18:212.

10 For precept [must be] ~ upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, [and] there a little:

✓ or, hath been

For precept [must be] upon precept, precept upon precept. The Targum (T) has, “Surely, they were commanded to do the law; but what they were commanded, they were not willing to do. The prophets prophesied unto them, that if they would repent, it should be forgiven them; but they did not obey the words of the prophets: they walked after the desire of their soul, neither did they desire to do my law. They hoped to have idolatrous worship established among them, and they did not consider the worship of the house of my sanctuary: to worship in the house of my sanctuary was a little thing in their eyes, my Shekinah was a little thing in their eyes.” The LXX (6) reads, “Expect affliction on affliction.” The Peshitta (S), instead of *line* and *precept* uses such words as *filth* and *vomit*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “For command, command again; command, command again.” Ibn Ezra explains: “This is just the way how writing is taught. *Here a little and there a little.* Little by little, gradually.” Many moderns have really twisted the meaning of this verse, so it is nice to find a straight forward interpretation offered by Ironside, that God had, through His prophets “who could teach them the way of righteousness, endeavoring to instruct them as one deals with little children, giving them ‘precept upon precept &c.’ as they were able to bear it.” So also Kay, who writes, “In his spiritual husbandry the prophet used the same minute discrimination, the same adjustment of means to end, as are set forth in the parable of ISAIAH 28:23–29.” ¶ There are volumes that could be written about ISAIAH 28:10. Truly, it has been my experience that this is the way the Lord reveals His truth unto us, *line upon line*. It is as waves of knowledge and understanding. Truly, there is *no greater call* than teaching. I so much love to be invited to speak about the Gospel either in a classroom, a fireside, as a home teacher or with the missionaries. I seldom encounter a teaching situations but that I do not get additional inspiration on the subject. This insight may come directly through the Spirit of the Holy Ghost, or through a member of the class. This has happened to me not only in spiritual matters, but also in my academic fields and in the equestrian sports. No sooner would I publish the most recent edition of a book, when I would have to begin revising the manuscript for the next edition. I have spent most of my academic and personal life studying, pondering and writing. But it is at those times when I leave my studying and my writing and get out and share with others when I tend to receive even a

greater amount of revelation. I may well be the only person that has been chastised by the Spirit and told to stop studying the scriptures and get out and *minister*. I have so much to be grateful for. I feel I have received from the Lord “wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures” (D&C 89:19). One of my recurring prayers includes asking God for opportunities to share what I have learned. I feel the Spirit of God upon my mind and my hand as I study and write; but even more so, as I teach. But here I will say that God has indeed revealed many things to me, even before I joined the Church. The thing which I am most grateful for is that God answers my prayers as I ask in the name of His beloved Son Jesus Christ. I believe each one of us can obtain these answers. Most of my answers to prayer (perhaps because I am more interested in asking God if He heard my prayer and then leave things to Him than demanding that something happen the way I might want it to) come right away. Others take longer, and some I know will probably not be answered in this lifetime. The answer to one particular prayer that bears upon this study on Isaiah is instructive. I was in Yesterday’s Books in Modesto about ten years ago, checking to see if there were any new books on Isaiah or others related to my Scripture study. The word of the Lord came to me and said something to this effect: “You know how you asked to find the Chaldee. You already have it, it is also called the Targum.” I had been, little by little, finding the various ancient manuscripts that I have used for this study, including the LXX, Targum, Peshitta, and so on. But many authors spoke about the Chaldee and I yearned to add this to my collection. A year earlier I had prayed to the Father to help me find this book. Now I was amazed at what I was hearing. The voice of the Lord, when He speaks to me under these types of situations is often followed, *line upon line*. While I was still pondering what I had just received, not doubting at all, I received the next: “Go over across the room look up *Chaldee* in that dictionary.” This was Hastings’ five volume dictionary which I had looked at before. I walked across the room and opened Volume I¹⁰ to “Chaldee Versions” and read: “See TARGUMS.” So it is that the Lord does reveal line upon line &c., and I have noticed that if we will write these impressions more is revealed to us. By writing these things we honor what God has given us. The Lord will always honor His promises to us. ¶ In the Book of Mormon we read: “We be unto him that shall say: We have received the word of God, and we need no more of the word of God, for

we have enough! For behold, thus saith the Lord God: I will give unto the children of men line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; and blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts, and lend an ear unto my counsel, for they shall learn wisdom; for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have. Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, or maketh flesh his arm, or shall hearken unto the precepts of men, save their precepts shall be given by the power of the Holy Ghost” (2 Nephi 28:29–31)¹¹; and “And I give unto you a commandment, that ye shall forsake all evil and cleave unto all good, that ye shall live by every word which proceedeth forth out of the mouth of God. For he will give unto the faithful line upon line, precept upon precept; and I will try you and prove you herewith” (D&C 98:11–12). The first of these has reference to the rejection of the Book of Mormon by many; while the second speaks about the manner that we receive commandments through the Lord. As we learn to keep the commandments, more light and truth and guidance is given to us *until the perfect day*. Elder Gene R. Cook, formerly of the First Quorum of the Seventy, explained that our understanding of any given scripture can always grow—that we are never done learning: “[Then we finally] understand that revelation is continual on that verse. It almost doesn’t matter what the words are; if we continue to approach the verse humbly and prayerfully, the Lord will continue to give us additional revelations on it.”¹² Elder Cook also wrote: “Obedience to the Lord’s voice helps us receive additional instructions from that voice.”¹³ ¶ The Lord also guides us *line upon line, precept upon precept* when it comes to revealing His commandments to us. I had just baptized someone to whom I had taught the Gospel of Jesus Christ to in Chile. She said she was going to do some business transaction the next day—it was something I did not think was appropriate for a LDS to do, in terms of the integrity of the matter. The word of the Lord came to me something like this: “I gave you fourteen years before I taught you it was wrong to do such and such; I will teach her myself

¹⁰ Hastings, James. *A Dictionary of the Bible dealing with its Language, Literature, and Contents Including the Biblical Theology*. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons. 1911, p. 368. By the way, some months later I bought that set even though it was extremely expensive for me at the time.

¹¹ Kent P. Jackson, ed., in *Studies in Scripture* (Vol. 4:1 Kings to Malachi, p.109) makes a very interesting observation: “Although about one-third of the entire book of Isaiah is directly quoted and interpreted in the Book of Mormon, apart from chapter 29 ... only one verse of Isaiah from chapters 18 through 33 is cited in the Book of Mormon (ISAIAH 28:10, in 2 Nephi 28:30).”

¹² Gene R. Cook, *Searching the Scriptures: Bringing Power to Your Personal and Family Study*, p.62.

¹³ Gene R. Cook, *Searching the Scriptures: Bringing Power to Your Personal and Family Study*, p.109. I have always thought of learning by *faith* as also implying direct revelation when the windows of heaven are opened and light and knowledge are poured into our minds and into our hearts.

when she is ready.” Indeed, this is precisely what happens. As we show God that we are capable of keeping a commandment, He adds *precept to precept*. Just as I believe that it will be impossible to truly understand Isaiah in a single lifetime, our life is too short to become the person we wish to become. The Prophet Joseph Smith shared these reassuring words: “When you climb up a ladder, you must begin at the bottom, and ascend step by step, until you arrive at the top; and so it is with the principles of the gospel—you must begin with the first, and go on until you learn all the principles of exaltation. But it will be a great while after you have passed through the veil before you will have learned them. It is not all to be comprehended in this world; it will be a great work to learn our salvation and exaltation even beyond the grave.”¹⁴ ¶ *Line upon line, line upon line; here a little, [and] there a little:* The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Hope on hope, yet a little while—yet a little while.” The BPE (Ⲫ) instead of *line* uses *spitting*. The Peshitta (Ⲫ) also has the last clause as the Masoretic text (ⲙ). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲫ) has, “Expect, expect again; expect, expect again: a little there, a little there.”

11 For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.

✓ stammerings of lip

✓ ✓ or, he hath spoken

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Because with feigned speech, and with mocking language, these people mocked the prophets, who prophesied unto them.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “On account of the mockery of their lips—because they will speak to this people with a strange tongue.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has, “Because with a difficult speech and with another tongue shall *he* (Lamsa) / *I* (BPE) speak to this people.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲫ) has *speech of lips* instead of *stammering lips*. In 1 Corinthians we read: “Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord” (1 Corinthians 14:20–21). Now this scripture is given in the New Testament quoting the Law תִּירָה, or the Torah, where תִּירָה is put for Scripture in general. A curious comment is made by Rawlinson: “The application of this Old Testament quotation furnishes one of the many singular instances of quotation which prove that the Jews often referred to the words without any direct reference to their context or original meaning.” The reason for this comment is

that most all exegetes feel that ISAIAH 28:11 is speaking about the fact that because Israel did not learn from her own prophets, she would learn from being taken captive into a land where people would speak in a foreign tongue to them. ¶ Latter-day Prophets, however, have consistently applied these scriptures to the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ by the weak and the humble. The correct idea here is that the Gospel of Jesus Christ would be taught by the Spirit through the weak unto the convincing of sincere seekers: “But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty” (1 Corinthians 1:27). And this weakness often comes not only because the young and inexperienced missionaries sent to confound the proud and the learned, but they often do so in a tongue they do not know. Think about this and rejoice! This is the Lord’s work and who can stay it? Elder Erastus Snow taught: “We testify and bear witness that it is not of man, but of God,—that it is the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ—that it is the gift and influence of the Holy Ghost that bears witness to the hearts of this people. When in the simplicity of my heart I could speak but little unto them with stammering lips, I said more with my eyes and fingers than with my tongue. The power of the Holy Ghost rested upon the people; and when I asked them if they understood me, ‘Yes,’ said they, ‘we understood it all.’ It was not because I spoke it fully with my tongue, but God made them understand me. If I asked them if they believed it, ‘Yes,’ would be the reply; ‘we have the testimony of the Holy Ghost bearing witness within us that it is true.’”¹⁵ Kay well says, regarding *another tongue*, “A tongue that deviated widely from the ordinary style of speech; sometimes resorting to strangely bold figures, and constantly employing metaphor and parable and allegory (which last is almost literally ‘other speech,’ ἀλληγορία¹⁶).”

12 To whom he said, This [is] the rest [wherewith] ye may cause the weary to rest; and this [is] the refreshing: yet they would not hear.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The prophets said unto them, This is the house of the sanctuary, worship ye in it: and this is the possession in which there is rest; but they would not accept instructions.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Saying to them, ‘This is the rest for him who is hungry: and this is the destruction, but they would not

¹⁴ Prophet Joseph Smith, “The King Follett Sermon,” April 1971 *Ensign*.

¹⁵ Erastus Snow, *Journal of Discourses* 7:129. Also see beginning with 7:125. Remarks by Elder Erastus Snow, Delivered in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, September 18, 1859.

¹⁶ Allegory, see Galatians 4:24.

hear.” The Peshitta (S) has *tranquility* (Lamsa) / *peace* (BPE) for *refreshing*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “To whom he said: This is my rest, refresh the weary, and this is my refreshing: and they would not hear.” The Vulgate (V) renders it, “Cui dixit : Hæc est réquies mea, reficite lassum; et hoc est meum refrigerium: et noluérunt audire.” This verse speaks of the invitation to find peace (ISAIAH 27:5), or in other words *rest and refreshment*, through the Gospel of Christ, but the people would not hearken to it. Matthew has, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” (Matthew 23:37). Rawlinson points us to the *Rain in Due Season*: “God had from remote times offered to his people ‘rest’ and ‘refreshing’ or a life of ease and peace in [the Holy Land] but on condition of their serving him faithfully and observing his Laws (Deuteronomy 28:1–14). But they had rejected this ‘rest,’ since they had refused to observe the condition on which it was promised.” So also Kay, “The words ‘rest’ and ‘refreshing’ occur in Deuteronomy 28:65, where the penalty of disobedience was proclaimed beforehand. (‘The Lord shall scatter thee among all peoples, from the one end of the earth even to the other.) And among these nations shalt thou find no *ease* (*refreshing*, [תְּרִיבָהּ from מְרִנָּה and רַנַּע, see HAL and here in ISAIAH, *the refreshing*, תְּרִיבָהּ]), neither shall the sole of thy foot have *rest* [מְנוּחָה, see HAL מְנוּחָה, and here in ISAIAH, *the resting*, תְּמַנְיָהּ.]” Jennings says, “Here we get a forecast that the proud will reject the ‘report.’” Lowth writes, “God had warned them by his Prophets, that their safety and security, their deliverance from their present calamities, and from the apprehensions of still greater approaching, depended wholly on their trust in God, their faith and obedience; but they rejected this gracious warning with contempt and mockery.”

13 But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, [and] there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line; here a little, [and] there a little. The Targum (T) has, “This shall be the cup of their punishment, because they have transgressed the word of the Lord, and because they were commanded to do my law, but would

not do what they were commanded. Therefore they shall be delivered unto the nations, who do not know the law; because they walked after the desire of their soul, and had no delight to do my will. Therefore they shall hope for help at the time that I shall bring distress upon them; but they shall have no help or support.” The LXX (G) reads, “Therefore the oracle of God will be to them ‘Affliction on affliction; hope on hope, yet a little while, yet a little while.’” The Peshitta (S), as in ISAIAH 28:10, instead of *line* and *precept* uses *filth* and *vomit*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And the word of the Lord shall be to them: Command, command again; command, command again: expect, expect again; expect, expect again: a little there, a little there.” To those who *would not hear* the tender pleadings of *precept upon precept* and *line upon line* would come the punishment mentioned next (this also reminds us somewhat of ISAIAH 6:10). ¶ Kimhi explains (see Slotki / Rosenberg), related to ISAIAH 28:10, but fits better here, that this is the process used by the Lord to teach *line upon line* yet many of the people “do not accept it.” Ibn Ezra explains: “They indeed thought that the word of God itself was of no importance.” Ironside well writes that despite the careful efforts of the Prophets to teach the people, “They had not profited by such careful teaching but had turned away from the truth and like many today accepted in its place the traditions of men.” ¶ *That they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.* The Targum (T) has, “Because the house of my sanctuary was too little in their eyes to worship there, therefore they shall be left as a little thing in the eyes of the nations, among whom they shall go into captivity, in order that they may walk, and stumble backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.” The LXX (G) reads, “That they may proceed on and fall backwards; and they shall be broken and snared and caught.” The Peshitta (S) has that they might *return* instead of *that they might go*. With the expression to “fall backward” we are reminded of Eli, Samuel’s tutor, who had not raised his children in obedience to the Lord: “Eli sat upon a seat by the wayside watching: for his heart trembled for the ark of God... And it came to pass, when [the messenger of bad tidings] made mention of the ark of God [which had been captured by the enemies of Israel], that he fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died” (1 Samuel 4:13b; 18a). Calvin says, “We had a similar sentiment on a former occasion (ISAIAH 8:15), and expressed in nearly the same words; for there the Prophet speaks on the same subject, the blinding of the people, who by their obstinacy had provoked the wrath of God. He shews that they who go astray, in opposition to the word of God, are always very near destruction.” Here in Isaiah there seems to be an allusion to Ephraim and Judah who would soon go into exile (*that they might go*, as well as *and [be] taken*) and

suffer greatly (*and fall backward, and be broken, and snared*), because they refused to turn to the Lord. In the latter days these same words may be used of those who are taken captive and bound into mystic Babylon. The Prophet Joseph Smith explains that those who have fought against the Church, as Haman against the Jews, would “go backwards and stumble and fall.”¹⁷

vv. 14–22. We return here to the time of Isaiah. Delitzsch says, “The prophet now directly attacks the great men of Jerusalem, and holds up a Messianic prophecy before their eyes.” Barnes explains: “This verse commences a direct address to the scoffing and scornful nation, which is continued to the close of ISAIAH 28:22. It is addressed particularly to the rulers in Jerusalem, as being the leaders in crime, and as being eminently deserving of the wrath of God.” Christ is the foundation stone, a tried stone, a corner stone.

14 ¶ Wherefore hear the word of the LORD, ye scornful men, that rule this people which [is] in Jerusalem.

The LXX (6) reads, “Therefore hear the word of the Lord, ye afflicted men, and ye rulers of this people in Jerusalem!” The Douay-Rheims (v) has *over my people* rather than *this people*. As it is so clearly spoken about during the time of Jeremiah (e.g. Jeremiah 6, 8, 9, 15, 17, 21, etc.), those in Jerusalem thought it was impossible for them to fall. Never mind the fact that by then Ephraim had fallen to Asshur. Not too many years hence, and Jerusalem would fall and be taken captive by Babylon. This verse is a stinging reproach to the rulers of Jerusalem. Rawlinson writes, “Isaiah now turns from a denunciation of the priests and prophets, who especially opposed his teaching, to a threatening of the great men who guided the course of public affairs. He taxes them with being ‘men of scorn,’ *i.e.* scornors of Jehovah, and with ‘a proud and insolent self-confidence’ (Delitzsch).” I facilitated a meeting on interpersonal relations in 2012 and we had an interesting roundtable after the guest speaker was finished. I found it necessary to explain that I believed in right and wrong, good and bad, and in an absolute truth. To my shock—for this has not happened to me very frequently—one of the participants mocked my beliefs. I found it very interesting that the two of us in the room who had a firm belief in Christ were the most confident when it came to life and joy, while those who did not have a belief (despite the immense amount of

good that they had accomplished in the field of peace making) were full of misery. Truly, it is only through Christ that we can find peace. As it later became evident in that same meeting, those who rejected Christ leaned on superstition.

15 Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves:

The LXX (6) reads, for the final section, “We have made falsehood our refuge and by this falsehood we shall be saved (or, ‘protected,’ Brenton).” The Douay-Rheims (v) has, “For you have said: We have entered into a league with death, and we have made a covenant with hell. When the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come upon us: for we have placed our hope in lies, and by falsehood we are protected.” The theme of ISAIAH 28:14 continues here with Jerusalem truly thinking that she could not be captured. The expression, *a covenant with death and with hell* is a sarcastic comment as to Judah’s overconfident trust in Egypt and Assyria. Anytime that God is not our head, we are in effect making such a *covenant with death*. In speaking about covenants, Elder Matthias F. Cowley said, “In making a covenant with death they broke the ‘everlasting covenant’ and dishonored God, for He is everlasting and His ordinances endure forever, unimpaired by death, hell or the grave.”¹⁸ In ISAIAH 28:18 we shall say more about the proper order of covenants. The Lord uses in D&C many of the same expressions that He used when inspiring Isaiah to write. For instance, we read in D&C 97:23–26: “The Lord’s scourge shall pass over by night and by day, and the report thereof shall vex all people; yea, it shall not be stayed until the Lord come; For the indignation of the Lord is kindled against their abominations and all their wicked works. Nevertheless, Zion shall escape if she observe to do all things whatsoever I have commanded her. But if she observe not to do whatsoever I have commanded her, I will visit her according to all her works, with sore affliction, with pestilence, with plague, with sword, with vengeance, with devouring fire.”

16 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner

¹⁷ Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, introduction and notes by B. H. Roberts, 3:227 (also see 5:128, in regards to the Prophet Joseph Smith’s enemies).

¹⁸ Matthias F. Cowley, *Cowley’s Talks on Doctrine*, p.189.

[stone], a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, beginning with the second clause, “Behold, I appoint a King in Zion; a King mighty, powerful, and terrible: I will make him powerful, and I will strengthen Him, saith the prophet. But the righteous, who believe these things shall not be moved, when distress shall come.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “‘Therefore thus saith the Sovereign Lord; behold I lay for the foundation of Sion a stone of inestimable worth—a chosen, precious cornerstone for the foundations of it, and he who believeth shall not be ashamed.’” Brenton Ⓛ (also NETS Ⓛ) fills the ellipsis, “and he that believes *on him* shall by no means be ashamed.” So also the *Lexham Greek-English Interlinear* as well as the LXX SESB (πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ). As in ISAIAH 27:5–6, amidst all of the challenges faced by man, an invitation is given to take hold of the horns of salvation through Christ Jesus. ¶ *Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone.* Rashi (in Rabbi Rosenberg) has “I have set up the King-Messiah, who shall be in Zion as an **בֵּיתֶיךָ אֶבֶן** a fortress stone, an expression of a fortress and strength.” Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained that a much better rendition of this verse was given in Romans 9:33, “As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.”¹⁹ ¶ No doubt this is an excellent example of how the New Testament leans on the LXX (Ⓛ), which at times has excellent renderings. The beauty and power of its rendering and Messianic allusion are breathtaking. The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓟ) renders it, “Therefore thus says the LORD God: Behold, I lay in Zion a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation; he who believes shall not be afraid.” The BPE (Ⓟ) has, “For thus saith Yahweh God: I have placed a stone in Zion, and approved stone, angular and precious, a fundamental and principal of the wall. He who believes shall not fear.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “Therefore thus saith the Lord God: Behold I will lay a stone in the foundations of Sion, a tried stone, a corner stone, a precious stone, founded in the foundation. He that believeth, let him not hasten.” ¶ This verse clearly speaks of Christ, at His first coming. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland explained: “Jehovah said to the prophet Isaiah that in building the kingdom of God on earth, a ‘stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation’ would be used (ISAIAH 28:16). He was, of course, speaking of himself. Paul used that same imagery in declaring that Jesus was the

chief cornerstone, that basic block around which a foundation of apostles and prophets would be laid and onto which the Church of God would be built (Ephesians 2:20). Peter noted that builders of lesser vision simply shoved him aside in favor of less substantial material (see Acts 4:11). The tragic irony is that to most, he was not a building stone at all, but rather a mere stumbling block, a huge boulder obstructing the journey toward death (see 1 Corinthians 1:23.)”²⁰ Referring to 1 Peter 2:6–8, Elder McConkie writes: “Peter here quotes, combines, and interprets three Messianic prophecies, two from Isaiah and one from the Psalms. ‘Thus saith the Lord God,’ Isaiah announced in one of them, ‘I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste’ (ISAIAH 28:16). The clear meaning is: ‘Christ our Lord, the promised Messiah, the Stone of Israel—as a precious and tried person—shall come to Israel; and be the foundation upon which they shall build the house of salvation; he shall be the cornerstone of the house and kingdom of God itself; and all they who believe in him and build on the foundation he lays shall be saved.’ The other Isaiah prophecy says that ‘he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both²¹ the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken’ (ISAIAH 8:14–15). Again the meaning is clear: ‘When the stone of Israel comes, he shall be a sanctuary for the righteous; they shall find peace and safety under the shelter of his gospel; but he shall be a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of Offense (as also a gin and a snare) to the rebellious and disobedient in Jerusalem and in all Israel. They shall stumble and fall because of him; they shall take offense because of his teachings and be condemned and broken and snared and taken for rejecting them.’ During his mortal ministry, our Lord discussed this very prophecy with his disciples and said that ‘on whomsoever this stone shall fall, it shall grind him to powder’ (*Commentary I*, pp. 590–595).”²² And today, we may say that the Book of Mormon is playing a like role. Some recognize the words of the Savior in this wonderful book and others have taken offense and rejected the message. This is so well expressed by Nephi: “And now, my beloved brethren, and also Jew, and all ye ends of the earth, hearken unto these words and believe in Christ; and if ye believe not in these

¹⁹ McConkie, Bruce R. *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*. (3 vols.). Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1965–1973. Vol. II.

²⁰ Jeffrey R. Holland, *However Long and Hard the Road*, p.23 (see also p. 24).

²¹ Ephraim and Judah.

²² Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3:293.

words believe in Christ. And if ye shall believe in Christ ye will believe in these words, for they are the words of Christ, and he hath given them unto me; and they teach all men that they should do good. And if they are not the words of Christ, judge ye—for Christ will show unto you, with power and great glory, that they are his words, at the last day; and you and I shall stand face to face before his bar; and ye shall know that I have been commanded of him to write these things, notwithstanding my weakness” (2 Nephi 33:10–11). ¶ *A tried stone, a precious corner [stone], a sure foundation.* Gill explains that King Messiah was tried, “... by the Old Testament saints, and by saints in all ages, who have ventured their souls on him, and laid the whole stress of their salvation upon him, and have been saved by him; by Satan, and his principalities and powers, by his temptations of him in the wilderness, and by his attacks upon him in the garden, and on the cross, and found him to be an immovable stone, and were broken by him; and by his divine Father, who tried his faithfulness by trusting him with all his elect, and the salvation of them; and his great strength, by laying upon him all their sins, and the punishment due unto them.” And even today, the Old Covenant promise is in force: “...prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” This is a promise that stands not only in regard to the principle of tithing, but upon all of the Gospel principles. Christ is a precious corner stone and a sure foundation. Rabshakeh had one thing right when he said: “Lo, thou trustest in the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him” (ISAIAH 36:6). Indeed, Christ is our true foundation, and if we put our trust in Him—and not in Egypt or the flesh of man—all will be well with us. ¶ *He that believeth shall not make haste.* In other words, all who put their trust in Christ can live in peace. Barnes explains: “The Hebrew word **יָחִישׁ**, from **חָיֵשׂ**, means properly ‘to make haste;’ and then to urge on; and then to be afraid, to flee. The idea is derived from one who is alarmed, and flees to a place of safety. The specific thought here is that of a man on whose house the tempest beats, and who apprehends that the foundation is insecure, and leaves it to seek a more safe position. The prophet says here, that the foundation on which Zion was reared would be so firm that if a man trusted to that he would have no cause of alarm, however, much the storms should beat around it. The same idea essentially is conveyed in the version of the Septuagint, and by Paul and Peter, where it is rendered ‘shall not be ashamed,’ or ‘confounded.’ That is, he shall have no reason to be ashamed of his confidence in the firm foundation; he shall not flee from it as a man does who

puts his trust in that which fails him in the day of trial.” Calvin, after quoting Paul (Romans 9:33; 10:11) explains: “The design of the Prophet is to shew, that they who believe will have peace and serenity of mind, so that they shall not desire anything more, and shall not wander in uncertainty, or hasten to seek other remedies, but shall be fully satisfied with this alone. That is not a departure from the meaning, for the word signifying to make haste conveys the idea of eagerness or trembling.”

17 Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.

Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: The Targum (**ܬ**) has, “And I will make judgment straight as a line of a building, and justice as a plummet, because you would hide yourselves *from the coming* distress, the nations shall lead you into captivity.” The LXX (**Ϛ**) reads, “And I will establish judgment for hope, and my mercy shall be for scales.” The Lamsa Peshitta (**ܣ**) has, for the first clause, “And I will make justice to the measuring line.” The Douay-Rheims (**Ϛ**) has, “And I will set judgment in weight, and justice in measure.” ¶ Barnes explains, “The line is used by a carpenter for measuring; the plummet consists of a piece of lead attached to a string, and is also used by carpenters to obtain a perpendicular line. A carpenter works exactly according to the lines which are thus indicated, or his frame would not be properly adjusted.” Wildberger observes, “Both the plumb line and the sounding lead are to be taken symbolically as well, since they refer to **מִשְׁפָּט** (justice) and **צְדָקָה** (righteousness). These two concepts provided the very measuring tool that Yahweh used when judgment was described in the song of the vineyard (ISAIAH 5:7).” Gill has, “A metaphor taken from builders, who in building use the line and plummet to carry on their work even and regular, retaining such stones as agree thereunto, and rejecting such as do not.” Luther similarly has, “I will weigh out justice with a balance, that is, I will make a distinction between the good and the bad. I will not be so rash that I will destroy the good with the bad, nor ... will [I] not punish the bad for the sake of the good, but I will first separate the good from the bad. As a carpenter, who marks off with the plummet what must be cut off, so I will put the measure and rule around this stone to determine who is to be saved and who is to be cast off.” Jenour explains: “So would God, as it were, measure the actions and characters of those who professed to belong to his church, by the *line* of his infallible justice, and with the *plummet* of his perfect

righteousness.” Calvin here makes some interesting comments about the apostasy and restoration of the Lord’s Church—which fit so well with the subject of ISAIAH 28–29: “He shews that God has in his hand the ready means of forming the Church entirely anew. As he lately mentioned a building, so now, by a different metaphor, he shews that there is no reason to fear that God will not at length finish the work of building which has been begun. Yet indirectly he reproves the pride and insolence of those who wished to be accounted pillars of the Church, while they were endeavoring, as far as lay in their power, to raze it to the foundation. Although, in consequence of an almost total extinction of the light of faith, and a frightful corruption of the worship of God, the state of the people was hideous... I do not deny [regarding line and plummet] that he alludes to the examination of weights; but both metaphors are taken from buildings, in which the master-builders and masons try everything by a rule, in order to preserve a due proportion in every part. Thus it is said that the Lord administers equal judgment, when he restores the Church, in which otherwise everything is disordered and confused, as in a hideous ruin... He makes the same statement concerning ‘righteousness,’ ... The meaning is, that this foundation is laid, not only that the Church may be commenced, but that it may be perfectly restored, to use a common phrase, ‘from top to bottom’ (*De fonds en comble*).” ¶ *And the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.* The LXX (6) reads, “But as for you who have vainly trusted in falsehood, that the tempest would not reach you.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “And hail shall overturn the hope of falsehood: and waters shall overflow its protection.” The expression *waters shall overflow* reminds us of the Assyrian invasion (ISAIAH 8:7). The *refuge of lies* is the leaning upon Egypt, Assyria, Babylon or any great force—intellectual, academic, or worldly—rather than upon the Lord. Also, the *refuge of lies* implies leaning upon false doctrine.

18 And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it. ✓

✓ a treading down to it

And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand. The LXX (6) reads, “And that it would not break your treaty with death; the hope which you have with respect to the grave shall not last.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “And your league with death shall be abolished, and your

covenant with hell shall not stand.” Certainly, Satan will not stand by those with whom he has covenanted with. ¶ When it says *disannulled* (from כִּפֶּר, to cover over, expiate, destroy, make void), it means that this covenant will be utterly useless. In D&C we read: “And verily I say unto you, that the conditions of this law are these: All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations, that are not made and entered into and sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, of him who is anointed, both as well for time and for all eternity, and that too most holy, by revelation and commandment through the medium of mine anointed, whom I have appointed on the earth to hold this power (and I have appointed unto my servant Joseph to hold this power in the last days, and there is never but one on the earth at a time on whom this power and the keys of this priesthood are conferred), are of no efficacy, virtue, or force in and after the resurrection from the dead; for all contracts that are not made unto this end have an end when men are dead” (D&C 132:7). ¶ *When the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.* The Targum (7) has, “When the stroke of the enemy shall come upon you, it shall be like an overwhelming river, and ye shall be unto them for a treading under foot.” The LXX (6) reads, “When the furious tempest cometh, by it you shall be beaten down.” Applying this verse to the time of Isaiah (for instance, see ISAIAH 8:7) as many exegetes do, Kaiser says, “Thus ISAIAH 28:18 explicitly states that the pact with death and the underworld will be of no use when the flood, or to abandon the metaphor, the Assyrian army, sweeps over the land and claims its victims.” ¶ The Doctrine and Covenants speaks directly to this *overflowing scourge* in the last days: “And in that day shall be heard of wars and rumors of wars, and the whole earth shall be in commotion, and men’s hearts shall fail them, and they shall say that Christ delayeth his coming until the end of the earth. And the love of men shall wax cold, and iniquity shall abound. And when the times of the Gentiles is come in, a light shall break forth among them that sit in darkness, and it shall be the fulness of my gospel; But they receive it not; for they perceive not the light, and they turn their hearts from me because of the precepts of men. And in that generation shall the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be men standing in that generation, that shall not pass until they shall see an overflowing scourge; for a desolating sickness shall cover the land. But my disciples shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved; but among the wicked, men shall lift up their voices and curse God and die. And there shall be earthquakes also in divers places, and many desolations; yet men will harden their hearts against me, and they

will take up the sword, one against another, and they will kill one another” (D&C 45:26–33).

19 From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only [to] understand the report.[✓]

✓ or, when he shall make you to understand doctrine

From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “At the time of its passing by, it shall lead you captive, because each morning it shall pass you by, by day and by night.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “When it cometh it will overtake you. Early, very early in the morning it will come, and at night.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “Whensoever it shall pass through, it shall take you away: because in the morning early it shall pass through, in the day and in the night.” The *overflowing scourge* spoken about in the previous verse will be unrelenting, as shown by the expression *day and night* (see also ISAIAH 21:11–12). ¶ *And it shall be a vexation only [to] understand the report.* It is of interest that the words *understand doctrine*

[יְבִין שְׁמוּעָה] in ISAIAH 28:9 are precisely the same as those found here (see the margin ||) in a slightly different context, *understand the report* [יְבִין שְׁמוּעָה]. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And it shall come to pass before the time of the curse shall have come, that ye shall consider the words of the prophets.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Your hope will be wretched. Learn to hear.” The BPE (Ⲯ) has, for the last clause, “Only the message shall be understood.” Instead of *vexation*, the Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲯ) has, *terror*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “And vexation alone shall make you understand what you hear.” The Masoretic text (ⲙ) has “*And it shall be only vexation* (וְהָיָה רֶק־זוּעָה) &c.” (of special interest to us as LDS, as וְהָיָה is often translated as either *and it came to pass* or *and it shall come to pass*), while the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲯ) is missing the expression וְהָיָה and we simply have רֶק זוּעָה. Rashi (in Rabbi Rosenberg) explains: “Terror for all those who hear, to understand the messages of the harsh retributions that I will bring upon you. Kay points out that the word *vexation* also appears in *Rain in Due Season*, i.e., in Deuteronomy 28:25 where we have *to be removed*, KJV, לְזַעֲוָה while here we have it as *vexation* זוּעָה [see BDB, “object of trembling, terror, fright”]. Both acceptations are correct, and indeed to be removed was a terror to the children of Jacob. Kaiser sees this and the coming verses as eschatological. The Prophet Joseph

Smith wrote about this verse in the context of preaching the gospel and helping people to “save themselves from this untoward generation.” Not infrequently the prophets have been permitted to see the future and have become ill with the visions of impending disasters over the earth or particular nations. The Prophet Joseph Smith said: “The servants of God will not have gone over the nations of the Gentiles, with a warning voice, until the destroying angel will commence to waste the inhabitants of the earth, and as the prophet hath said, ‘It shall be a vexation to hear the report.’ I speak thus because I feel for my fellow men; I do it in the name of the Lord, being moved upon by the Holy Spirit. Oh, that I could snatch them from the vortex of misery, into which I behold them plunging themselves, by their sins; that I might be enabled by the warning voice, to be an instrument of bringing them to unfeigned repentance, that they might have faith to stand in the evil day!”²³ Also see notes on President Wilford Woodruff’s vision under ISAIAH 2:12.

20 For the bed is shorter than that [a man] can stretch himself [on it]: and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself [in it].

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “For their strength shall be diminished by reason of mighty slavery; and the government of the oppressor shall increase their subjection. The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “We are straitened for room, we cannot fight. We are weakened by your pressing upon us.” The BPE (Ⲯ) has, “For the garment is too short to cover, there is not sufficient thread to finish it.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲯ) has, “For the cloth is too short, and the warp grows weak and is insufficient for a garment.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “For the bed is straitened, so that one must fall out, and a short covering cannot cover both.” The Masoretic text (ⲙ) includes the word *narrower* (צָרָה) which is absent from the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲯ). Instead of *stretching himself* (מִדְשָׁתָרֵעַ) as in the Masoretic text (ⲙ), in the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲯ) we have *stretching themselves* (מִשְׁתַּרְיִם). For a little humor, we read: “Robert Teske of the Leiden Branch, The Hague Netherlands Stake, is a little over 6 feet, 8 inches tall. When he returned from serving a mission, he said in a sacrament meeting talk, ‘During my mission, a prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled.’ He then turned to ISAIAH 28:20 and quoted, ‘For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it ...’”²⁴

²³ Smith, Joseph, *History of the Church*, 2:263.

²⁴ C. de Bruijn, Amstelveen, the Netherlands. On the Bright Side, *LDS Church News*, 9 September 1995.

¶ Faussett explains: “Proverbial, for they shall find all their sources of confidence fail them; all shall be hopeless perplexity in their affairs.” Barnes has: “So it would be with those who sought protection in idols, in the promises of false prophets, and in the aid which might be obtained from Egypt.” Jennings rather, speaks of the apostates and their false doctrine: “The apostates had made a comfortable bed for themselves, as they assumed; it is too short to permit them to stretch themselves upon it.”

21 For the LORD shall rise up as [in] mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as [in] the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.

For the LORD shall rise up as [in] mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as [in] the valley of Gibeon. The Targum (ܬ) has, “For as the mountains trembled when the glory of the Lord was revealed in the days of King Uzziah, and in the wonders which He performed for Joshua in the valley of Gibeon, taking vengeance on the wicked, who had transgressed against His Word.” The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “Like a mountain of wicked men the Lord will rise up; and he will be in the valley of Gabaon.” The Peshitta (ܫ) has *mountain pass* instead of *mount Perazim*. The Douay-Rheims (ܝ) has, “For the Lord shall stand up as in the mountain of divisions: he shall be angry as in the valley which is in Gabaon.” The DSS 1QIsa^a (ϙ) reads *in mount Perazim* (בְּהַר פְּרָצִים) while the Masoretic text (מ) has *as mount Pertzim* (כְּהַר-פֶּרְצִים). Likewise, the DSS 1QIsa^a (ϙ) reads *in valley* (בְּעֵמֶק) of Gibeon, while the Masoretic text (מ) has *as valley* (כְּעֵמֶק) of Gibeon. ¶ *For as mount Peratzim*, כִּי כְהַר-פְּרָצִים. This spot near the Valley of Rephaim, near Jerusalem, is considered to be the same as mentioned in 2 Samuel 5:20; 1 Chronicles 14:11, where David triumphed over the Philistines. It is there referred to as *Baal-Perazim*, “בַּעַל-פְּרָצִים; βααλ'φρασεῖν, ‘the lord of breakings through’” (ISBE). Barnes says, “The word ‘Perazim’ is from פָּרַץ, to tear, or break forth, as waters do that have been confined; and is indicative of sudden judgment, and of a complete overthrow.” The Targum (ܬ) makes reference to the *great slaughter at Gibeon* at the time of Joshua, when “the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies” (Joshua 10:10, 13). Either way, these victories are used as a type for *his strange act*—the restoration of the Gospel—to be manifested in the last days. Most all of

the Gentile authors suggest that this verse refers to the punishments that God had in mind, as does Jenour, for instance: “I take these verses to a general denunciation of the wrath of God against all those Jews who should refuse to believe in the promised Messiah, and prefer rather to trust in an arm of flesh.” In reality, it is a prediction of the bringing forth of the Book of Mormon and the restoration of the Gospel. ¶ *That he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.* The Targum (ܬ) has, “So shall he be revealed to take vengeance on them, who work works, strange works, and on those who worship with idolatrous worship.” The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “With wrath he will execute his work—a work of bitterness; and his wrath will attack in a strange manner; and its severity will be unusual.” That he may do his work, his strange work: that he may perform his work, his work is strange to him.” ¶ Cowles says, “‘Strange’ is here in the sense of peculiar, extraordinary, wonderful.” This fits in perfectly with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the restoration of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Jennings explains that the *strange work* is God’s work. Calvin says, “For my own part, I consider ‘strange’ to mean simply what is uncommon or wonderful; for this appellation is given to what is rare and unusual among men, and we know that they almost always view with astonishment whatever is new.” Young adds, “Apparently what Isaiah means (although the language is difficult and one must not be dogmatic), is that what it to take place is something unusual, foreign from the ordinary course of providence.” But here agreement ends. The exegetes think the strange work and act revolve around punishment, rather than upon the light of the Gospel that would shine in the night of apostasy. I only found that Alexander questions this view so prevalent with all the exegetes: “The English word *strange* is here the only satisfactory equivalent to the two Hebrew adjectives’ נִכְרִי²⁵ and נִכְרִיָּה. The idea that punishment is God’s strange work because at variance with his goodness, is not only less appropriate in this connection, but inconsistent with the tenor of Scripture, which describes his vindictory justice as an essential attribute of his nature.”

¶ Returning to the pruning and vineyard motif of previous chapters, we get a greater hint as to what this *strange act* may consist of in Doctrine and Covenants: “For the preparation wherewith I design to prepare mine apostles to prune my vineyard for the last time, that I may bring to pass my strange act, that I may pour out my Spirit upon all flesh” (D&C 95:4). The Prophet Joseph Smith said: “The Lord has a hand in bringing to pass his strange act, and proving the Book of Mormon

²⁵ Although נִכְרִי also means *peculiar* (LHI).

true in the eyes of all the people.”²⁶ Brother Joseph continues to explain that “the world will prove Joseph Smith a true prophet by circumstantial evidence” and then goes on to quote the history of the Quiche people of Guatemala and their knowledge of their Hebrew heritage. (My daughter Cristina spent time among the Quiche in Guatemala and recognized one of the words I was learning in Hebrew as also used by these people.) Monte Nyman writes, “The Lord probably calls his work a strange event because the world does not usually rely upon the Spirit to prove things. Oliver Cowdery said the angel Moroni told Joseph Smith that this strange act would bring about a marvelous work and a wonder, and that the scripture in Isaiah was about to be fulfilled (see MA, February 1835, p. 79).” From Elder Neal A. Maxwell we read the following observations, “President Brigham Young, while testifying of the restored and living Church, gave this practical caution: ‘This is the kingdom that was to be set up in the last days. It is like a stone taken from the mountain without hands, with all its roughness, with all its disfigured appearance—uncomely—even a stumbling-block and a stone of offence to the nations of the earth’ (*Journal of Discourses* 5:75. We are, in fact, a part of what at least in some respects is regarded in the eyes of the world as a ‘strange work,’ ‘disfigured’ and ‘uncomely’ (see ISAIAH 28:21).”²⁷ Elder Maxwell further states on this matter of a *strange act*, “The Restoration cannot be ‘a marvelous work and a wonder’ without at the same time being seen by some as unlikely, unusual, and unexpected.”²⁸

22 Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth.

Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “deal not wickedly” rather than “be ye not mockers.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “As for you therefore, be not filled with joy, yet let not your bonds gather strength.” Instead of *bands be made strong*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *lest your chastisement be severe* (Lamsa) / *that thy punishment might not be severe* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “And now do not mock, lest your bonds be tied strait.” The Masoretic text (Ⓜ) has *Lord LORD (Adonai YHWH)*,

²⁶ *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (TPJS), p. 267.

²⁷ Maxwell, Neal A. *If Thou Endure It Well*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1996, p. 34.

²⁸ Maxwell, Neal A. *Lord, Increase Our Faith*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1994, p. 57.

אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה rather than just *LORD (YHWH)* יְהוָה, as is found in the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⓢ).²⁹ Kay also sees a connection between ISAIAH 28:22, 29 and *the marvelous work and a wonder* in ISAIAH 29:14. Indeed “the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.” ¶ *For I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth.* The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “For the things are complete and decisive which I have heard from the Lord of Hosts—which he will execute on all this land.” Instead of *a consumption, even determined* the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *devastation and judgment* (BPE) / *destruction and judgment* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “For I have heard of the Lord the God of hosts a consumption and a cutting short upon all the earth.” Reference is again made of the judgment that would fall *upon the whole earth* in the last days, a *vexation only to understand the report*.

vv. 23–29. Regarding these next verses, Birks explains: “Here the solemn warning has a striking close. A parable is drawn from the various processes of husbandry, to teach us the deep and hidden wisdom of God in His moral government of the church and of the world. However strange some of those processes to the inexperienced, they all concur in securing one main result, the harvest. So too all the ways of God in His holy providence conspire to one great end, a blessed harvest of purified and ransomed souls.” We may take note, also, that not only does the Lord harvest with much care, but also plants each seed in the locale that best fits its needs (Jacob 5).

23 ¶ Give ye ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech.

The Targum (Ⓣ) makes these words explicitly introduced by the prophet, and instead of *my speech* has *my Word* or *to my Meimra*, “לְמִימְרֵי.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Listen and hear my voice; attend and hearken to these words of mine.” To *give ear* means to listen, as does *hearken* (see 1 Samuel 15:22). Behind the idea of listening and hearkening is that of obedience. Lowth writes: “The prophet concludes with an explanation and defense of God’s method of dealing with his people in an elegant parable or allegory; in which he employs a variety of images, all taken from the science of agriculture. As the husbandman uses various methods in preparing his land, and adapting it to the several kinds of seeds to be sown, with a due observation of times

²⁹ The AV follows the Jewish tradition of reading these as Lord God, rather than repeating of the words Adonai ADONAI, Lord LORD.

and seasons; and when he hath gathered in his harvest, employs methods as various in separating the corn from the straw and the chaff by different instruments, according to the nature of the different sorts of grain: so God, with unerring wisdom, and with strict justice, instructs, admonishes, and corrects his people; chastises and punishes them in various ways, as the exigence of the case requires; now more moderately, now more severely; always tempering justice with mercy; in order to reclaim the wicked, to improve the good, and, finally, to separate the one from the other.”

24 Doth the plowman plow all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods of his ground?

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The prophets prophesied at all times in order to teach, if peradventure the ears of sinners might be opened, and receive instruction.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Will the ploughman plough the whole day? Or prepare seed before he hath tilled the ground?” Instead of *open and break the clods* the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *picking up and breaking up* (BPE) / *open and harrow* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, for the second half, “Shall he open and harrow his ground?”

Henderson explains, “כָּל הַיּוֹם, literally *all the day*, an idiom for *always, continually*.” Gill explains it: “By ploughing he prepares the ground for sowing, that is his end in ploughing; and he may plough a whole day together when he is at it, but he does not plough every day in the year; he has other work to do besides ploughing, as is later mentioned; such as breaking of clods, sowing seed, and threshing the grain after it is ripe, and reaped, and gathered.”

25 When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the rie[✓] in their place?^{✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓}

✓ or, spelt

✓ ✓ border?

✓ ✓ ✓ or, the wheat in the principal place, and barley in the appointed place

When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Is it not so? If the house of Israel would set their faces to do the law, and repent (the Royal Polyglot reads אֶתְּנֶה, ‘I will return’), then behold, He would gather them (the Royal

Polyglot reads אֶכְנֶשׁ, ‘I will gather them’)³⁰ from among the nations, amongst whom they were dispersed, like fitches and cummin that are scattered.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Doth he not, when he hath levelled the face of the soil, then sow the small dill or cummin?” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “Will he not, when he hath made plain the surface thereof, sow gith³¹.” ¶ *And scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the rie in their place?* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And, behold, he would bring their offspring together according to their tribes, as seed of wheat in the uncultivated field (the Royal Polyglot reads לְגִנֵּי, ‘garden beds’ or ‘cultivated land’), and barley in the appointed place, and spelt in the borders.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And again sow wheat and barley and millet and rye in all thy borders?” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “And scatter cummin, and put wheat in order, and barley, and millet, and vetches in their bounds?”

26 For his God doth instruct him to discretion, [and] doth teach him.[✓]

✓ or, And he bindeth it in such sort as his God doeth teach him

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “All these things are instruction of judgment (the Royal Polyglot reads לְחֹן אֱלֹפִין דְּרִין, ‘all these things are to their instruction, that the generations may know &c.’), that they may know, that our God shows them the right path, in which they ought to walk.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “So thou shalt be corrected by the judgment of God; and be made glad.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “For he will instruct him in judgment: his God will teach him.” Birks explains: “The word *yasar* [יָסַר] here, based on the root יָסַר, to *chastise*, or *train by discipline*, is here very fitly applied to the whole process of agriculture ; and *mishpat* [מִשְׁפָּט], *judgment*, refers to the wise, orderly method, in which the whole work needs to be carried on. The verse refers alike to what has gone before, and to that which follows; and thus connects the whole by the common lesson of man’s dependence on a wisdom that comes from God.” Rabbi Joseph Kimhi (in Rabbi Rosenberg) has, “The farmer, so to speak, chastens the earth by breaking the hard clods. Then his God causes rain to fall upon it.”

27 For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart

³⁰ Pauli suggests that it should rather be יִקְרֶב, “and he shall bring together.”

³¹ Gith is a type of pepper, see Noah Webster’s 1828 dictionary.

wheel turned about upon the cummin; but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod.

For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart wheel turned about upon the cummin. Alexander explains: “Nothing more is necessary here to the correct understanding of the verse than a just view of the contrast intended between heavy and light threshing.” The Targum (Ⲯ) makes the threshing instrument iron. The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “For the dill is not cleaned with a corn drag; nor is the wheel of a wain to turn round on the cumin.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲯ) has, “*under the feet of oxen*” rather than *threshing instrument*.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “For gith shall not be thrashed with saws, neither shall the cart wheel turn about upon cumin.” Henderson explains the general idea: “We have here a description of the different implements used in threshing [*trilla* in Spanish]. The **תָּרִיץ** [i.e., **sharp**] in full, **מִזְרֵג תָּרִיץ** [**sharp threshing sled**] ISAIAH 41:15, was a kind of sledge drawn by two oxen, in the front of which stood the driver on his knees, or sat on a piece of wood fixed crossways on the car. Under this machine were rollers of wood, with sharp stones, or pieces of iron, by which the straw was cut in pieces, and the grain separated from the ears. The **עֲגִלָּה** was also a cart [ISAIAH 28:28], but differed from the former by its having wheels instead of rollers, which, being serrated, produced the same effect, when drawn over the corn. Besides oxen, both horses and asses were employed in drawing these instruments; and, as appears from this passage, horses were made to perform the operation merely by treading out the grain, as they still do in different parts of the East [as well as the *trilla de yeguas* in Chile, where mares would trample over the cut grain and help separate the seed kernels from the straw]. When the quantity was small, or when more minute kinds of seed were to be threshed out, a flail or switch was used, with which it was beat.” ¶ *But the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod.* The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “But with a rod are beaten out the dill—and cummin.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “But gith shall be beaten out with a rod, and cummin with a staff.” Rashi explains that these do not need the harshness of a wooden threshing implement, “for its seed is easily extracted from within its straw, and, likewise, on cumin they do not turn the wheel of a wagon to thresh it, because the black cumin is easily beaten with a staff and the cumin with the rod.”

28 Bread [corn] is bruised; because he will not ever be threshing it, nor break [it with]

the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it [with] his horsemen.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Corn³² they tread out, yet they will not continue to tread it out for ever; but he will throw it into confusion with the wheel of his wain,³³ and would separate the corn, and blow away the chaff.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Yet with bread they will be eaten. For I, *the I Am* (Brenton and NETS do not fill the ellipsis) will not be angry with you forever, nor shall the voice of my severity destroy you.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲯ) has, “Grain is threshed for our sakes because man would not otherwise be threshing it, nor break it with many wheels of his threshing instruments, nor crush it under the feet of his oxen.” The BPE (Ⲯ) has, “For our sakes the grain is threshed, but it shall not be threshed indefinitely with the many wheels of the thresher, nor with the hoofs of the beasts shall it be crushed.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “But bread corn shall be broken small: but the thrasher shall not thrash it for ever, neither shall the cart wheel hurt it, nor break it with its teeth.” The DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲯ) reads **and it [is] crushed** (**וְיִדָּק**), 4QIsa^k (Ⲯ) reads **and [the] grain [is] crushed** (**וְיִדָּק לֶחֶם יוֹדָק**), as does the Masoretic text (ⲙ), except it is missing the **and**, thus we read **[the] grain (i.e., bread, or grain seed) [is] crushed** (**לֶחֶם יוֹדָק**). Ibn Ezra explains: “That he shall not bruise it always.” Regarding verses 27 and 28, Lowth explains: “Four methods of threshing are here mentioned, by different instruments; the flail, the drag, the wain, and the treading of the cattle... The drag consisted of a sort of frame of strong planks, made rough at the bottom, with hard stones or iron: it was drawn by horses or oxen over the corn sheaves spread on the floor, the driver sitting upon it... The wain was much like the former; but had wheels with iron teeth, or edges like a saw ... by which it would seem that the axle was armed with iron teeth or serrated wheels throughout... This not only forced out the grain, but cut the straw in pieces for fodder for the cattle; for in the eastern countries they have no hay... The last method is well known from the law of Moses, which ‘forbids the ox to be muzzled, when he treadeth out the corn;’ Deuteronomy 25:4.” Henderson explains, “The practical idea conveyed is, that God mingles mercy with his judgments. His design is not to crush his people, but to render them fit for becoming useful subjects of his government; so that when these judgments have answered their end, they shall cease.”

³² Not maize, but rather *grains* (see ISAIAH 17:5).

³³ “A wagon; a carriage for the transportation of goods on wheels,” in Noah Webster’s 1828 Dictionary.

29 This also cometh forth from the LORD of hosts, [which] is wonderful in counsel, [and] excellent in working.

The Targum (T) has, beginning with the second clause, “Who in the vast knowledge of His mind hath established the world; He hath multiplied His works in the beginning (בְּרִישִׁית),³⁴ occurs also in the sense of creation... hence, we may render here ‘He hath multiplied His works of the creation.’ מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרִישִׁית, ‘the work of creation’ is a common phrase in the Rabbinical writings) by His great wisdom.” The LXX (G) reads, “These wonders have indeed proceeded from the Lord of Hosts.” The Peshitta (S) renders *excellent in working*, as *excellent in instruction*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “This also is come forth from the Lord God of hosts, to make his counsel wonderful, and magnify justice.” ¶ Barnes writes: “*This also cometh*—That is, these various devices for threshing his grain comes from the Lord no less than the skill with

which he tills his land (see ISAIAH 28:26). *And excellent in working*—Or rather, who magnifies (תַּגְדִּיל) his wisdom (תוֹשִׁיָה). This word properly means wisdom, or understanding Job 11:6; 12:16; 26:3; Proverbs 3:21; 8:14; 18:1. The idea of the prophet is, that God, who had so wisely taught the farmer, and who had instructed him to use such various methods in his husbandry, would also be himself wise, and would pursue similar methods with his people. He would not always pursue the same unvarying course, but would vary his dispensations as they should need, and as would best secure their holiness and happiness.” Redak (in Rabbi Rosenberg) explains that “The plowman is the Almighty, and the earth is Israel. Just as the plowman prepares the earth to receive seed, so did the Almighty prepare Israel to accept His words.” He goes on to explain how He took his people out of Egypt in the exodus and continues on until He gives them doctrine through the Torah. And we add, through the Book of Mormon.

20 June 2012

³⁴ See the King Follett sermon to see the Prophet Joseph Smith’s inspired exposition on Genesis 1:1 and בְּרִישִׁית.

Isaiah 29

This is one of the most glorious chapters in Holy Writ. It declares the coming forth of *that book of books*, as Elder Parley P. Pratt called the Book of Mormon. The Lord, in His mercy, made provisions for the descendants of the Lamanites to hear the *word* in the last days (see Enos 1:12–13). The writings of the Nephite prophets—as well as the Jaredites—were to come forth as the Book of Mormon many centuries after these prophets lived upon the earth. This book, together with the Bible, bears the most solemn witness of the divinity of Christ. To really understand ISAIAH 29 one must ponder and study 2 Nephi 25–33.

The following verses are intimately associated with ISAIAH 29, and are found in 2 Nephi 26:14–20. In them we see the setting of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. There are many others also found in 2 Nephi 25–33.

14 But behold, I [Nephi] prophesy unto you concerning the last days [the time when the Church of Jesus Christ would once again be restored upon the earth]; **concerning the days when the Lord God shall bring these things** [the Book of Mormon] **forth unto the children of men.**

15 After my seed [the Nephites] **and the seed of my brethren** [the Lamanites] **shall have dwindled in unbelief** [as both the Nephites and Lamanites would turn away from the Lord and the Church of Jesus Christ], **and shall have been smitten by the Gentiles** [after the European colonists conquer the American continent and subdue the Lamanites]; **yea, after the Lord God shall have camped against them** [the Nephite nation] **round about, and shall have laid siege against them with a mount, and raised forts against them; and after they shall have been brought down low in the dust, even that they are not** [the Nephite nation shall be extinguished], **yet the words of the righteous shall be written** [the Book of Mormon will contain the words of the righteous prophets], **and the prayers of the faithful shall be heard** [such as the prophet Enos and others], **and all those who have dwindled in unbelief** [the Lamanite nation] **shall not be forgotten.**

16 For those who shall be destroyed [the Nephites] **shall speak unto them out of the**

ground [representing the Book of Mormon, that would be buried and brought forth out of the ground], **and their speech shall be low out of the dust, and their voice shall be as one that hath a familiar spirit** [all of these are various ways of representing the Holy Ghost, speaking forth and bearing witness of the truth spoken by the Nephite Prophets long buried as well as the words of the Plates of Brass or the Bible]; **for the Lord God will give unto him power** [to the Prophet Joseph Smith, in terms of being able to translate the words into English so they transmit the message with power], **that he may whisper concerning them, even as it were out of the ground; and their speech shall whisper out of the dust** [through the Book of Mormon that will be unburied and the testimonies of the prophets of the Book of Mormon].

17 For thus saith the Lord God: They shall write the things which shall be done among them, and they shall be written and sealed up in a book [the Book of Mormon¹], **and those who have dwindled in unbelief** [the Nephite and Lamanite nations of old] **shall not have them, for they seek to destroy the things of God.**

18 Wherefore, as those who have been destroyed have been destroyed speedily [both those at time of crucifixion and final battles around Cumorah]; **and the multitude of their terrible ones shall be as chaff that passeth away—yea, thus saith the Lord God: It**

¹ Not just the sealed portion of the plates is considered 'sealed.' Nephi also uses this word when describing the return of the Book of Mormon plates to the Lord after its translation: "For after the book of which I have spoken shall come forth, and be written unto the Gentiles, and sealed up again unto the Lord, there shall be many which shall believe the words which are written; and they shall carry them forth unto the remnant of our seed" (2 Nephi 30:3b).

shall be at an instant, suddenly—[both those at time of crucifixion and final battles around Cumorah]
 19 And it shall come to pass, that those who have dwindled in unbelief [the remnant of the Lamanite nation at the time that the European settlers arrive in America] shall be smitten by the hand of the Gentiles [the European settlers].
 20 And the Gentiles are lifted up in the pride of their eyes [the European settlers], and have stumbled, because of the greatness of their stumbling block [pride and blindness so they could not recognize Christ], that they have built up many churches; nevertheless, they put down the power and miracles of God, and preach up unto themselves their own wisdom and their own learning, that they may get gain and grind upon the face of the poor [thus requiring that the Lord re-establish the Church of Jesus Christ once again, rather than reform any of the existing churches of the time].

Nephi prophecies of the last days when the Book of Mormon shall come forth. This will happen after both the Nephites and Lamanites will have fallen away from the true Church. The Nephites will have been surrounded by the Lamanites and conquered despite all their former strength. The Nephite nation will be destroyed speedily about 400 BC and the inhabitants of the continent will also suffer great upheavals at the time of the crucifixion of the Savior. It will be after the European colonists conquer the American continent and subdue the Lamanites that the Book of Mormon will come forth. The Book of Mormon will contain the words of the righteous prophets and these words will testify to the descendants of the Lamanites and of the whole earth. The prayers of the faithful—such as Enos of whom we have already mentioned in ISAIAH 28:5—will be fulfilled in that the descendants of the Lamanites will receive this book and be moved by the Spirit. The words of the Book of Mormon shall “speak from the ground.” The Prophet Joseph Smith would play a key role in bringing forth these words in the last days. Through the power of the Holy Ghost, the words of the book will testify to all: Lamanite, Jew and Gentile. The Book of Mormon will be published at the last day (1) after the Nephites and Lamanites will have apostatized, (2) after the remaining Lamanites will have been humbled by the Gentile nations; and (3) at a time when the Gentile nations will be full of pride—at a time when they will have built many churches, but none unto God; at a time when they shall deny that God has any intercourse with man; at a time when miracles will be

denied; and at a time when churches take advantage of the poor to build themselves up. At the last days all nations shall gather against Jerusalem. They will no more succeed than a hungry person can quench thirst or hunger in a dream.

vv. 1–8. Ariel (אֶרְיֶל), or Jerusalem (יְרוּשָׁלַיִם), or the City of David (עִיר דָּוִד), to include the Temple Mount, would be destroyed. One like Ariel, that is, the Nephite people, would likewise be destroyed. The people would continue to offer sacrifices upon the temple altar even after Christ would give His life for us. As a consequence, distress would come upon both of these Ariels (Jerusalem and the Nephite cities). After the destruction of the Nephites, in the latter days, the voice of the righteous prophets would come forth, as it were, from the ground (as the Book of Mormon plates were so buried).

1 ¶ WOE to Ariel, to Ariel, the city
 [where] David dwelt! add ye year to year;
 let them kill sacrifices.

✓ or, O Ariel, that is, the lion of God ✓ ✓ or, of the city
 ✓ ✓ ✓ cut off the heads

The Targum (ܬܪܓܡ) has, “Woe to the altar, the altar which is built in the city in which David dwelt; because of the assembly of the armies which are gathering themselves together against her year by year, because the festivals shall cease.” The LXX (Λ) reads, “Hold consultation; exalt vain comfort. Ah city Ariel, against which David fought! collect provisions year after year; eat; for you shall eat with Moab.” Instead of *kill sacrifices*, the Peshitta (ܫܬܬܐ) has *keep festivals* (Lamsa) / *celebrate the feast [days]* (BPE). The BPE footnotes explain that Ariel means Ari-El, or Ari of El (that is, Lion of Elohim or Abode/Home of Elohim). The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Woe to Ariel, to Ariel the city which David took: year is added to year: the solemnities are at an end.” Ariel is spelled a bit different so that the Masoretic text (M) has אֶרִיאֵל, as also DSS 1QIsa^b (Q), אֶרִיאֵל, while the DSS 1QIsa^a (Q) has replaced the yod for a vav, אֶרְוֵאֵל.² ¶ הוֹי, Woe, greetings, or oh! Jennings says, “Nor is it without tenderness that He here cries, ‘O Ariel, Ariel,’ for the interjection will bear equally well the rendering ‘O’ as ‘Woe.’ Thus we ought to be well prepared to see judgment and mercy mingled in what follows.” See also ISAIAH 18, where הוֹי is given as a greeting rather than a warning. ¶ Ariel, אֶרִיאֵל. There are a number of interpretations for the meaning of this

² This would be pronounced Aruel or Aroel.

word. In Ezekiel 43:15, **אֶרְאֵל** it clearly refers to the altar of burnt offerings (see Gesenius, HAL) or an “altar hearth” (WZAT³) from **אָרָה**, to burn or kindle (Delitzsch); or **אֶרֶב**, light (Lowth). Since Jerusalem was burnt in 70 AD, it would be easy to think that this is what was meant. The Targum (ܬܪܓܡ) follows this perspective. Others also follow the margin || (e.g., Rawlinson, Barnes, Gill), i.e., the lion of God, for **אֶרֶב**. Gill suggests: “... it seems better to understand it of the city of Jerusalem, in which David encamped, as the word [dwelt, **הִתְחַבֵּר**] signifies; or ‘encamped against’, as some; which he besieged, and took from the Jebusites, and fortified, and dwelt in; and which may be so called from its strength and fortifications, natural and artificial, and from its being the chief city of Judah, called a lion, Genesis 49:9 whose standard had a lion on it, and from whence came the Messiah, the Lion of the tribe of Judah...” [Regarding *encamped* also see notes on ISAIAH 29:3.] Gill adds, “...the words may be considered as of one calling to Jerusalem, and lamenting over it, as Christ did, ‘O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets,’ &c. Matthew 23:37 and the mention of David’s name, and of his dwelling in it, is not only to point out what city is meant, and the greatness and glory of it; but to show that this would not secure it from ruin and destruction.” A second very interesting point about Ariel is that a number of exegetes believe that reference is made to two Ariels. For instance, Gill suggests: “The words are rendered by Noldius, ‘woe to Ariel, to Ariel: to the city in which David encamped’; and he observes, that some supply the copulative ‘and; woe to Ariel, and to the city’, &c.” Clarke also speaks of two Ariels: “In the second verse it is said, I will distress Ari-el, and it shall be unto me as Ari-el. The first Ari-el here seems to mean Jerusalem, which should be distressed by the Assyrians: the second Ari-el seems to mean the altar of burnt offerings.” || Three LDS Apostles explain that two Ariels are meant (we will relate Elder Orson Pratt’s narrative under our ISAIAH 29:2 notes). Elder LeGrand Richards frequently reiterated: “Not only did Isaiah see the destruction of the great city of Jerusalem, but he also saw the destruction of another great center here in America eleven hundred years after he made that prophecy.”⁴ Elder Bruce R. McConkie speaks of the multiple attacks on Jerusalem or Ariel and says: “This proclamation [against Ariel] is the setting for like woes that shall come upon another people, a people who went out from Jerusalem to become a great nation, but who,

in turn, through sin fell from grace and became ‘as Ariel.’ Those who are to be ‘as Ariel’ are the Nephites, as we learn from chapter 3 of Second Nephi, Nephi’s paraphrase of ISAIAH 29.”⁵ || *Add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices.* The idea of adding *year upon year* (**שָׁנָה עַל־שָׁנָה**) here is similar to that of ISAIAH 30, adding *sin upon sin* (**חַטָּאת עַל־חַטָּאת**). Lowth has, “Ironically: Go on year after year; keep your solemn feasts; yet know, that God will punish you for your hypocritical worship, consisting of mere form destitute of true piety.” || Elder Orson Pratt has this to say, “... the Lord threatens Ariel, or Jerusalem, with judgment: he says, ‘woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the city where David dwelt! Add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices; yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow.’ After the Messiah came and was sacrificed for the sins of the world, the Jews continued to ‘kill sacrifices’ when they should have been done away; they added ‘year to year’ to the law of Moses, until they brought down ‘heaviness and sorrow,’ and great ‘distress’ upon their beloved city. The Roman army encompassed the city—cast a trench about it and finally brought it down ‘even with the ground.’ The principal part of the Jews perished, and a remnant was scattered among the nations where they have wandered in darkness unto this day.”⁶ Barnes similarly has: “That is, ‘go on year after year, suffer one year to glide on after another in the course which you are pursuing.’ This seems to be used ironically, and to denote that they were going on one year after another in the observance of the feasts; walking the round of external ceremonies...” Lowth writes: “Go on year after year, keep your solemn feasts: yet know, that God will punish you for your hypocritical worship, consisting of mere form destitute of true piety.” Gill writes, “...the sense is, go on from year to year in your security and vain confidence; or keep your yearly feasts, and offer your yearly sacrifices; ... let the people bring them, and the priests offer them, for the time is coming when an end will be put to them; ‘the feasts shall be cut off’: so the words may be rendered; the festivals shall cease, and be no more observed; and so the Targum, ‘the festivities shall cease.’” || *Let them kill sacrifices.* Barnes has, “Margin ||, ‘Cut off the heads.’ The word here rendered ‘kill’ (**נִקְּוָה**) may mean to smite; to hew; to cut down ISAIAH 10:34; Job 19:26. But it has also another signification which better accords with this place. It denotes to make a circle, to revolve; to go round a place Joshua 6:3, 11; to surround 1Kings 7:24; 2Kings 6:14;

³ Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament.

⁴ Elder LeGrand Richards, A Testimony, *Ensign* (CR), November 1980, p.63. Also see Elder LeGrand Richards, *Conference Report*, April 1967, First Day-Morning Meeting, p.21–22.

⁵ Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, pp.430–436.

⁶ Pratt, Orson. *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, number 6, Prophetic evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon, Latter-day tracts, p. 87.

Psalms 17:9; 22:17; 88:18. The word rendered ‘sacrifices’ (זָבִיחַ) may mean a sacrifice Exodus 23:18; Psalm 118:27; Malachi 2:3, but it more commonly and properly denotes feasts or festivals Exodus 10:9; 12:14; Leviticus 23:39; Deuteronomy 16:10, 16:16; 1 Kings 8:2, 65; 2 Chronicles 7:8–9; Nehemiah 8:14; Hosea 2:11, 13. Here the sense is, ‘let the festivals go round;’ that is, let them revolve as it were in a perpetual, unmeaning circle, until the judgments due to such heartless service shall come upon you. The whole address is evidently ironical, and designed to denote that all their service was an unvarying repetition of heartless forms.” Compare to ISAIAH 1:11; and 66:3.

2 Yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow; for thus hath the Lord said unto me, and it shall be unto me as Ariel;

The Targum (ܬܪܓܡ) has, “And I will distress the city, in which the altar is, and she shall be desolate and empty; and she shall be surrounded before me with the blood of the slain, as the altar is surrounded round about with the blood of the holy sacrifices in the day of the festival.” The LXX (Λ) reads, “For I will bring distress upon Ariel, and her strength and her riches shall be for me.” Instead of *heaviness* the Peshitta (ܫܠܬܐ) renders it, *lamentation*. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “And I will make a trench about Ariel, and it shall be in sorrow and mourning, and it shall be to me as Ariel.” ¶ *Yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow*. Gill says, “... this he would do, notwithstanding their yearly sacrifices, and their observance of their solemn feasts, and other ceremonies of the law, in which they placed their confidence, and, neglected weightier matters.” Cheyne translates, תַּאֲנִיחַ וְאֵיִלָּה, instead of *heaviness and sorrow*, as *moaning and bemoaning*, thus retaining the paronomasia. ¶ Elder Orson Pratt talks about the second Ariel (on this topic, also see ISAIAH 29:1): “The latter part of the second verse [of ISAIAH 29:2] speaks of another event that should be similar to the one which was to happen to Ariel, or Jerusalem: it reads thus; And it shall be unto me as Ariel’ [ISAIAH 29:2]. This cannot have reference to Ariel itself, but it must refer to something which should be ‘As Ariel.’ It would be folly to say that Ariel shall be as Ariel. Therefore the word ‘it’ must refer to a nation that should suffer similar judgments to those which should befall Jerusalem. In the three following verses the Lord describes more fully the second event; he says, ‘And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee. And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the

dust, and thy voice shall be as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust. Moreover, the multitude of thy strangers shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones shall be as chaff that passeth away; yea, it shall be at an instant suddenly.’ These predictions of Isaiah could not refer to Ariel or Jerusalem because their speech has not been ‘out of the ground, or low out of the dust’ but it refers to the remnant of Joseph who were destroyed in America upwards of fourteen hundred years ago. The Book of Mormon describes their downfall, and truly it was great and terrible. At the crucifixion of Christ, ‘the multitude of their terrible ones,’ as Isaiah predicted ‘became as chaff that passeth away,’ and it took place, as he further predicts, ‘at an instant suddenly.’ Many of their great and magnificent cities were destroyed by fire, others by earth thereby buried in the depths of the earth. This sudden destruction came upon them because they had stoned and killed the prophets sent among them. Between three and four hundred years after Christ they again fell into great wickedness, and the principal nation fell in battle. Forts were raised in all parts of the land, the remains of which may be seen at the present day. Millions of people perished in battle and they suffered just as the Lord foretold by Isaiah—And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee, and thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground,’ etc. This remnant of Joseph in their distress and destruction, became unto the Lord as Ariel. As the Roman army lay siege to Ariel, and brought upon her great distress and sorrow, so did the contending nations of ancient America bring upon each other the most direful scenes of blood and carnage. Therefore, the Lord could, with the greatest propriety, when speaking in reference to this event, declare that, ‘It shall be unto me as Ariel.’”⁷ ¶ LDS Scholar Philip Reynolds explains: “...remember that the Lamanites, about 100 B.C., built a city which they called Jerusalem (Alma 21:2), which was destroyed at the time of the crucifixion (3 Nephi 9:7).”⁸ We also need to turn our attention to 3 Nephi 8 in regards to the destruction of much of the Nephite civilization associated with that time period: “And it came to pass in the thirty and fourth year, in the first month, on the fourth day of the month, there arose a great storm, such an one as never had been known in all the land. And there was also a great and terrible tempest; and there was terrible thunder, insomuch that it did shake the whole earth as if it was about to divide

⁷ Pratt, Orson. *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, number 6, Prophetic evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon, Latter-day tracts, p. 87.

⁸ Reynolds, Philip C., ed. *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*. Salt Lake City, Utah. 4:289–290.

asunder. And there were exceedingly sharp lightnings, such as never had been known in all the land” (3 Nephi 8:5–7) and “And there was a great and terrible destruction in the land southward. But behold, there was a more great and terrible destruction in the land northward; for behold, the whole face of the land was changed, because of the tempest and the whirlwinds, and the thunderings and the lightnings, and the exceedingly great quaking of the whole earth” (3 Nephi 8:11–12).

3 And **That** I the Lord will camp against thee her round about, and will lay siege against thee her with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee her.

The Targum (ⓧ) has, “And I will encamp against thee with armies; and I will build a fortified camp (מִצְדָּה) against thee, and I will cast up a mound against thee.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “I will indeed encompass thee as David did; and surround thee with a rampire (i.e., ‘mount’ or ‘rampart’); and erect towers around thee.” The Peshitta (Ⓟ) renders it much like the Masoretic text (Ⓜ), “And I will encamp against thee &c.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, “And I will make a circle round about thee, and will cast up a rampart against thee, and raise up bulwarks to besiege thee.” The whole notion of encamping around (ISAIAH 29:3, 1) is very interesting to us as LDS, as we turn to 2 Nephi 26:15, 18 and read about the many fortifications to be built, to no avail, by the peoples in the American continent whose fall would be as abrupt as that of Jerusalem in 70 AD. ¶ *That I the Lord will.* Faussett, Gill, Barnes and many others agree with the Book of Mormon and the JST in making these the words of the Lord. ¶ *... camp against her round about, and will lay siege against her with a mount, and I will raise forts against her.* Gill says, “This cannot be understood of Sennacherib’s siege, for he was not suffered to raise a bank against the city, nor shoot an arrow into it (ISAIAH 37:33) but well agrees with the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans, as related by Josephus (Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 7. sect. 1. &c. 12. sect. 1, 2.).” Faussett also suggests that the prophecy was more fully fulfilled by the “Roman siege (Luke 19:43; 21:20).” As we have said, this attack would take place not only against Jerusalem but also against the Nephites in the final battle. ¶ *Mounts and forts.* AMP translates as “and I will hem you in with siege works and I will set up fortifications against you.” LHI assigns to both מִצְדָּה and מִצְרָה the idea of *siege works* or apparatus that were used to overcome or destroy the fortified walls. ASV has “And I will encamp

against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with posted troops, and I will raise siege works against thee.” Regarding the מִצְדָּה (siege) we read in the ISBE¹⁰ a number of related operations. The process of besieging included (1) surrounding the city, (2) placing archers on forts to discharge their weapons, (3) an inclined road made of packed soil and other matter was constructed so battering rams could be brought against the walls of the city, (4) battering rams could now be used to tear down or breach the walls, and (5) finally rushing the breach through which the attacking armies could enter the surrounded cities.

4 And thou she shalt be brought down, [and] shalt speak out of the ground, and thy her speech shall be low out of the dust; and thy her voice shall be as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy her speech shall whisper out of the dust.

✓ peep, or, chirp

And she shalt be brought down. The Targum (ⓧ) has, “And thou shalt be brought low.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “But when thy words shall be brought down to the ground.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, “Thou shalt be brought down.” Gill writes, “To the ground, and laid level with it, even the city of Jerusalem, as it was by the Romans.” And no doubt Jerusalem was also intended as one that would be brought down. But the idea here is more correctly in line with the peoples of ancient America that were brought down after the great and last battle of the Nephites and the Lamanites around Hill Cumorah as well as the disasters that took place in the American continent at the time of the crucifixion of Christ. ¶ *And shalt speak out of the ground, and her speech shall be low out of the dust; and her voice shall be as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and her speech shall whisper out of the dust.* The Targum (ⓧ) has, “And shalt speak from beneath the earth, thy words shall gibber from the dust; and thy voice shall come like a necromancer out of the ground; yea, thy words shall gibber from the dust.” Chilton’s Targum (ⓧ) translation has: “From the earth you will speak and from the dust your utterances will whine, and your voice will be like a ghost from the ground, and from the dust your utterances will whine.” Stenning’s (ⓧ) translation renders it, “Out of the ground shalt thou speak, and out of the dust shall thy words whisper; and thy voice shall be as of one that hath a familiar spirit

⁹According to the Targum Lexicon, ‘Siege works.’

¹⁰ See *SIEGE* in ISBN for a very interesting and thorough article on this subject—in terms of the actions of both the attackers and the defenders.

coming out of the ground, and out of the dust shall thy words whisper.” The LXX (6) reads, “And shall be as if they sounded out of the earth; and thy voice on the ground shall be feeble.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “Thou shalt speak out of the earth, and thy speech shall be heard out of the ground: and thy voice shall be from the earth like that of the python, and out of the ground thy speech shall mutter.” Nägelsbach writes: “¹¹שָׁחַח is used by Isaiah with tolerable frequency (ISAIAH 2:9, 11, 17; 5:15; 25:12; 26:5). The word is used especially of a suppressed voice (Ecclesiastes 12:14)... The voice will, like that of the spirit of one dead, come forth out of the earth.” And if we follow Gesenius, not just *come forth*, but *spring forth* with the force of a wild beast who is *low*, ready to leap with much energy. ¶ The words of Elder Orson Pratt fill my eyes with tears of joy: “One of the most marvelous things connected with this prediction is that after the nation should be brought down, they should ‘speak out of the ground.’ [ISAIAH 29:4.] This is mentioned or repeated four times in the same verse. Never was a prophecy more truly fulfilled than this in the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. Joseph Smith took that sacred history ‘out of the ground.’ It is the voice of the ancient prophets of America speaking ‘out of the ground’; their speech is ‘low out of the dust’; it speaks in a most familiar manner of the doings of by gone ages; it is the voice of those who slumber in the dust. It is the voice of prophets speaking from the dead, crying repentance in the ears of the living. In what manner could a nation, after they were brought down and destroyed, ‘speak out of the ground?’ Could their dead bodies, or their dust, or their ashes speak? Verily, no: they can only speak by their writings or their books that they wrote while living. Their voice, speech or words, can only ‘speak out of the ground,’ or ‘whisper out of the dust’ by their books or writings being discovered.”¹² I wish to testify of the tremendous force with which the Spirit of the Holy Ghost will affirm the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon and of the divinity of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ ... permitting the ancient Nephite and Lamanite prophets to *whisper out of the dust*. See my conversion story in the introduction to this book, as well as in the January 1992 *Ensign*, and February 1993 *Liahona* magazines, entitled “On Sacred Ground.” In ISAIAH 1:15, I speak of *the perfect pattern of prayer* wherein you may come to know that the Book of Mormon is true.

¹¹ Gesenius has, “To sink down, Habakkuk 3:6; used of beasts of prey couching down and lying in wait in their lairs, Job 38:40,” and LHI has *low*.

¹² Pratt, Orson. *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, number 6, Prophetic evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon, Latter-day tracts, p. 87.

5 Moreover the multitude of ~~thy~~ *her* strangers shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones [*shall be*] as chaff that passeth away; yea, it shall be at an instant suddenly.

The Targum (7) has, “Moreover the multitude of those scattering thee shall be like a small dust, and the tumultuous assembly of the mighty as chaff that passeth away; and there shall be a tumult suddenly.” The LXX (6) reads, “Then shall the riches of the wicked be as the dust of a wheel, and the multitude of thine oppressors as chaff blown away: and this shall be as in a moment, suddenly.” The Peshitta (5) has *oppressors* (Lamsa) / *oppress thee* (BPE) instead of *strangers*. The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “And the multitude of them that fan thee, shall be like small dust: and as ashes passing away, the multitude of them that have prevailed against thee.” In the DSS 1QIsa^a (9) we have *presumptuous*,

rebellious or *arrogant* (BDB, for roots זָוַר and זָוַד),

thy insolent (Swanson) or *thy enemies* (DSSB), זָוַר, while in the Masoretic text (11) we have *thy strangers* (זָוַר, for root זָוַר). The JST has *her* instead of *thy*.

¶ *Moreover the multitude of her strangers shall be like small¹³ dust* (כָּאֶבֶק קָטָן). Gill says “... the simile of ‘small dust,’ to which they are compared, is not used to express the weakness of them, but the greatness of their number.” Rawlinson says: “In primitive societies every stranger is an enemy; and hence language the formation of primitive men often has one word for the two ideas. In Latin *hostis* is said to have originally meant ‘foreigner’ (Cic., ‘De Off,’ 1:12).” Barnes writes, “The multitude of the strangers that shall besiege thee; called ‘thy strangers,’ because they besieged, or oppressed thee.” The Nephites, in the last battle in Cumorah were surrounded by an innumerable enemy or *strange* people. ¶ *And the multitude of the terrible ones shall be as chaff that passeth away*. Rawlinson says, “‘Chaff,’ in Scripture, is always a metaphor for weakness.” This clause refers not to the attackers (those were described as *small dust* because of their great numbers), but rather to the attacked, the Nephite nation who at one time had been great. Now, they were consumed as chaff. While a few were indeed scattered, most were killed on Hill Cumorah. Those who were left were hunted down and killed by the Lamanites. Moroni was the only Nephite who lived to tell the story (Moroni 1). ¶ *It shall be at an instant suddenly*. Elder Mark E. Peterson wrote:

¹³ HCSB, LHL, ISV, LBP, LITV, NASB, and RV use *fine*. Most others use *small*.

“Isaiah’s words were fulfilled to the letter. The people who wrote the Book of Mormon were indeed destroyed ‘at an instant suddenly’ (ISAIAH 29:5). The book was sealed and placed in the ground for safekeeping by the last survivor of the Nephite nation—Moroni.”¹⁴

But, behold, in the last days, or in the days of the Gentiles—yea, behold all the nations of the Gentiles and also the Jews, both those who shall come upon this land and those who shall be upon other lands, yea, even upon all the lands of the earth, behold, they will be drunken with iniquity and all manner of abominations—^{*}

6 And when that day shall come^{**} Thou shalt they shall be visited of the LORD of hosts, with thunder and with earthquake, and with a great noise, and with storm, and with tempest, and with the flame of devouring fire.

^{*} Verse 6 in the KJV is verse 2 in the Book of Mormon version of this chapter, except that the Book of Mormon introduces the text of Isaiah with this verse, which is very important in terms of the time frame of the fulfillment of the revelation, and thus is included here.

^{**} JST: The clause, “And when that day shall come” is replaced by the prophetic “for” in the JST.

But, behold, in the last days, or in the days of the Gentiles—yea, behold all the nations of the Gentiles and also the Jews, both those who shall come upon this land and those who shall be upon other lands, yea, even upon all the lands of the earth, behold, they will be drunken with iniquity and all manner of abominations. This speaks of the total apostasy that would prevail before the coming of the Book of Mormon (as indicated by the idea of being *drunken with iniquity and all manner of abominations*, as we also saw in ISAIAH 28). ¶ *And when that day shall come they shall be visited of the LORD of hosts, with thunder and with earthquake, and with a great noise, and with storm, and with tempest, and with the flame of devouring fire.* The Targum (ܬܠܡܝܬ) has, “Thou shalt be visited with thunder from (Chaldee, ‘from before’) the Lord of hosts, and with earthquake, and with a great noise; with storm, and tempest, and a flame of devouring fire.” The LXX (Ϟ) reads, “For from the Lord of Hosts there will be a visitation—a hurricane and a devouring flame of fire with thunder and an earthquake and a mighty noise.” The Douay-Rheims (Ϟ) has, “And it shall be at an instant suddenly. A visitation shall come from the Lord

of hosts in thunder, and with earthquake, and with a great noise of whirlwind and tempest, and with the flame of devouring fire.” Faussett well says that these verses refer to the last days, a time where neither Jew nor Gentile shall be possessed of the truth. (Also see D&C 88:88–90.)

7 And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel Zion, even all that fight against her and her munition, and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night vision;

The Targum (ܬܠܡܝܬ) has, “And the multitude of all the nations, that are gathered together against the city, and the altar which is in her, and all their camps and their armies, that are oppressing her, shall be like a phantom (literally, as a dream of the imagination) of the night.” The LXX (Ϟ) reads, “And the wealth of all the nations which encamped against Ariel, and all they who are warring against Jerusalem, and all who have been assembled against her, and those distressing her, shall be like one dreaming dreams by night.” The Peshitta (ܣܠܬܐ), instead of *munition*, has *all the armies and multitudes*. The Douay-Rheims (Ϟ) has, “And the multitude of all nations that have fought against Ariel, shall be as the dream of a vision by night, and all that have fought, and besieged and prevailed against it.” The DSS 1QIsa^a (ϙ) has וּמִצְרֵתָהּ, spelled with a *rosh* (fortification) while the DSS 1QIsa^b (ϙ) has *stronghold*, spelled with a *dalet*, וּמִצְדָּתָהּ, as does also the Masoretic text (מסורה), וּמִצְדָּתָהּ. The LXX (Ϟ) uses Ἀριελ (Ariel) in the first instance but Ἱερουσαλημ (Jerusalem) instead of *her* in the same verse. The Book of Mormon has Zion (צִיּוֹן) here, rather than the Ariel (אַרְיֵאל) found in the Masoretic text, which makes the comments by Nägelsbach particularly interesting: “The concluding words of this verse ‘the multitude of all the nations that fight against Mount Zion,’ which correspond exactly to what we find in ISAIAH 29:7, except that there instead of ‘Mount Zion’ the name ‘Ariel’ occurs, furnish the key to the understanding of the enigmatical word Ariel. Can it be deemed accidental that the Prophet in ISAIAH 29:8 repeats those words of ISAIAH 29:7 with the sole change of substituting for ‘Ariel’ the words ‘Mount Zion?’” The Book of Mormon does have a small difference, *Zion* (צִיּוֹן) vs. *Mount Zion* (הַר צִיּוֹן). ¶ Govett, while also speaking of the early verses of this chapter, makes suggestions that fit well here: “These characteristics [i.e., dream of a night vision] point out that time as the day of the Saviour’s

¹⁴ Mark E. Petersen, *Isaiah for Today*, p.108.

second advent. Moreover, as the enemies of Jerusalem are in the 7th verse stated to be ‘a multitude of *all nations*,’ this proves that the siege here spoken of will take place at the time of the Great Confederacy, so often alluded to. If the reader will compare this chapter with the twelfth and fourteenth chapters of Zechariah, he will discover the most evident harmony in the siege of Jerusalem there predicted; in its besiegers being ‘all nations,’ in the issue,—their utter discomfiture; and that too, after they have taken the city...” Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: “In the day when all nations are gathered at Jerusalem to fight against the chosen people; in the day when the house of Judah accepts Him in whose hands and feet are the nail marks of Calvary; when they look upon him whom they have pierced and ask, ‘What are these wounds in thine hands?’ (Zechariah 13:6); and when he identifies himself as their God—in that day, the Lord of Hosts, the ancient God of battles, shall again fight their battles. Israel shall triumph. Their enemies shall be destroyed.”¹⁵ Elder McConkie also says: “Let us be reminded that most of the wars fought from the fall of man to this hour have been religious wars. It was so before the flood; it was so in ancient Israel... and it will be so—a thousand times over—in the coming Armageddon. The nations that distress Jerusalem in that day will be in opposition to the Lord Jehovah. They will be fighting against Mount Zion.”¹⁶ Elder Orson Pratt has: “The kingdom of God, with its inspired prophets and Apostles, was rooted out of the earth, also the Priesthood with all its powers; and instead thereof churches, creeds and governments have been reared and built up by human wisdom; but the kingdom of God that is to be established in these last days, instead of being overcome and destroyed out of the earth, is to stand forever; it was not to be delivered to another people (Daniel 2:44), that is, it is never to change hands, but once established, once organized on the earth, it is to continue from that time henceforth and forever, while the kingdoms of this world will vanish away like the dream of a night vision.”¹⁷

8 **Yea**, it shall be unto them, even be as ~~when an~~ unto a hungry [man] which dreameth, and, behold, he eateth, but he awaketh and his soul is empty: or as ~~when~~ like unto a thirsty man which* dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh, but he awaketh,

and, behold, [he is] faint, and his soul hath appetite; **Yea**, even so shall the multitude of all the nations be that fight against mount Zion.

* JST: uses “who” instead of “which.”

Yea, it shall be unto them, even as unto a hungry man which dreameth, and, behold, he eateth, but he awaketh and his soul is empty. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And it shall be as when a hungry man dreameth, behold, he eateth; but he awakes, and he (Chaldee, ‘himself’) is in want.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And like men who in sleep are eating and drinking, but when they awake the dream is vain.” The Peshitta (ܣ) instead of *soul is empty*, has *not satisfied* (BPE) / *weary and famished* (Lamsa). Have we not all experienced similar dreams at one time or another? Those who fight against the Lord will no more have power over Israel than to satisfy their hunger or thirst while they dream. The natural man may be ever searching to dictate to God but no satisfaction can be obtained—no enduring happiness—unless we align our desires with those of God. ¶ *Or like unto a thirsty man which dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh, but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Or as a thirsty man dreameth, and behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and behold, he (Chaldee, ‘himself’) is spent.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Even as a thirsty man dreameth that he drinketh, and when he waketh he is still athirst, his soul having trusted in a shadow.” Rawlinson explains, “The entire host of the ‘terrible ones’ would melt away and disappear, as a night vision before the light of day it would dissolve into nothing, vanish, leave no trace.” This whole experience, although many of the exegetes attach it to a different historical point, speaks of the feelings of impotence that the enemies of Israel shall experience at not being able to conquer Jerusalem in that great battle when the nations shall surround her and the Son of Man shall come to her protection. ¶ *Yea, even so shall the multitude of all the nations be that fight against mount Zion.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “So shall the multitude of all the nations be, that gather themselves together against the mountain of Zion.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “So shall be the wealth of all the nations, who have warred against mount Sion.” Once again, this has reference to the nations who in the last days will surround Jerusalem and will even succeed to some degree before the triumphal entry by the Lord of hosts who will stand in the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem and the mount will then split in two making possible the refuge and escape of the Lord’s people. A nation will be born in a day as they are converted to the Lord and recognize Jesus Christ as the Holy One of Israel (ISAIAH 66:8).

¹⁵ Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, pp.430–436.

¹⁶ Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, pp.435–436.

¹⁷ Pratt, Elder Orson, “The Restoration of the Jews, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 14, No. 9, May 26, 1871, pp. 58–70.

vv. 9–16. A sense of complete spiritual darkness will prevail before the Book of Mormon comes to light. This apostasy was born of the rejection of the prophets that the Lord had sent through the ages until they were finally removed from the earth. The Book of Mormon would be translated by a humble unlearned boy rather than by the self-proclaimed wise and prudent. It would come at a time when the precepts of men are given more weight than those of God. The coming forth of this book and the subsequent establishment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints would constitute a marvelous work and a wonder.

9 ¶ For behold, all ye that doeth iniquity, stay yourselves, and wonder; ~~ery ye for ye shall cry out, and cry;~~ [✓] they are ye shall be drunken, but not with wine; they ye shall stagger, but not with strong drink.

✓ or, take your pleasure and riot

For behold, all ye that doeth iniquity, stay yourselves, and wonder; for ye shall cry out, and cry; ye shall be drunken, but not with wine; ye shall stagger, but not with strong drink. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Be astounded, wonder, be ye terrified, and muse, and marvel. They are drunk, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with old wine.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Be sunk in dejection and stand astonished; be drunk and reel, not with wine nor strong drink.” The BPE (Ⲥ) has, “Be astonished and amazed, shake and wonder, because they are drunken, but not with wine; because they stagger, but not on account of intoxicating drink.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “Be astonished, and wander, waver, and stagger: be drunk, and not with wine: stagger, and not with drunkenness.” The JST and the Book of Mormon give it the future—*shall be*—rather than present tense. The Masoretic text (ⲙ) has וַיִּשְׁכָּרוּ, wine, while 1QIsa^a (Ⲙ) has וַיִּשְׁכָּרוּ, from wine. Also, the Masoretic text (ⲙ) has וְלֹא שִׁכָּרוּ, and not strong drink, while DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲙ) has וְלֹא שִׁכָּרוּ, and to strong drink, וְלֹא שִׁכָּרוּ. ¶ Regarding this drunkenness, Barnes says: “It is a moral and spiritual intoxication and reeling. They err in their doctrines and practice; and it is with them as it is with a drunken man that sees nothing clearly or correctly, and cannot walk steadily. They have perverted all doctrines; they err in their views of God and his truth, and they are irregular and corrupt in their conduct.” Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained: “In a spiritual sense drunkenness means apostasy” (ISAIAH 29:9–10; Revelation 17:2; 18:3).¹⁸

¹⁸ Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed., p.209.

Also from Elder McConkie we have: “How shall the night of awful darkness that covers the earth come to an end? What light will pierce the enshrouding gloom? How shall those who are drunken but not with wine and who stagger but not with strong drink, be reclaimed? What will bring spiritual sobriety into their souls? Again the answer is a book—a book that contains the mind and will and voice of the Lord, a book that whispers from the dust. And so Isaiah speaks of the glorious restoration of the everlasting gospel, which is to take place in the last days, and he introduces that restoration by speaking of the book so long sealed and even now only partially opened.”¹⁹

10 For behold, the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep. For behold, ye have ~~and hath~~ closed your eyes, and ye have rejected the prophets; [✓] and your rulers, [✓] the seers hath he covered because of your iniquity.

* JST: uses semi-colon after “rulers,” rather than after “prophets.”

✓ heads

(See also ISAIAH 6:10; and Romans 11:8.) *For behold, the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep. For behold, ye have closed your eyes, and ye have rejected the prophets; and your rulers, the seers hath he covered because of your iniquity.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Because the Lord shall cast among you a spirit of error; and He shall hide the prophets from you, and he shall hide the scribes, and the teachers, who teach you the instruction of the law.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “For the Lord hath drenched you with a spirit of stupefaction, and will close up the eyes of them and of their prophets and their rulers.” The Peshitta (Ⲑ) has the seers seeing hidden things. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “For the Lord hath mingled for you the spirit of a deep sleep, he will shut up your eyes, he will cover your prophets and princes, that see visions.” Barnes explains: “The word rendered ‘hath poured out’ (נִסַּךְ) is usually referred to the act of pouring out a libation, or drink-offering in worship Exodus 30:9; Hosea 9:4; ISAIAH 30:1. Here it means that Yahweh had, as it were, ‘drenched them’ (Septuagint, πεπότικε) with a spirit of stupefaction.” A spirit of deep sleep has a perfect translation into Spanish, *un espíritu de aturdimiento*, something to the effect of being in a daze, confused and disoriented. When people reject the prophets or the Book of Mormon it is as if they have shut their eyes to the truth and thus walk in this *espíritu de aturdimiento*.

¹⁹ Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, p. 442.

¶ In John we read: “And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil” (John 3:19). The Savior said: “For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?” (John 5:46–47). Likewise, those who truly believe the Bible will believe in the Book of Mormon, for the Bible speaks of the Book of Mormon (2 Nephi 33:10). Anyone who reads the Book of Mormon with a sincere heart will know that this book is full of light and truth and will feel of the influence of the Holy Ghost bearing witness of its truthfulness. ¶ Nägelsbach notes: “Where a capacity to receive the divine word is wanting, there it works an effect the very opposite of what it should properly produce; it hardens, blinds, stupefies. It is as if the spirit of understanding had become in those who do not desire the knowledge of the truth, a spirit of stupefaction, of stupidity. תרדמה²⁰, which is found only here in Isaiah, has this ... sense.”

¶ In speaking about ISAIAH 29:9–10, Elder Orson Pratt says, “Here we perceive the dark and benighted condition of the multitude of all the nations ... they were to be drunken and stagger, but not with wine nor with strong drink; the prophets and seers were to be covered from them; and ‘the vision of all,’ that is, the revelations of all the holy prophets and seers, contained either in the Bible or any other place were to become as the words of the sealed Book of Mormon ... they are covered; they are not understood any more than the words of the sealed book were understood by the learned. When the events of the scripture prophecy are so clearly fulfilled before their eyes, they will not even then perceive it ... because they are drunken with every species of wickedness and abominations, and because they, draw near to the Lord with their mouths, and with their lips, while their hearts are removed far from Him, and because they are taught by the precepts of men they will reject it, and in so doing, they will reject the Lord’s great and last warning message to man, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”²¹ ¶ *For behold, ye have closed your eyes, and ye have rejected the prophets; and your rulers* [i.e., *your heads*, ראשיכם], *the seers hath he covered because of your iniquity*. Many exegetes believe that the *prophets* and *seers* are a latter gloss or addition, but the Book of Mormon greatly clarifies this passage to make it clear that the Lord would cover or remove the prophets and seers from the presence of the people as they would no longer heed their words but had rejected them. Nyman well says, “The KJV reads as

though the Lord were responsible for these problems, but the Book of Mormon shows that that it was the people’s choices which had brought upon them their conditions.”

We turn again to materials found in the Book of Mormon and Inspired Version not contained in today’s other ancient texts. But first, this from Church history: “Sometime in this month of February [1828], the aforementioned Mr. Martin Harris came to our place, got the characters which I had drawn off the plates, and started with them to the city of New York. For what took place relative to him and the characters, I refer to his own account of the circumstances, as he related them to me after his return, which was as follows: ‘I went to the city of New York, and presented the characters which had been translated, with the translation thereof, to Professor Charles Anthon, a gentleman celebrated for his literary attainments. Professor Anthon stated that the translation was correct, more so than any he had before seen translated from the Egyptian. I then showed him those which were not yet translated, and he said that they were Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyriac, and Arabic; and he said they were true characters. He gave me a certificate, certifying to the people of Palmyra that they were true characters, and that the translation of such of them as had been translated was also correct. I took the certificate and put it into my pocket, and was just leaving the house, when Mr. Anthon called me back, and asked me how the young man found out that there were gold plates in the place where he found them. I answered that an angel of God had revealed it unto him. He then said to me, “Let me see that certificate.” I accordingly took it out of my pocket and gave it to him, when he took it and tore it to pieces, saying that there was no such thing now as ministering of angels, and that if I would bring the plates to him he would translate them. I informed him that part of the plates were sealed, and that I was forbidden to bring them. He replied, “I cannot read a sealed book.” I left him and went to Dr. Mitchell, who sanctioned what Professor Anthon had said respecting both the characters and the translation”’²² Note that Anthon was so convinced that these characters were authentic that he desired to see the plates even though he did not believe the angel narrative.

And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall bring forth unto you the words of a book, and they shall be the words of them which have slumbered.

²⁰ Deep sleep.

²¹ Pratt, Orson. *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, number 6, Prophetic evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon, Latter-day tracts, pp. 89–90.

²² JS–History 1:63–65.

The words that the Lord God would bring forth are those of the Book of Mormon. These will be the words of ancient prophets who lived in the American continent more than a millennia ago. We read that they have *slumbered* as a poetical way of saying that they have long since passed from their mortal existence into the world of spirits.

And behold, the book shall be sealed; and in the book shall be a revelation from God, from the beginning of the world to the ending thereof.

Besides the Book of Mormon there would be additional plates—plates that were sealed and that are to come forth at a future date. We understand that these words were seen by the brother of Jared and were also known to John the revelator (see Ether 4:4–7).

Wherefore, because of the things which are sealed up, the things which are sealed shall not be delivered in the day of the wickedness and abominations of the people. Wherefore, the book shall be kept from them.

Only the Book of Mormon would be delivered to the Prophet Joseph Smith for translation but not the sealed portion of the plates. The sealed portion of the plates would be kept from this undeserving generation.

But the book shall be delivered unto a man, and he shall deliver the words of the book, which are the words of those who have slumbered in the dust, and he shall deliver these words unto another;

The Book of Mormon would be delivered to Joseph Smith, the Prophet. The Prophet would, in turn, write some of the words found in the plates and hand them to another man, that is, to Martin Harris. Note that the Prophet would not hand the book or plates to Martin Harris, but rather, words from the plates. The words of the Book of Mormon represent the words of the ancient prophets of the American continent who are no longer living, but *slumber*.

But the words which* are sealed he shall not deliver, neither shall he deliver the book. For the book shall be sealed by the power of God, and the revelation which

was sealed shall be kept in the book until the own due time of the Lord, that they may come forth; for behold, they reveal all things from the foundation of the world unto the end thereof.

* JST: uses “that” instead of “which.”

Elder Orson Pratt explains: “Mark this prediction; the book itself was not to be delivered to the learned, but only ‘the words of a book’; this was literally fulfilled in the event which has already been described [Martin Harris and Professor Anthon incident], as clearly testified of, not only by the ‘plain-looking countryman,’ namely Martin Harris, but by the learned professor Anthon himself. But Isaiah informs us in the next verse [ISAIAH 29:12] that the book itself should be delivered to the unlearned; he says, ‘and the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, read this, I pray thee: and he said, I am not learned.’ This was fulfilled when the angel of the Lord delivered the book into the hands of Mr. Smith; though unlearned in every language, but his own mother tongue, yet he was commanded to read or translate the book. Feeling his own incapability to read such a book, he said to the Lord in the words of Isaiah, ‘I am not learned.’”²³ The sealed portion of the book, on the other hand, shall come forth at a time that the Lord has set and contains “all things from the foundation of the world unto the end thereof.”

And the day cometh, that the words of the book which were sealed shall be read upon the house tops; and they shall be read by the power of Christ; and all things shall be revealed unto the children of men which ever have been among the children of men, and which ever will be, even unto the end of the earth.

At this future date the words from the sealed plates “shall be read from the house tops... through the power of Christ.” At that time these things shall be revealed to all humankind—past, present and future. Recall that housetops described the houses with a terrace on top of the houses (ISAIAH 22:1). This is to be fulfilled either literally or symbolically, the meaning being that all shall have these words.

²³ Pratt, Orson. *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, number 6, Prophetic evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon, Latter-day tracts, p. 88.

Wherefore, at that day when the book shall be delivered unto the man of whom I have spoken, the book shall be hid from the eyes of the world, that the eyes of none shall behold it save it be that three witnesses shall behold it, by the power of God, besides him to whom the book shall be delivered; and they shall testify to the truth of the book and the things therein.

So—returning to the time when the Book of Mormon would be delivered to the Prophet Joseph Smith—these plates would not be shown to many others. Among these there would be three special witnesses and an additional eight witnesses. These witnesses would testify that indeed they had seen the plates and of the truthfulness of what they contained.

And there is none other which shall view it, save it be a few according to the will of God, to bear testimony of his word unto the children of men; for the Lord God hath said that the words of the faithful should speak as if it were from the dead.

Only a few individuals, besides the Prophet Joseph Smith and these three witnesses and eight witnesses would have the privilege of viewing the plates and bear testimony to the children of men based on this witness. Mary Whitmer (at times she is called the 4th witness and at others the 12th witness) was among them. The remainder of the children of men could obtain a witness of its authenticity through the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost has poured out upon me a sure witness of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon.

Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to bring forth the words of the book; and in the mouth of as many witnesses as seemeth him good will he establish his word; and woe be unto him that rejecteth the word of God!

The Lord God, through the Prophet Joseph Smith, would bring forth the words of these ancient prophets. He would establish the truthfulness of the words of the book through “as many witnesses as seemeth him good.” This includes not only those who were to see the plates but of each one of us who has received a witness of the Holy Ghost of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon—to which I rejoice to be counted. I have

received countless manifestations of the Spirit, most of them through the sweet comfort of the Spirit. Only a few times in my life has that manifestation been so very strong—I describe it as almost *falling of my horse or of my bicycle*! One such occasion took place when I opened the Book of Mormon and read Moroni’s promise in my home in Asturias 400, Santiago, Chile, before I turned 16. I have never tired of telling and retelling my conversion story (see introduction and ISAIAH 3:1 footnote).

~~11 And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book~~ ✓ ~~that is sealed, which [men] deliver to one that is~~
But behold, it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall say unto him to whom he shall deliver the book: Take these words which are not sealed and deliver them to another, that he may show them unto the learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee. And he the learned saith, shall say: Bring hither the book, and I will read them. And now, because of the glory of the world and to get gain will they say this, and not for the glory of God. And the man shall say: I cannot bring the book, for it [is] sealed. Then shall the learned say, I cannot read it.

✓ or, letter

Chilton’s Targum (Ⲛ) translation has, “And all *prophecy* has become to you like the words of a book that is sealed. When men give it to one who knows the book, saying, ‘Read this,’ he *will* say, ‘I cannot, for it is sealed.’” Similarly, Stenning’s Targum (Ⲛ) translation reads, “And all prophecy is become unto you as the words of a book which is sealed, so that if they give it to one that is learned, saying, Read this now, he will say, I cannot for it is sealed.” The LXX (Ⲙ) reads, “As for your seers of hidden things, all these prophecies will be to you like the words of a book which is sealed: which when they give to a man skilled in letters, saying, Read this: He will say, I cannot read it, for it is sealed.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲙ) has, “And the vision of all shall be unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which when they shall deliver to one that is learned, they shall say: Read this: and he shall answer: I cannot, for it is sealed.” Whitehouse says, “Cheyne appropriately translates by ‘a man who is a scholar’”²⁴ ¶ And says, *I cannot for it is sealed* &c. The DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲛ) has *and*

²⁴ But not in my version of Cheyne.

he says (וַיֹּאמֶר) while the Masoretic text (וַיֹּאמֶר) renders it *and says* (וַיֹּאמֶר) where the *he* is implied. ¶ Philip Reynolds well says, “Isaiah makes the meaning of this vision so clear that it need not be misunderstood. He speaks of a book, or rather *the book*, for the Hebrew text has the definite article, to which the translators have not given the full force”²⁵ And so it is, as we have *the book*²⁶ סֵפֶר in the Masoretic text (וַיֹּאמֶר) and *a book* סֵפֶר in the Targum (סֵפֶר). Various exegetes (Rawlinson, Gill, Delitzsch) explain that *learned* (אֱלֹהִים יָדָע, to *know*, or *one knowing*) has to do with being literate or knowing how to read. This fits in very well with the idea of being able to know the ancient characters. ISAIAH 29:11 was among the scriptures that Angel Moroni quoted to Joseph Smith according to the Oliver Cowdery narrative (see note to ISAIAH 1:7). “Yet,” said he, “the scripture must be fulfilled before it is translated, which says that the words of a book, which were sealed, were presented to the learned; for thus has God determined to leave men without excuse, and show to the meek that his arm is not shortened that it cannot save.”²⁷ ¶ *But behold, it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall say unto him to whom he shall deliver the book: Take these words which are not sealed and deliver them to another, that he may show them unto the learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee. And the learned shall say: Bring hither the book, and I will read them. And now, because of the glory of the world and to get gain will they say this, and not for the glory of God. And the man shall say: I cannot bring the book, for it is sealed. Then shall the learned say, I cannot read it.* The Lord God would say to Joseph Smith, the person to whom the plates had been delivered to, and ask him to take some of the words from the plates—from the section that was not sealed—that these words might be shown to the learned. Charles Anthon was that learned professor to whom these words or characters would be shared with. Anthon asked that the plates be brought to him so he could read them—but he did this not because he believed in God or cared about the Book of Mormon, but because he cared about his scholarly status or the glory and riches of the world. Martin Harris told Anthon that he could not bring him the book because it

was sealed. Professor Anthon responded that he could not read a sealed book. ¶ *Non-LDS exegetes.* A large number of commentators have spoken about the sealed book as being either the Book of Revelation or the book of Isaiah, or the Old Testament, or all of the Bible, suggesting that to many people these books are so difficult to read or understand—or of so little interest—that for all practical purposes they remain sealed.

12 Wherefore it shall come to pass, that the Lord God ~~And the book is delivered~~ will deliver again the book and the words thereof ~~to him~~ and the man that is not learned; ~~saying,~~ shall say: ~~Read this, I pray thee: and he saith,~~ I am not learned.

Wherefore it shall come to pass, that the Lord God will deliver again the book and the words thereof and the man that is not learned; shall say: I am not learned. At the end, it would not be the learned who would translate the ancient plates but the unlearned young man through the power of God. The Prophet Joseph Smith did not remain unlearned long. ¶ Chilton’s Targum (סֵפֶר) translation has, “And the book *will* be given to one who does not know the book, saying, ‘Read this,’ and he *will* say, ‘I do not know the book.’” Stenning’s Targum (סֵפֶר) translation reads, “And should the book be given to one that is not learned, saying, Read this now, he will say, I am not learned.” The LXX (Σ) reads, “And should the book be put in the hands of an illiterate man, and they say to him, Read that, he will say, I do not know letters.” The Douay-Rheims (Σ) has, “And the book shall be given to one that knoweth no letters, and it shall be said to him: Read: and he shall answer: I know no letters.” Rawlinson says, regarding the person who is not learned: “i.e. ‘that cannot read writing.’ Even in our Lord’s day the ordinary Jew was not taught to read and write. Hence the surprise of the rulers at his teaching the people out of the Law (John 7:15, ‘How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?’).” Gill, in part says this of the unlearned: “He does not excuse himself on account of its being sealed, but on account of his want of learning.”

Then shall the Lord God say unto him: The learned shall not read them, for they have rejected them, and I am able to do mine own work; wherefore thou shalt read the words which I shall give unto thee.

²⁵ Reynolds, Philip C., ed. *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*. 6 vols. Salt Lake City, Utah. Vol. IV, pp. 289–290.

²⁶ It is interesting to note that the Ketib has סֵפֶר; the Qere סֵפֶר, but compare to verse 12, where we have סֵפֶר.

²⁷ Cowdery, Oliver, et al., eds. *Messenger and Advocate: The Latter Day Saints’ Messenger and Advocate*. Kirtland, Ohio: Letter to W. W. Phelps from Oliver Cowdery, February 1835 and continued April 1835. Electronic text prepared by the Department of Church History and Doctrine, Brigham Young University (pp. 78–80, 108–112), 1991, p.80.

In summary, then, the Lord God not lean on the learned—the professors of religion and the scholars²⁸—to read and translate the plates. Instead He would make use of the weak things of the earth to accomplish His purposes.

Touch not the things which are sealed, for I will bring them forth in mine own due time; for I will show unto the children of men that I am able to do mine own work.

The Lord instructed the Prophet Joseph Smith not to touch the sealed portion of the plates. These would be brought forth in the Lord's due time.

Wherefore, when thou hast read the words which I have commanded thee, and obtained the witnesses which I have promised unto thee, then shalt thou seal up the book again, and hide it up unto me, that I may preserve the words which thou hast not read, until I shall see fit in mine own wisdom to reveal all things unto the children of men.

When the Prophet Joseph Smith would be done translating, and after the witnesses would be invited to view the plates, the time would come when the Prophet would be instructed to return the plates to the angel for safekeeping, and this is what is meant here by “seal up the book again.” The sealed portion of the plates that the Prophet Joseph Smith was not permitted to read would be revealed in the Lord's due time.

For behold, I am God; and I am a God of miracles; and I will show unto the world that I am the same yesterday, today, and forever; and I work not among the children of men save it be according to their faith.

The Lord God makes it clear that He is a God of miracles and unchangeable—and that humankind can only have intercourse with God according to their faith.

²⁸ Elder McConkie taught: “When there were no longer apostles and inspired men to give the Lord's message and word to living men, the world turned to interpreters—to scholars, to doctors of divinity, to theologians, to professors of religion—to set forth what they thought or imagined the divine word of former days meant.” Bruce R. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary*, pp.251–252.

13 And again it shall come to pass ~~Wherefore the Lord said,~~ that the Lord shall say unto him that shall read the words that shall be delivered him: Forasmuch as this people draw near unto [me] with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precept of men--

And again it shall come to pass that the Lord shall say unto him that shall read the words that shall be delivered him: The Lord would speak to the Prophet Joseph Smith. ¶ *Forasmuch as this people draw near unto me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precept of men.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “Wherefore the Lord hath said: Because I am magnified by the mouth of this people, and with their lips they do honor me, but their heart is far from my fear, and their fear towards me is as the commandment of men teaching them.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “The Lord hath indeed said, ‘This people draw near to me with their mouth; and with their lips they honour me; but their heart is far from me: and in vain do they worship me, teaching the commands and doctrines of men.’” The Peshitta (Ⓟ) has reverence rather than fear, and not only precepts but also doctrines of men. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “And the Lord said: Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips glorify me, but their heart is far from me, and they have feared me with the commandment and doctrines of men.” ¶ Rabbi Rosenberg writes, “According to *Rashi*, the reading of נִשְׁׁנָה is with a ‘shin,’ meaning ‘came near’ or ‘approached,’ which he explains to mean that they raise themselves up to speak, as though approaching heaven.” Gill has, “Kimhi observes, there is a double reading of the word נִשְׁׁנָה, rendered ‘draw near’: in one reading of it, it signifies to be ‘afflicted’; and then the sense is, ‘when this people are afflicted, with their mouth, and with their lips, they honour me’; that is, when they are in distress, they pray unto him, and profess a great regard for him, speak honourably of him, and reverently to him, hoping he will help and relieve them; see ISAIAH 26:16 but the other reading of the word, in which it has the signification of ‘drawing near,’ is confirmed, not only by the Masora on the text, but by the citation of it in Mathew 15:7 and designs the approach of these people to God, in acts of religion and devotion, in praying to him, and praising of him, and expressing great love and affection for him, and zeal for his cause

and interest; but were all outwardly, with their lips and mouths only... their worship of God was not according to the prescription of God, and his revealed will; but according to the traditions of the elders, which they preferred to the word of God, and, by observing them, transgressed it, and made it of no effect; see Matthew 15:3.” Regarding *precepts of men*, Barnes has: “That is, their views, instead of having been derived from the Scriptures, were drawn from the doctrines of mankind. Our Saviour referred to this passage, and applied it to the hypocrites of his own time Matthew 15:8–9. The latter part of it is, however, not quoted literally from the Hebrew, nor from the Septuagint, but retains the sense: ‘But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.’” Skinner writes: “Religion, being personal fellowship with God, cannot be ‘learned’ from men, but only by revelation (Matthew 16:17).” Regarding these verses, Jennings says, “And the most serious charge is that people set aside the revelation that God has given, and substitute for the revealed will of God their own precepts.” ¶ Oliver Cowdery, recounting what Moroni shared with the Prophet Joseph Smith included these words: “Wherever the sound shall go it shall cause the ears of men to tingle, and wherever it shall be proclaimed, the pure in heart shall rejoice, while those who draw near to God with their mouths, and honor him with their lips, while their hearts are far from him, will seek its overthrow, and the destruction of those by whose hands it is carried. Therefore, marvel not if your name is made a derision, and had as a by-word among such, if you are the instrument in bringing it, by the gift of God, to the knowledge of the people.”²⁹ ¶ The Prophet Joseph Smith shared this about angel Moroni’s visit: “I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong; and the Personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those professors were all corrupt; that: ‘they draw near to me with their lips,³⁰ but their hearts are far from

²⁹ Cowdery, Oliver, et al., eds. *Messenger and Advocate*, 1835, p. 80. See note on ISAIAH 1:7.

³⁰ Elder Dallin H. Oaks taught: “The Book of Mormon applies this principle [of priestcraft] to those who seem to be serving the Lord but do so with a hidden motive to gain personal advantage rather than to further the work of the Lord: ‘Priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world; but they seek not the welfare of Zion’ (2 Nephi 26:29; see also Alma 1:16). Priestcraft is the sin committed by the combination of a good act—such as preaching or teaching the gospel—and a bad motive. The act may be good and visible, but the sin is in the motive. On earth, the wrong motive may be known only to the actor, but in heaven it is always known to God ... The sin of priestcraft is a grievous one. Time after time the Lord has condemned those who appear to men to be his servants, but who, though they draw near to him with their lips, have removed their hearts far from him. This description of those who have no true motive to serve the Lord appears in ISAIAH (29:13), in Matthew (15:8), in 2 Nephi (27:25), and in Joseph Smith’s History (JSH 1:19). In modern as in

me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof.”³¹

14 Therefore, ~~behold~~, I will proceed[✓] to do a marvellous work among this people, [even] yea, a marvellous work and a wonder, for the wisdom of their wise [men] and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent [men] shall be hid.

✓ add

YLT renders the Masoretic text (M) as “Therefore, lo, I.” The Targum (T) has, “Therefore, behold, I shall again (Chaldee, ‘adding to strike’) strike this people with wonderful strokes; the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hidden.” The LXX (S) reads, “Therefore, behold, I will proceed to the removal of this people and I will remove them; and destroy the wisdom of the wise, and darken the understanding of the prudent.” The Peshitta (S) has, for the first “marvelous work,” *create a division* (BPE) / *set apart* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Therefore behold I will proceed to cause an admiration in this people, by a great and wonderful miracle: for wisdom shall perish from their wise men, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.” ¶ Regarding the *wonderful wonder among these people* see Psalm 72:18, and our notes under ISAIAH 29:17. Faussett well notes that the *marvelous work and a wonder* was associated with the *strange work* mentioned in ISAIAH 28:21. Govett quotes John 9:39: “And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.” While Jennings goes on to speak of “God giving His own Son” his words also certainly fit perfectly to the Book of Mormon that was sent forth for the very purpose of testifying of Christ, the Son of God, and the confounding of false teachings, and together with the Bible the Lord’s tool for the gathering of Israel in the last days: “[God] will add to all His marvelous works by another still more marvelous. So wonderful is this—so superhumanly wonderful—that when it comes, it shall destroy all

ancient times, those who appear to be servants of the Lord and present themselves to labor in his vineyard are subject to the prophetic principle: ‘The laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for if they labor for money they shall perish’ (2 Nephi 26:31) ... The commandment to avoid priestcraft is a vital challenge to religious persons in every age of time. It is easier to have clean hands than to have a pure heart. It is easier to control our acts than to control our thoughts.” Oaks, Dallin H. *Pure in Heart*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1988, pp. 16–18.

³¹ JS-H 1:19.

man's boasted wisdom, and so eclipse his prudence as to render it invisible, as the noon-day sun extinguishes the light of a taper." ¶ *Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, yea, a marvellous work and a wonder.* It is interesting that in the Talmud tradition (Seder Mo'ed, Shabbath 138b) these words are applied to the Torah, its neglect and future study: "For Rab said: The Torah is destined to be forgotten in Israel, because it is said, Then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful: now, I do not know what this wonder is, but when it is said, Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a wonderful work among this people, even a wonderful work and a wonder [and the wisdom of their wise men shall perish], it follows that this wonder refers to Torah" (Talmud, Soncino). As LDS we certainly understand this verse to be associated with Scripture, and more specifically, the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, which was written for the "convincing of both Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ." ¶ Elder LeGrand Richards had much to say about this glorious verse, including: "Could you imagine living upon the earth when the God of Heaven fulfills that promise made by the Prophet Isaiah and not wanting to know what that 'marvellous work and a wonder' is all about? No boy or girl or man or woman in this world, if they understood fully what God has done in restoring His truth to the earth in our day, could call it anything but 'a marvellous work and a wonder.' When the God of Heaven says that it will be a 'marvellous work and a wonder' in His eyes, then what ought it to be to those of us who are privileged to be partakers of it?"³² ¶ *For the wisdom of their wise and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid.* Elder Marion G. Romney explained: "Until we come to a knowledge of God, we will continue in our distraction, regardless of how much other knowledge we acquire. The Lord, knowing all things, foresaw our present state of confusion; and long ago, speaking about us through His prophets, Isaiah and Nephi, declared, 'The wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid' (ISAIAH 29:14; 2 Nephi 27:26). Confirming the fact, He has said in our day that the wisdom of men has perished and their understanding has come to naught. And He has specified as the reason for their loss of wisdom their forsaking of Him. His words are, 'They have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant; They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own God, whose image is in the likeness of the world' (D&C

1:15–16)."³³ Elder LeGrand Richards spoke at General Conference, "I am going to tell you one more experience. A few years ago two of the major churches on the west coast, including California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Utah, and Nevada, were holding a convention here in Salt Lake. Their leader wrote a letter to President McKay and asked if he would send one of the General Authorities to attend their convention and talk for two hours in the morning session and tell them the story of Mormonism... I explained the restoration of the gospel, the difference between a restoration and a reformation... Then I held up the Bible. I said, 'Here is the Lord's blueprint. Isaiah said the Lord had declared the end from the beginning. It is all here. Now,' I said, 'you could take this, the Lord's blueprint, and try to fit it to every church in this world, but there is only one church that it will fit, and that is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Now,' I said, 'I will proceed to illustrate to you what I mean.' I said that in Canon Frederick William Farrar's work *Life of Christ* (Cassell, 1902), he said there were two passages in the New Testament for which he could find no excuse. The first is John 10:16, where Jesus said, 'And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.' ... The other passage they couldn't understand was the one where Paul said, 'Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?' (1 Corinthians 15:29). [After explaining the meaning of these two scriptures Elder LeGrand Richards said] ... you can't look for the coming of the Savior as was promised by Peter and the prophets until there has been a restitution, and not a reformation.' When I concluded, the man in charge said, 'Mr. Richards, this has been one of the most interesting experiences of my entire life.' That is what Isaiah meant when he said, 'the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.' (ISAIAH 29:14)."³⁴

15 And woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD! And their works are in the dark; and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?

And woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD! The LXX (5) reads, "Alas! for them, who deeply form a design, but not by the Lord." The

³² Elder LeGrand Richards in 1960, Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1960–1966, pp. 6–7

³³ Romney, Marion G. Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, February 11, 1964, p. 8.

³⁴ Elder LeGrand Richards, He Has Sent His Messenger to Prepare the Way, *Ensign* (CR), July 1973, p.76.

Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Woe to you that are deep of heart, to hide your counsel from the Lord.” ¶ *And their works are in the dark; and they say, Who seeth us and who knoweth us?* The LXX (G) reads, “Alas! for them, who form designs in secret, that their works may be in darkness; and who will say, ‘Who hath seen us, and who can find out us, or what we do?’” The Masoretic text (M) has *and who knoweth us* (וְיִדְעֵנּוּ). The Peshitta (S), for *who knoweth us*, has *Who knows what we do corruptly?* (Lamsa) / *Who knows we have been perverted?* (BPE) ¶ Nyman writes: “The Book of Mormon retains the word ‘and’ in introducing the verse, which indicates that it refers back to what has been said. The warning is to those who refuse the message of the ‘marvelous work and a wonder’—the Book of Mormon—which would come forth to correct the precepts of men...” Spencer W. Kimball taught: “Isaiah warned: ‘Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?’ (ISAIAH 29:15). Likewise our Lord suggested that men ‘loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light’ (John 3:19–20).”³⁵

16 And they also say: Surely, your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter’s clay. **But behold, I will show unto them, saith the Lord of Hosts, that I know all their works.** For shall the work say of him that made it, he made me not? Or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, he had no understanding?

(Also see ISAIAH 45:9) *And they also say: Surely, your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter’s clay.* The Targum (T) has, “Why do ye seek to pervert your works? Behold, as the clay in the hand of the potter, thus are ye accounted before me.” The LXX (G) reads, “Are not you to be considered as the potter’s clay?” The BPE (S) has, for the first clause, “*You are considered as the potters clay.*” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “This thought of yours is perverse: as if the clay should think against the potter.” ¶ Barnes explains: “The sense of the passage seems to be this: ‘Your “changing of things” is just as absurd as it would be for the thing formed to say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? It is as absurd for you to find fault with the government of God as it would be for the clay to complain of want of skill in the potter. You complain of God’s laws, and worship Him according to the

commandments of people. You complain of his requirements, and offer to him the service of the mouth and the lip, and withhold the heart. You suppose that God does not see you, and do your deeds in darkness. All this supposes that God is destitute of wisdom, and cannot see what is done, and it is just as absurd as it would be in the clay to complain that the potter who fashions it has no understanding.” ¶ *But behold, I will show unto them, saith the Lord of Hosts, that I know all their works.* Nothing is hid from the Lord. ¶ *For shall the work say of him that made it, he made me not?* The Targum (T) has, “Is it possible that the clay should say to its maker, Thou hast not made me?” The LXX (G) reads, “Shall the thing formed say to the former of it, thou hast not made me.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And the work should say to the maker thereof: Thou madest me not.” ¶ *Or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, he had no understanding?* The Targum (T) has, “Or should the creature say to its creator, Thou dost not understand me?” The LXX (G) reads, “Or shall the work say to the workman thou hast not made me wisely?” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Or the thing framed should say to him that fashioned it: Thou understandest not.”

vv. 17–24. Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field. The Book of Mormon will be searched by the deaf and by the blind. The poor and the humble will embrace the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Those who oppose the restored Gospel will make the Brethren and the Church an offender by a word—especially because they will twist these words. At the end, however, the house of Israel will no longer feel humiliated and ashamed. Those who had been blinded by the false traditions of the fathers will find understanding through the Book of Mormon and the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ.

17 ¶ But behold, saith the Lord of Hosts: I will show unto the children of men that [Is] it is not* yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field; and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest? .

* JST: restores “not” deleted in Book of Mormon.

But behold, saith the Lord of Hosts: I will show unto the children of men that it is not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field; and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest. The Targum (T) has, “Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall turn into (Chaldee, ‘to be’) a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be inhabited by many cities.” The LXX (G) reads, “Is it not a little while, ere Libanus shall be changed to a likeness of mount Carmel? And

³⁵ Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness*, p.213.

Carmel be accounted a forest?" The Lamsa Peshitta (S) has, *reared as a forest*, instead of *esteemed as a forest*. The BPE (S) is essentially the same as the KJV: *considered as a forest*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, "Is it not yet a very little while, and Libanus shall be turned into charmel, and charmel shall be esteemed as a forest?" Alexander explains regarding **לֹא-עוֹד** (*not yet?*): "The negative interrogation is one of the strongest forms of affirmation." Barnes suggests that the uncultivated Lebanon would turn fruitful: "This is evidently a proverbial expression, denoting any great revolution of things. It is probable that in the times of Isaiah the whole chain of Lebanon was uncultivated, as the word is evidently used here in opposition to a fruitful field. The word which is rendered 'fruitful field' (**כַּרְמֶל**) properly denotes 'a fruitful field,' or a finely cultivated country." ¶ *Literal meaning*. Cheyne says, "Most commentators prefer to take ISAIAH 29:17 figuratively. But a comparison of the parallel passage favors a combined literal and symbolical interpretation." Most LDS speak of the literal fulfillment of these promises associated with a period close to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. ¶ Elder Orson Pratt explains: "As another evidence that the book of which Isaiah speaks was to come forth in latter times, he says in the seventeenth verse, is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as the forest?" 18th verse: And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.' This book could not mean the New Testament, for when that was written it was about the time that Lebanon was to be forsaken by the Jews and become a desolation, a forest, or wilderness for many generations. 'Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers.' (ISAIAH 32:13.) Hence the land of Palestine, which includes Lebanon, was, when the New Testament was written, about to be cursed. But immediately after the unlearned should read the book, 'Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as the forest.' The book, therefore, that Isaiah prophesies of is to come forth just before the great day of the restoration of Israel to their own lands; at which time Lebanon and all the land of Canaan is again to be blessed, while the fruitful field occupied by the nations of the Gentiles, 'will be esteemed as a forest;' the multitude of the nations of the Gentiles are to perish, and their lands which are now like a fruitful field, are to be left desolate of inhabitants and become as Lebanon has been for many generations past; while Lebanon shall again be occupied by Israel, and be turned into a fruitful field. These great events could not take place

until the Lord should first bring forth a book out of the ground."³⁶ In Conference, Elder Mark E. Peterson testified: "A sacred book was to come forth... Where is that book? It is one of the signs of the times. Not only did the prophets predict its appearance, but Isaiah set a limit on the time of its publication. That time limit was related to the period when fertility would return to Palestine. Isaiah said that the book would come forth first, and then added that in 'a very little while . . . Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest' (ISAIAH 29:17). The time limit has expired. This new volume of scripture must have come forth before now or Isaiah was not a true prophet, for Palestine is fruitful again."³⁷ ¶ Simeon asks, "What is that book to which the attention of all men shall be called—" and we as LDS answer: the attention of men shall be called to the Book of Mormon together with the Bible as shown in Ezekiel 37.

18 And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness.

And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book. The Targum (T) has, "And at that time those who are like the deaf shall hear the words of the book." The LXX (G) reads, "And in that day the deaf shall hear the words of a book." Rawlinson says: "The spiritually deaf shall have their ears opened, many of them, and shall not only hear, but understand, the words of Scripture addressed to them by God's messengers." Delitzsch also has: "The people that are now blind and deaf, so far as the word of Jehovah is concerned, are changed into a people with open ears and seeing eyes." ¶ Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote: "The gathering of Israel in the last days shall consist in bringing together 'the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears,' that is, the spiritually blind and deaf shall come to a knowledge of the things of God and they shall see and hear (ISAIAH 43). In large part the opening of the eyes of the blind and the unstopping of the ears of the deaf shall take place by means of the Book of Mormon. 'And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness' (ISAIAH 29:18)."³⁸ I am one who was blind to the things of God until I read the Book of Mormon.

³⁶ Pratt, Orson. *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, number 6, Prophetic evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon, Latter-day tracts, p. 90.

³⁷ Elder Mark E. Petersen, *Conference Report*, October 1965, Second Day-Morning Meeting, p.61.

³⁸ Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed., p.184.

¶ There is also a more literal fulfillment. Elder Orson Pratt explained, “‘In that day shalt the deaf hear the words of the book, the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness.’ A great many people, perhaps, would want this spiritualized; but, whether it is spiritualized or not, I can bear testimony to one thing which I have seen with my own eyes, and that is that those who were deaf, so deaf that they could not hear the loudest sound, have been instantaneously restored by the administrations of the Elders of this Church and thus the deaf, the literally deaf, have been enabled to hear the words of the book. The eyes of the blind, not those alone who are spiritually blind, but of those who are blind physically, should see out of obscurity and out of darkness, when that book was revealed. Now I know that this, too, has been the case, and many in this congregation know it and have seen it; some have seen those who were born blind restored to their sight by the power of God since this book came forth. Thus have been fulfilled, literally, the words of our text.”³⁹ My daughter Andrea has *retinitis pigmentosa* and my wife got her a copy of the Book of Mormon in Braille. So it is yet another way that this prophecy is fulfilled, as not all the blind or all of the deaf will be healed in this lifetime. ¶ *And the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness.* The KJV does not include the *double-and* that appears in the Hebrew. A good translation might be: “**And** out of obscurity, **and** out of darkness, the eyes of the blind shall see.” Both the DSS 1QIsa^a (א) **וּמֵאֲפֶלֶת וּמִחוּשׁ**, and the Masoretic text (מ) **וּמֵאֲפֶלֶת וּמִחוּשׁ**, retain this *double-and* construction. The Targum (ܬ) has, “And the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.” The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “And they in darkness, even they in thick darkness—the eyes even of the blind shall see.” Nägelsbach wrote: “Is not the purport of these two verses, 18 and 19, reproduced in the saying of Christ, ‘The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them’ (Matthew 11:5; Luke 7:22)?” Bruce R. McConkie explained: “Jesus, as he ‘targumed’⁴⁰ Isaiah’s meaning from Hebrew to Aramaic, did what only inspired interpreters can do: he expanded the words and interpreted the meaning of the original utterance. ‘I am sent by the Father—not only to proclaim how deliverance from sin may be found, but to preach the recovering of spiritual sight to those who are blind spiritually.’⁴¹ Through me they shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.’ If a parallel passage for these added words is needed, it may be found in Isaiah’s

prophecy about the latter-day coming forth of the Book of Mormon, for the promise is that through ‘the words of the book . . . the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness’ (ISAIAH 29:8).”⁴²

19 And the meek also shall increase,[✓]
and [their] joy shall be in the LORD, and
the poor among men shall rejoice in the
Holy One of Israel.

✓ add

The Targum (ܬ) has, “And those that have suffered affliction on account of the Word of the Lord shall increase *their* joy, and the poor of the sons of men shall rejoice in the Word of the holy One of Israel.” The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “And the distressed shall exult with joy because of the Lord; and the disconsolate among men shall be filled with joy.” The meek (עֲנָוִים) are the “poor afflicted, humble” (DBD). Rawlinson says, “The ‘evangelical prophet’ anticipates the gospel in this, among other points that he promises his choicest blessings, not to the rich and mighty, but to the poor and meek (compare ISAIAH 57:15; 61:1).” Elder Orson Pratt writes, “Now during the long night of darkness there have been some humble, meek persons who have had a degree of light; but as the Church of Christ had fled from the earth there was no one that had authority to baptize or administer the ordinances of the gospel to those meek persons; therefore their joy was imperfect: but Isaiah says, when the book is revealed, ‘the meek shall increase their joy in the Lord.’ This is what the book is calculated to produce; for by its contents the meek learn that the time is at hand for them to inherit the earth, according to the blessings of our Savior on the Mount: ‘Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.’ This will be fulfilled after all the wicked nations are destroyed. ‘And the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.’ This also is promised as a result of the revelation of the book, and the means by which it is to be effected is by a general overthrow of the wicked; as, says Isaiah: ‘For the terrible one is brought to naught, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off; that make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of naught.’ O how plainly it is declared that judgment was soon to fall upon all the wicked after the appearance of this book, this marvelous work and a wonder! And O how plainly it is also declared that the

³⁹ Pratt, Orson. July 18, 1875; Journal of Discourses, Vol. 4, p. 165.

⁴⁰ That is, paraphrased from Hebrew to Aramaic.

⁴¹ See Luke 4:18 ff.

⁴² Bruce R. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary*, pp.22–23.

deaf, the blind, the meek and the poor among men were to be greatly benefited by the book.”⁴³

20 For assuredly as the Lord liveth they shall see that the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off;

For assuredly as the Lord liveth they shall see that the terrible one is brought to nought. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “For the oppressor is come to an end, and the plunderer is made to cease.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “The lawless one hath failed.” Instead of the *terrible one* the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has the *oppressor*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “For he that did prevail hath failed.” ¶ *And the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And all that rose up early to act violently have come to an end.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And the haughty one is destroyed, and these are utterly cut off who maliciously commit iniquity.” Those who watch for iniquity, says Faussett, are those who “watch for opportunities of committing it.” Gill agrees and adds: “[These are those who] cannot sleep unless they commit it, and seek for and take all opportunities of doing it; or watch for iniquity in others, in Christ, and the professors of his religion [i.e., the Saints or followers of Christ]; or for anything they could call so, that they might have something to accuse them of.” Or, as we see in the next verse, those who *make a man an offender for a word*. ¶ Elder Orson Pratt wrote: “However much you may have erred, because you have been taught by the precepts of men; however much you may have walked in darkness and blindness, with the Prophets, seers, and revelations of God covered, and no voice of inspiration in your midst; however much you may have groped in outer darkness, yet if you have been meek before the lord, you will come to understanding when [the Book of Mormon] makes its appearance... when a certain book should come forth it should bless the meek and lowly in heart, for their joy should increase in the Lord. And the poor among men be gathered out from the nations.”⁴⁴

21 And they that make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought.

And they that make a man an offender for a word. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “All that declare the sons of men guilty on account of their words.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And who by reasoning cause men to err.” Brenton’s Ⲭ renders it “And they that cause men to sin by a word.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲫ) has, “Those who cause men to sin by the word.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “That made men sin by word.” ¶ In New Testament times the Savior was constantly made an offender for a word. After the coming forth of the Book of Mormon the Prophet Joseph Smith was likewise made an offender for a word: so also today the Brethren are often accused. Ibn Ezra explains that to *make a man an offender for a word* means one who will “watch the words of man, and accuse him, in order to see him punished.” Alexander writes: “Ewald... takes מְבַדֵּק in the same sense with the English and many other early versions, which explain the clause to mean accusing or condemning men for a mere error of the tongue or lips.” Or better, for what the wicked believe is an error. The Geneva Bible notes correctly have: “They who went about to find fault with the prophets words, and would not abide admonitions, but would entangle them and bring them into danger.” The Prophet Joseph Smith wrote: “...our souls were vexed from day to day. We refer you to Isaiah, who considers those who make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate. We believe that the old Prophet told the truth: and we have no retraction to make. We have reproveth in the gate, and men have laid snares for us. We have spoken words, and men have made us offenders. And notwithstanding all this, our minds are not yet darkened, but feel strong in the Lord.”⁴⁵ Elder Dallin H. Oaks explained: “The Lord acts through his servants. That is the pattern he has established to safeguard our agency in mortality. His servants are not perfect, which is another consequence of mortality. But if we act against them, we are working against the Lord and his cause and will soon find ourselves without the companionship of his Spirit. There are other such teachings in ancient and modern scriptures. The prophet Isaiah denounced those who ‘make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate’ (ISAIAH 29:21; see also 2 Ne. 27:32). This modern revelation from the Doctrine and Covenants is to the same effect: ‘Cursed are all those that shall lift up the heel against mine anointed, saith the Lord, and cry they have sinned when they have not sinned before me, saith the Lord, but have done that which was meet in mine eyes, and which I commanded them. But those who cry transgression do it because they are the servants of sin, and are the children of disobedience themselves’” (see

⁴³ Pratt, Orson. *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, number 6, Prophetic evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon, Latter-day tracts, p. 90.

⁴⁴ Elder Orson Pratt, July 18, 1875; *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 4, p. 166.

⁴⁵ TPJS, p. 124.

D&C 121:16–22.)⁴⁶ Elder Neal A. Maxwell warned us against fault finding, “In a church established, among other reasons, for the perfecting of the Saints—an ongoing process—it is naive to expect, and certainly unfair to demand, perfection in our peers. A brief self-inventory is wise before we ‘cast the first stone.’ Possessing a few rocks in our own heads, it is especially dangerous to have rocks too ready in our hands. (‘Not My Will, But Thine’, p. 74.)”⁴⁷ ¶ *And lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of naught.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “The court of justice that is in the gate seeks to ensnare him, who reproves them with the words of the law (the Royal Polyglot omits בִּית דִּינָא, and reads, ‘They lay a snare for him who reproves them in the gate with the words of the law,’ &c.). They turn aside the just by false judgment.” The LXX (Ⓢ) reads, “But as for all them who reprove in the gates they will indeed lay a stumbling block, because of their having turned aside the righteous one for the unrighteous.” Brenton Ⓢ renders the last clause, “because they have unjustly turned aside the righteous,” while NETS Ⓢ has “and they have turned aside the just among the unjust.” Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓢ) has, “And lay a snare for him that reproves, and turn aside the righteous into darkness.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓢ) has, “And supplanted him that reproved them in the gate, and declined in vain from the just.” ¶ Rawlinson explains: “‘The gate’ was the place where judgment was given and public assemblies held.” Cheyne writes regarding the *gate*: “In the chief place of concourse, where, too, the judges sat. So Amos, ‘They hate him that reproveth in the gate’ (Amos 5:10).” Regarding the second half of this clause Delitzsch writes: “And thrust away the righteous, i.e., forced him away from his just rights (ISAIAH 10:2), בִּלְהוֹךְ, [for thing of naught—also see Genesis 1:2, without form], i.e., accusations and pretences of the utmost worthlessness; for these would all have been swept away... for with Isaiah בִּלְהוֹךְ is the synonym for all such words as signify nothingness, groundlessness, and fraud.”

22 Therefore, thus saith the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.

Therefore, thus saith the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: The LXX (Ⓢ) reads, “Therefore, thus saith the Lord respecting the house of Jacob, whom he set apart from Abraham.” Ironside says of ISAIAH 29:22–24, “Never, in times past, have these words had their fulfillment, but we may be assured that nothing that God has spoken will ever come to naught.” Barnes says, “The connection ... would seem to imply that there was a reference to the promise which was made to Abraham that he should have a numerous posterity (see ISAIAH 29:23).” ¶ Elder Orson Pratt makes this scripture clear: “After Isaiah had foretold the great change that was to happen to Lebanon, to the deaf, etc., when the book should be revealed, he then describes more particularly the great benefit the book should be to the house of Jacob. He says, ‘Therefore, thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face wax pale. But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.’ The house of Jacob has been made ashamed, and his face has waxed pale, ever since he was driven away from Lebanon or Canaan, but the Lord has now brought forth out of the ground book which shall, accompanied by His power, restore the tribes of Jacob from the four quarters of the globe, and establish them in the land of Palestine and Lebanon forever; and His holy name they shall no more profane, but shall be a righteous people throughout all their generations, while the earth shall stand, and they shall possess their promised land again in eternity, nevermore to pass away; therefore, they shall never again be made ashamed. It is in vain for the Gentiles to seek the conversion of Jacob, and to bring about their great redemption, only in the way that the Lord God of Israel hath predicted and appointed: they may call meetings and conventions to convert the Jews, but let them know assuredly that the book spoken of by Isaiah is to accomplish the salvation of the house of Jacob, and bring about the restoration of all Israel, while the Gentiles who will not receive it and be numbered and identified with the house of Jacob, must surely perish, yea, and they shall be utterly wasted with storm and tempest, with earthquakes and famine, with the flame of devouring fire, and their fruitful lands shall be esteemed as a forest, while Jacob shall dwell in safety for ever.”⁴⁸ Philip Reynolds explains, “Commentators note that there is no reference in the Old Testament to any incident in the life of the Patriarch [Abraham] to which this redemption can refer specially, but that there is a

⁴⁶ Dallin H. Oaks, *The Lord’s Way*, p.197–198.

⁴⁷ Maxwell, Cory H., ed. *The Neal A. Maxwell Quote Book*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1997.

⁴⁸ Pratt, Orson. *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, number 6, Prophetic evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon, Latter-day tracts, p. 90–91.

tradition that he, at some time, was threatened with the fire of a burning furnace. In the Book of Abraham, Pearl of Great Price, I think, we find the story of the redemption of Abraham to which ISAIAH (29:22) and Nephi here refer ... a time came, when the priests of Pharaoh seized Abraham, intending to take his life on the altar. But when he lifted up his voice to God, the ‘Angel of his (God’s) Presence’ appeared, unloosened the bands of the intended victim, promised him the Priesthood, and declared that: ‘Through thy ministry my name shall be known in the earth forever, for I am thy God’ ... It was thus that God redeemed Abraham by almighty power ...”⁴⁹ ¶ *Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “They of the house of Jacob shall not henceforth be confounded, neither shall their faces henceforth look dismayed (literally, ‘be changed’).” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Jacob will not be ashamed now, nor will he now change his countenance.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, “Jacob shall not now be confounded, neither shall his countenance now be ashamed.”

¶ Alexander correctly explains לֹא-עַתָּה: “The Hebrew phrase *not now* does not imply that it shall be so hereafter, but on the contrary, that it shall be so no more. Redak has, “Since all Jews are descendants of Jacob, if there are wicked among them, it is as though Jacob is ashamed, as he would be were he alive, for a father is embarrassed if his son abandons the faith” (in Rabbi Rosenberg). Not just the Jews, but all of the house of Israel. ¶ Elder Orson Pratt explained, “Now how is this book to affect the house of Israel? Is it for their benefit particularly? They have been a long time scattered, a long time abroad among the nations; are they to be affected by this book that is spoken of by Isaiah? Yes. Read the 22nd verse, which I have already once read before you—‘Therefore, thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob, shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.’ Why? Because this book [has] come forth to bring the house of Jacob from all the nations and kingdoms of the earth; and this will commence just as soon as the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled; not until then. We must be warned first; we Gentiles must hear the word first; and when we count ourselves unworthy of eternal life, and fight against the book, and against the Zion and people of God, behold the Lord will then remember the house of Jacob, and they will no longer be ashamed.”⁵⁰ Why will Jacob not be ashamed? We find the answer in ISAIAH 29:23, because the children of Israel will turn to the Lord God.

23 But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.

But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “But when *they of the house of Jacob* shall see (literally, ‘in his seeing’) the mighty deeds which I shall do for their children, the kindness *which I have promised* Abraham, and his posterity after him in their own land.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “But when his children shall see my works.” So also that the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has the children seeing the work of the hands of the Lord, and as a result, sanctifying of glorifying the Lord. Redak has “When Jacob sees his children, who are truly his children by following the ways of God” (in Rabbi Rosenberg). ¶ Elder Orson Pratt continues: “The lord says, in the 23rd verse, that Jacob, when he shall see his children, the work of his hands, in the midst of him, that is, gathered out from among the nations, they shall sanctify my name, and shall sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel. Where will this work commence among the house of Israel? Among the remnant that we call the American Indians, who are the literal descendants of Israel.”⁵¹ ¶ *They shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob,⁵² and shall fear the God of Israel.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “They shall sanctify my name among them; they shall say, *Holy* (ⲉⲗ after ⲕⲃⲓⲃ is omitted in the Royal Polyglot) is the holy One of Jacob; and concerning the God of Israel they shall say, He is mighty.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Because of me they will hallow my name. They will hallow the Holy One of Jacob, and tremble before the God of Israel.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has *glorify* instead of *fear*. Delitzsch well says, “The end of Israel will correspond to the holy root of its origin. Just as Abraham was separated from the human race that was sunk in heathenism, to become the ancestor of a nation of Jehovah, so would a remnant be separated from the great mass of Israel that was sunk in apostasy from Jehovah; and this remnant would be the foundation of a holy community well pleasing to God.” Elder Dallin H. Oaks said: “When Isaiah condemned the critics of his

⁴⁹ Reynolds, Philip C., ed. *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*. 6 vols. Salt Lake City, Utah, vol. I, pp. 400–401.

⁵⁰ Elder Orson Pratt, July 18, 1875; *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 4, p. 166–168.

⁵¹ Elder Orson Pratt, July 18, 1875; *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 4, p. 166–168.

⁵² Delitzsch, in defending the unity of Isaiah says, “There is the same interchange of Jacob and Israel here which we so frequently met with in chapters 40ff. And, in fact, throughout this undisputedly genuine prophecy of Isaiah, we can detect the language of chapters 40–66. Through the whole of the first part, indeed, we may trace the gradual development of the thoughts and forms which predominate there.”

day, he concluded with a prophecy. He said that in time the children of God would ‘fear the God of Israel’ and ‘sanctify [his] name.’”⁵³

24 They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, ✓ and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.

✓ know understanding

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And they who were not taught by the spirit of understanding shall have knowledge; and they who said, All these things are nothing, shall receive instruction.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And they who have erred in spirit will gain knowledge, and the murmurers shall be taught obedience, and the trifling tongues will learn to speak peace.” Instead of *they that murmured shall learn doctrine*, the Peshitta (Ⓟ) has *those who lack wisdom will learn obedience*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “And they that erred in spirit, shall know understanding, and they that murmured, shall learn the law.” Who are those who murmured? The clear answer: the descendants of Israel. Barnes says, “All that the prophet teaches is, that at some future period in the history of the Jews, there would be such a reform that they should be regarded as the worthy descendants of the pious patriarch Jacob.” Gill explains, “The doctrine of the Messiah... which Christ ‘received’ from his Father, as the word (לקח) used signifies, and his disciples received from him, and the church has received from them, and has been transmitted to [the] Gentiles, and will be to the Jews in the latter day, who

will learn the true knowledge of it.” And indeed, the Book of Mormon is given “... to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that JESUS is the CHRIST, the ETERNAL GOD.” Elder Orson Pratt testimony feels me with joy: “Oh, How precious must be the contents of a book which shall deliver us from all the errors taught by the precepts of uninspired men! Oh, how gratifying to poor, ignorant, erring mortals who have murmured because of the multiplicity of contradictory doctrines that have perplexed and distracted their minds, to read the plain, pure and most precious word of God, revealed in the Book of Mormon! It is like bread to the hungry, like the cool refreshing fountain to him that is ready to perish with thirst.”⁵⁴

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⁵³ Dallin H. Oaks, *The Lord’s Way*, p.207.

⁵⁴ Pratt, Orson. *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, number 6, Prophetic evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon, Latter-day tracts, p. 91.

Isaiah 30

Kaiser opines: “When the great emperor Sennacherib began to close upon Jerusalem—if not before—Hezekiah sent an embassy to Pharaoh Shabako with a request for military assistance... But the Egyptian army that actually set out was defeated at Eltekeh. This seems to have sealed the fate of the allies [including other nations such as Philistia, Ammon, Moab, and others]... On the one hand the actual decision to send the embassy had been taken without consulting the prophet of Yahweh... The revolt of the Philistine cities, which seems to have lasted from 713–711, and in which Ashdod tried at least to involve Hezekiah, failed quite miserably; not only did Shabako refuse to send the reinforcing army but actually handed over... the ruler of Ashdod.” It is not certain, however, whether Hezekiah ever sought the aid of Egypt—as the kings of Judah who had preceded him had done. Alexander well says: “Egypt is mentioned in the first part of the chapter as the chosen ally of the people, and Assyria in the last part as the dreaded enemy. There is no need, however, of restricting what is said to that period exclusively.” ¶ Govett points these scriptures to former days, but also likens them to the challenging times before the coming of the Son of Man and to the dangers of leaning upon the Antichrist or upon Satan. The Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith asked: “Should we expect the Lord to come to judge the world without first giving it warning and preparing the means of escape for all who will repent?” And citing ISAIAH 30:1–17 answers: “In each instance [of warning] the call came through the opening of the heavens. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other prophets were sent to warn Israel and Judah before the scattering and captivity came upon them.” Isaiah warns against those who lean on the strength of man, or Egypt (a symbol for that strength), and also cautions against those who despise His words and His prophets. Regarding the arm of flesh, Jenour well quotes Jeremiah as a summary of this chapter: “Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD... Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is” (Jeremiah 17:5, 7). In the millennial day the moon and the sun shall shine with incomparable strength. Great blessings are promised to those who heed the warning and return to the Lord. Christ lovingly invites us to heed the Spirit and partake of His blessings.

vv 1–7. Elder Marion D. Hanks loved ISAIAH 30. “Let me refer to a glorious expression in the book of Isaiah, written a long time before Christ, about seven centuries, which talks about listening. All of us need to cultivate the capacity to listen. And Isaiah, speaking in the name of the Lord, spoke to a people at a time when listening to the word of the Lord, to the whisperings of the Spirit, was rare—at a premium. He castigated the people and clearly identified their sins. I read from ISAIAH 30: ‘Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, [They were listening, but to the wrong voices.] but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin: That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth;¹ to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt! Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion.’” After also quoting ISAIAH 30:9–10, 15 and 18 Elder Hanks continues: “The people of Israel were listening all right, but to the voices of pagan, materialistic Egypt. They had forsaken God for the siren sound of the great secular strength which Egypt could offer. They thought to defend themselves with the strength of Pharaoh. They trusted in chariots because there were many, and in horsemen because they

were strong. They would not listen to the law of the Lord nor look to the Holy One of Israel. They admonished the seers to see not and the prophets to prophesy not unto them ‘right things,’ but to speak that which would tickle their ears and satisfy their unrighteous hearts. Their confidence was in temporal power, and in their idols of gold and silver.”²

1 ¶ WOE to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin:

WOE to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of me. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “*but not of [in] my Word (Meimra, מִמְּרָא)*” rather than “but not of me.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Ah rebellious children! saith the Lord, you have formed a design, but not by me.” The Douay-Rheims (ⵔ) has *apostate* instead of *rebellious*. This was one of the great pre-exilic sins of Israel, that of taking counsel, but not of the Lord. For instance, Ahab, King of Israel, “gathered the [false] prophets together, about four

¹ See discussion on Jeremiah 42, below (ISAIAH 30:2).

² Marion D. Hanks. Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, May 28, 1964, pp. 4–5.

hundred men, and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramothgilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for the LORD shall deliver it into the hand of the king” (1 Kings 22:6). When King Jehoshaphat of Judah questions why King Ahab does not inquire of a true prophet of the Lord, the Kind of Israel answers: “There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may enquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil” (1 Kings 22:8b). ¶ Faussett has: “God had prohibited such alliances with heathen nations, and it was a leading part of Jewish polity that they should be a separate people (Exodus 23:32; Deuteronomy 7:2).” With Cowles, we note that the Lord ceases to call the people “my children” or “my people,” as a sign of their rebelliousness. Regarding **rebellious**, סוֹרְרִים, Rashi relates it to סוֹר ³to turn away” (in Rosenberg). Luther translates סוֹרְרִים as “disobedient and self-willed”; Calvin as “obstinate and rebellious.” ¶ And that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Who consult a consultation, but do not ask my prophets, that they may add sin to the sin of their soul.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And thou hast made covenants, but not by my spirit, that you may add sins to sins.” Instead of cover with a covering the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has who offer wine offerings (Lamsa) / who offer libations (BPE),⁴ or and they poured out drink offerings (Bauscher⁵). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲫ) has, “And would begin a web,” instead of “And that cover with a covering.” ¶ And that cover with a covering, מְסַכָּה. Lowth explains: “Hebrew means, [who ratify covenants]: [And] ‘who pour out a libation.’ Sacrifice and libation were ceremonies constantly used, in ancient times, by most nations, in the ratifying of covenants: a libation therefore is used for a covenant, as in Greek the word σπονδη,⁶ for the same reason, stands for both. This seems to be the most easy explication of the Hebrew phrase; and it has the authority of the Septuagint, ἐποιήσατε συνθηκας.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) also supports this translation. The term covering מְסַכָּה, can either mean libations or covering. ¶ Several modern translations focus on the idea of

unholy alliances or unholy counsel: “Who make an alliance, but not of my Spirit (HCSB); “And who make alliances—but not by my Spirit” (ISV); “To make counsel, but not from Me” (LITV); “And make an alliance, but not of My Spirit” (NASB). Birks says, “This scheme of an Egyptian alliance was another idol, one of the heart, which they formed and moulded with equal care, poured into it, as a mould, costly sacrifices and efforts, and thereby ‘added sin to sin.’” ¶ Faussett has: “cover ... covering—that is, wrap themselves in reliances disloyal towards Jehovah. ‘Cover’ thus answers to ‘seek to hide deeply their counsel from the Lord’ (ISAIAH 29:15). But the Hebrew is literally, ‘who pour out libations’; as it was by these that leagues were made (Exodus 24:8; Zechariah 9:11), translate, ‘who make a league.’” We may note that cover with a covering may also make an interesting contrast with the idols made of wood that on the surface were covered with precious metals (see ISAIAH 30:22). ¶ Regarding the second acceptance, Wordsworth makes some interesting contrasts: “The vail (Heb. *masac*⁷) of the Tabernacle; and the covering (*masac*) of the Cloud which I provided for Israel in the wilderness, were ‘coverings of My Spirit,’ which is outraged, and is deserted for the help of idolatrous Egypt, from which I delivered them, and led them through the wilderness; and yet they now go back to trust in its shadow instead of in Mine!” Wade has, “Literally, *weave a web* (ISAIAH 25:7 Heb.), i.e. either, procure means of protection (cf. ISAIAH 22:8; 28:20), or, engage in political scheming.” ¶ But not of my spirit. Ibn Ezra explains, “But not of my spirit, that is, of my prophecy.” Gill explains this clause back to the counsel that did not come from the Lord: “They sought for a cover, a shelter, a protection from the enemy, but not from the Spirit of the Lord, in his word and prophets, who would have directed them to a more suitable and sufficient one.” The Lord through Micah complained, “If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood do lie, saying, I will prophesy unto thee of wine and of strong drink; he shall even be the prophet of this people” (Micah 2:11). That is, the people are apt to call someone a prophet because he teaches them to listen to a false spirit rather than to God (in the case of wine and strong drink, of coming plenty). This reprimand continues in the next chapter: “Thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him” (Micah 3:5). And we further read, “The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us” (Micah 3:11). As a result, these false prophets will be

³ Gesenius has for סוֹר, “to depart from God, i.e. to turn away from his worship.”

⁴ In Hebrew, libation is translated as קָרְבָּן, or Corban, “a gift,” or any type of sacrifice in a more generic way.

⁵ The Aramaic-English Interlinear Peshitta Old Testament, by Glenn David Bauscher, 2013. Bauscher translates נִקְיָהוּ as their oblations and נִקְיָה as drink offering.

⁶ LEH has, “agreement, pact, covenant (based on an accord between two parties, in opp. to διαθήκη where one party usually imposes its will upon the other).”

⁷ מְסַכָּה.

ashamed and confounded: “Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their lips; for there is no answer of God” (Micah 3:7). ¶ Adding *sin to sin* (חַטָּאת עַל-חַטָּאת) is similar to the concept—and a play on words—of what we saw ISAIAH 29:1 (שָׁנָה עַל-שָׁנָה), adding *year to year*. That is, to continue leaning on a wrong tradition (ISAIAH 29:1) or behavior (sin). Barnes says, “They add to the sin of rebellion against God that of forming an alliance. Sins do not usually stand alone. When one is committed, it is often necessary to commit others in order to carry out and complete the plan which that contemplated.” ¶ In summary, we are to trust the Lord and His prophets; not the philosophies of men.

2 That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!

That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth. The Targum (ܬ) has, “Who go to descend into Egypt, but ask not the words of my prophets.” The LXX (6) reads, “They are setting out to go down to Egypt, without having consulted me.” Instead of *walk to go down*, the Peshitta (ܣ) has *start to go down*. In the Hebrew text we have הֹלְכִים, from הָלַךְ, which means to *walk, go, journey* or *move about* [Gesenius, HAL], so we are essentially talking of the same thing. The children of Israel, in pre-exilic days, often wanted to lean on Egypt. *Descend or go down*, לָרַדְתָּ, from a stream that does down (HAL). Some exegetes have suggested because they are going *south*, toward Egypt, or because they descend from the hills of Judea, or from a spiritual height to a lower one. Instead of going up to the Holy Temple, as it were, they are descending from it. Barnes says, “The journey to Egypt from Palestine is always represented as going down (Genesis 12:10; 42:3; 43:15; Numbers 20:15; Deuteronomy 10:22).” ¶ *And have not asked at my mouth*, וְפִי לֹא שָׁאֲלוּ, *and my mouth not consult they*, that is, they do not ask or inquire at my mouth. Alexander says, “To *ask the mouth*, or at the mouth, of the Lord is a phrase used elsewhere in the sense of seeking a divine decision or response.” The Targum (ܬ), of course, removes the anthropomorphic expression by making it sound as if it is the mouth of the prophets. Young says, “At one time Israel had been under the shadow of Egypt and Egypt had been her oppressor. From this dreadful oppression and bondage the Lord had delivered Israel and had warned her against returning to Egypt. ‘Ye shall

henceforth return no more that way’ (Deuteronomy 17:16c).”⁸ ¶ These verses, about the people setting their hearts on Egypt, remind us of Jeremiah 42–43, where the captains of the forces of Judah—and *all the people from the least even unto the greatest* (Jeremiah 42:1b)—came to the Prophet Jeremiah to ask for the Lord’s blessing in escaping to Egypt. They asked God—in the most hypocritical way—to confirm their decision. “That the LORD thy God may shew us the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do” (Jeremiah 42:3). They even reassured the Prophet Jeremiah: “The LORD be a true and faithful witness between us, *if* we do *not* [אִם-לֹא]⁹ even according to all things for the which the LORD thy God shall send thee to us. *Whether* it be *good*, or *whether* it be *evil*¹⁰ [אִם-טוֹב וְאִם-רָע], we will obey the voice of the LORD our God, to whom we send thee; that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of the LORD our God” (Jeremiah 42:5b–6). So, how many times did they reassure the Prophet Jeremiah that they would be obedient? Nevertheless, they had already made up their minds as to what they wanted God’s answer to be. So it was that when the Prophet Jeremiah gave them an answer they did not like, they insulted him thus: “Thou speakest falsely: the LORD our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there” (Jeremiah 43:2b). No, indeed what they wanted was to hear *smooth things* and the prophecy of *deceits* (see also

⁸ Actually, the whole verse is instructive here, especially as we shall also speak about leaning upon horses: “But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.”

⁹ Recall that these words, *if not*, stand for an oath (ISAIAH 5:9). Remember that אִם stands for *if*, while לֹא for *no*, or *negation*. For more on oath formulas, see ISAIAH 22:14; and especially ISAIAH 62:8.

¹⁰ The word *evil* [רָע] is used in its archaic signification, i.e., to bring misfortune or challenge or difficulty or any sort of unwanted event. So these “pious” men were explaining to Jeremiah that they would be obedient to the word of the Lord that would come through the Prophet regardless of the consequences. Elder Dennis E. Simmons spoke of a truly righteous and faithful group of young men, Daniel and his companions: “Centuries ago, Daniel and his young associates were suddenly thrust from security into the world—a world foreign and intimidating. When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego refused to bow down and worship a golden image set up by the king, a furious Nebuchadnezzar told them that if they would not worship as commanded, they would immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace. ‘And who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?’ The three young men quickly and confidently responded, ‘If it be so [if you cast us into the furnace], our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand.’ That sounds like my eighth-grade kind of faith. But then they demonstrated that they fully understood what faith is. They continued, ‘*But if not* [not the oath formula, but simply a statement that if this would not happen, לֹא יִהְיֶה—GB], ... we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.’ That is a statement of true faith” (“But if not ...,” April 2004 General Conference).

Jeremiah 5:31). On that occasion the Lord had promised the people great things if they would be obedient, very much as we find in this chapter of Isaiah—glorious blessings to the obedient. ¶ *To strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!* The LXX (6) reads, “To be assisted by Pharaoh and protected by the Egyptians.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, for the first clause, “Hoping for help in the strength of Pharaoh.” ¶ The Assyrians would soon mock Israel for leaning on Egypt, “Lo, thou trustest in the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him” (ISAIAH 36:6). Faussett explains that shadow is an “image [taken] from shelter against heat: *protection* (Psalm 121:5–6).” So also Cowles: “‘Trusting in the shadow of Egypt’ is more precisely seeking shelter *under* her shadow, in the shade of her protection.” ISAIAH 4:6; 25:4; 32:2; 49:2; and 51:16 also use the term *shadow* as affording *protection*.

3 Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt [your] confusion.

Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame. The LXX (6) reads, “For the protection of Pharaoh will be your shame.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has *confusion* instead of *shame*. Egypt, in many scriptures, was synonymous with Babylon. So here Judah was being accused of putting her trust in the strength of Pharaoh and Egypt rather than in the Lord her God.

¶ *Therefore...be.* The Hebrew הַיָּהּ may properly be translated in a number of ways including *therefore...be*. Birks says, “The connective is rendered variously; ‘therefore’ A. V. ‘but’ (Rosenmüller, Henderson), ‘and’ (Alexander, Drechsler, Delitzsch). The first makes the causal relation too prominent, which has its proper Hebrew word, 29:14, 22; 30:7, 12, 13, 18. The main thought is that disappointment would be the natural and speedy result of their sin, and the causal relation is only implied. The word ‘so’ is thus the best rendering.” There is nothing wrong with the AV rendition, but Birks makes a vital point here, that the moment one translates from Hebrew to another language, the translator is forced to interpret, and indeed may not give a perfect translation. There are differences in nuance between such words as *and*, *so*, and *therefore*, and no single word in the English language can stand for all of these. ¶ *And the trust in the shadow of Egypt [your] confusion.* The LXX (6) reads, “And a disgrace to them who have trusted in Egypt.” Instead of *trust* in the shadow, the Peshitta (S) has *shelter* of the shadow. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And the confidence of the

shadow of Egypt to your shame.” In the DSS 1QIsa^a (Q) we have *in the shadow of Egypt to your yearning*, בְּצֵל מִצְרַיִם לְכַמָּה, while the Masoretic text (M) has *in the shadow of Egypt to your confusion*, בְּצֵל מִצְרַיִם לְכַלְמָה. ¶ Gill says, “They should be confounded, when they should find themselves unsupported by the Egyptians, in whom they put their confidence; so all such that trust in the creature, or in an arm of flesh, sooner or later are ashamed and confounded; but those that trust in the Lord never are, neither in this world, nor in that to come.” Govett points us to Ezekiel: “And all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the LORD, because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel. When they took hold of thee by thy hand, thou didst break, and rend all their shoulder: and when they leaned upon thee, thou brakest, and madest all their loins to be at a stand” (Ezekiel 29:6–7). Ezekiel describes Egypt as a *staff of reed* (in other words, something that would bend or break if we tried to lean upon it).

4 For his princes were at Zoan, and his ambassadors came to Hanes.

The Targum (T) has, “For their princes were in Tanes, and their messengers have reached Taphnes. The LXX (6) reads, “Because generals are unwelcome messengers at Tanis.” Instead of *came to Hanes*, the Peshitta (S) has *shall act deceitfully* (Lamsa) / *shall be fatigued* (BPE). The Lamsa Peshitta (S) translation is ambiguous and suggests that the ambassadors belong to Pharaoh rather than Judah. The Spanish Peshitta translation is not very clear either: “Porque él se encuentra en Zoán, pero sus príncipes y sus mensajeros perversos se fatigarán” (Peshitta BPE {S}), i.e., “Because he can be found in Zoan, but his princes and perverse messengers shall be fatigued.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “For thy princes were in Tanis, and thy messengers came even to Hanes.” ¶ Gill suggests that the ambassadors sent to Egypt were taken from the princes of Judah, and says, and that Zoan and Hanes, because the King of Egypt would be likely to be in one of these two places: “The Jews (T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 112. 1. & Sota, fol. 34. 2.) say there is not a more excellent place in all Egypt than Zoan, because kings were brought up in it.”

5 They were all ashamed of a people [that] could not profit them, nor be an help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach.

They were all ashamed of a people [that] could not profit them. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “All of them go unto a people to be confounded.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “They shall labour in vain with a people who will be of no service for assistance.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has them *going* to a people who cannot profit them. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has *confounded* instead of *ashamed*. ¶ Rawlinson says: “The reference is not to the ambassadors, who felt no shame in their embassy, and probably returned elated by the promises made them; but to the subsequent feelings of the Jewish nation, when it was discovered by sad experience that no reliance was to be placed on ‘the strength of Pharaoh ... Mr. Cheyne compares, very pertinently, an inscription of Sargon’s, where he says of the people of Philistia, Judah, Edom, and Moab, that ‘they and their evil chiefs, to fight against me, unto Pharaoh, King of Egypt, a monarch who could not save them, their presents carried, and besought his alliance’ (G. Smith, ‘Eponym Canon,’ p. 130, II 35–39). Egypt was, in fact, quite unable to cope with Assyria, and knew it.” ¶ *Nor be an help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach.* The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “But for a shame and disgrace.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “They were no help, nor to any profit, but to confusion and to reproach.” ¶ Rawlinson writes: “A shame, and also a reproach. A matter of which they would themselves be ‘ashamed,’ and with which the Assyrians would ‘reproach’ them (as they did, 2 Kings 18:21, 24).”

6 The burden of the beasts of the south: into the land of trouble and anguish, from whence [come] the young and old lion, the viper and fiery flying serpent, they will carry their riches upon the shoulders of young asses, and their treasures upon the bunches of camels, to a people [that] shall not profit [them].

The burden of the beasts of the south: into the land of trouble and anguish. The Hebrew word here rendered as *south* [צָפֹנ] can also mean *desert*. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “They carry upon their beast of burden on the way southward, into a land of oppression and distress.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “This is the vision of the four footed beasts in the desert.” The BPE (Ⓢ) has essentially the same translation as the KJV, *Prophetic burden of the beasts of the south*; the Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *The prophecy concerning the oppressors of the south*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “The burden of the beasts of the south. In a land of trouble and distress.” ¶ Most of the exegetes and translators believe this verse is an *oracle, prophecy or burden of the beasts of the south*. Delitzsch, for instance, writes: “Isaiah breaks off his

address to communicate an oracle relating to the Egyptian treaty, which Jehovah has specially commanded him to hand down to posterity...” ¶ The Targum (Ⓣ), however, represents a literal burden that is carried upon beasts of burden, rather than a *masha* (מָשָׂא) or oracle. So does Jenour: “This verse in the English Bible is very obscure, and seems to be the beginning of another prophecy, which it certainly is not; there being an evident connexion between it and the preceding. The translation I have given [i.e., “They shall carry the burden of the beasts of the south, to a land of trouble and anguish &c.”], makes, I trust, the meaning plain. Egypt is called a land of trouble and anguish, because the Israelites had there endured a cruel bondage. Also it abounded with lions of the largest description, and, more than any other country, with serpents and venomous reptiles; hence it is further characterized *as the land from whence come the great lion, etc.*” We may well have a play on words: as the camels carry a *burden* (מָשָׂא) on their backs and the prophet pronounces a *burden* (מָשָׂא) on the failure of this effort. ¶ *From whence [come] the young and old lion, the viper and fiery flying serpent.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “A place of the lion, and the whelps of the lionesses, and serpents, and the flying basilisks.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “A lion and a lion’s whelp were in distress and difficulty; and from them went the asps and the brood of flying serpents.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “From whence come the lioness, and the lion, the viper and the flying basilisk.” So also Alexander, and many others including HALOT, explains that “לָבִיָּא וְלִישׁ” rather means *lioness and lion*. Birks well suggests that “The description of the desert alludes to Deuteronomy 8:15. They were reversing the steps of their great national deliverance. They were trusting in the shadow of that oppressor, from whose cruel yoke God had rescued their fathers. On this vain errand they were journeying south through that terrible wilderness, where their forefathers had been sustained by water from the rock, and manna from heaven. There was danger in the journey itself, and would be nothing at its close but shame and sorrow.” ¶ Skinner suggests that *and fiery flying serpent* [וְשֶׂרֶפְתָּן] is a *winged seraph*. Rashi (in Rosenberg) has, “The flying serpent, too, is a species of snake, not that it has wings with which to fly, but it jumps and springs long distances and throws a flame from its mouth.” *The Book of Mormon Reference Companion* has, “Associated with the Egyptian Sinai (ISAIAH 30:6), these serpents were considered extremely poisonous and came to represent agents of divine chastisement (2 Nephi 24:29). In recounting the proofs of God’s power manifested in the Exodus (1 Nephi 17:23–42), Nephi observed that because of the ‘iniquity’ of the Israelites God had ‘sent fiery flying

serpents among them.’ But in his mercy God had also ‘prepared a way that they might be healed’ (1 Nephi 17:41). The means of healing consisted of a brass representation of a serpent twisted on a pole upon which the Israelites could gaze (Numbers 21:4–9). This brass serpent was interpreted by later Book of Mormon prophets to typify the Savior (Helaman 8:14–15; cf. John 3:14–15).¹¹ ¶ *They will carry their riches upon the shoulders of young asses, and their treasures upon the bunches¹² of camels, to a people [that] shall not profit [them].* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “They carry upon the shoulders of their young cattle their treasures, and they bring upon the bunches of camels whatever is in their treasures unto a people, that shall not profit them.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Who carried their wealth on asses and camels to a nation which could not profit them.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has *beasts* instead of *young asses*. Regarding the *bunches* of the camels [עַל־רִבְשֵׁת, *and upon the bunches*] Henderson writes: “That the hunch, or hump, of that animal is meant, there can be no doubt. It is of the shape of a pyramid, and sometimes of such a size as to occupy at its base nearly the entire back of the animal.” Rashi and Kara (in Rosenberg) explain that the רִבְשֵׁת,¹³ or camel’s hump, is frequently sore from burdens laid upon it and is often anointed with *honey* (רִבֵּשׁ), “as we say in Baba Mezia 38b: *Honey that lost its sweetness is fit for the sores of the camels.*” Most exegetes explain that the camels would be packed with the treasures and gifts to be taken by the ambassadors to be given to the Egyptians. What good, then, would come from all of these gifts? None, as they would be given *to a people* [the Egyptians] who would *not profit them* [Judah] at all.

7 For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I cried concerning this, Their strength [is] to sit still.

✓ or, to her

For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose: The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “In vain and to no purpose will the Egyptians help you.” Jenour beautifully says: “[The] prophet proclaimed to the Jews, that the way to be safe was, to wait quietly for that deliverance he had promised them. He taught them, that they would be

strongest when they relied most implicitly upon the protection of Jehovah. And so it is with the Christian, “*When he is weak, then he is strong*” (2 Corinthians 12:10). When he most *feels* his helplessness, and relies most exclusively upon the grace of his Saviour, then he is most able to contend against his spiritual enemies. Yet it is a shocking abuse of this passage to infer from it, as some appear to have done, that the Christian is required to make no exertions on his part for the attainment of holiness, but to consider himself as entirely passive in the hands of his Lord. When truly we most feel our weakness we are strong; but not when we exert ourselves least. What says the apostle? *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, on this very ground, that it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do* (Philippians 2:12).” ¶ *Therefore have I cried concerning this, Their strength [is] to sit still.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Therefore I shall meet many of the slain: I will bring armed men upon them.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Announce to them, That this application of yours is vain.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲯ) instead has the Lord warning them that their trust has been vainly misplaced. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, for the last clause, “It is pride only, sit still.” Regarding קָרָאתִי, *have I cried*, Wildberger calls it the *prophetic perfect*,¹⁴ “What Yahweh announces is already a reality, even when the punishment remains to be unveiled...” The word *strength* in this clause is rather רַהַב,¹⁵ *Rahab* (also see ISAIAH 51:9, and Psalm 87:4; 89:10). Cheyne here writes, “The riddle of ‘Ariel’ [see ISAIAH 29] receives its counterpart in that of **Rahab!**” Many of the modern translation so translate it: “For Egypt helpeth in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I called her Rahab that sitteth still” (ASV, also see AMP, ESV, GLB, GW, HCSB, ISV, LBLA, NASB, NBLH, RV). In addition, we have the Spanish 2009 LDS Edition, which offers a rendering that is very close to the ASV [except it translates וּמִצְרַיִם as *and Egypt* rather than *for Egypt*]: “Y Egipto en vano e inútilmente dará ayuda; por tanto, yo lo he llamado **Rahab**, la inmóvil” (Edición SUD 2009). Gesenius has for רַהַב: “a poetical name of Egypt (probably of Egyptian origin, but accommodated to the Hebrew language; however, no one has yet shewn a probable etymology in the Coptic language; see Jablonskii Opuscc. ed. te Water, i. 228) ... allusion is made to the Hebrew etymology in these words [i.e., quoted from ISAIAH 30:7], רַהַב הֵם שֹׁכֵת, ‘*insolence*, (i.e. the insolent) *they sit still*,’ i.e. boasting and

¹¹ *Book of Mormon Reference Companion*.

¹² Humps, e.g., “and their treasures upon the humps of camels” (ASV).

¹³ LXX (Ⲯ), Δαβασθή (Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature).

¹⁴ We shall repeatedly see the *prophetic perfect*, or the speaking of a future even with so much surety, as if it had already come to pass.

¹⁵ רַהַב, also means *pride, arrogance* (HALOT, Gesenius, BDB). So it is that Wordsworth says, “‘Rahab and Babylon,’ the cities of Pride and Confusion.”

grandiloquent, they are altogether inactive; no doubt a proverbial expression.” The BDB and HAL also include the synonym *arrogant* for that of *insolent*. As a result, we also see translations that use these words: “For Egypt helpeth in vain, and to no purpose; therefore have I called her arrogancy that sitteth still” (JPS), and “For Egypt shall help in vain, and to no purpose; therefore have I named her, Arrogance, that doeth nothing.”

Rashi (in Rosenberg) explains that “שָׁבַת” means that their pride and haughtiness is fit to be curtailed... [and that] their pride is fit to be curtailed.” This clause about Egypt’s false strength may stand in juxtaposition to what God can offer Judah: “Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth” (Psalm 46:10); “Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD” (Exodus 14:13); and “Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you” (2 Chronicles 20:17).

vv. 8–17. Isaiah is commanded to write these words in a book. The children of Israel refuse instruction and reject the prophets and the gospel. Poor use of moral agency brings negative consequences. Leaning upon the strength of horses or the mighty nations would be of no avail to Israel who, in punishment for disobedience, would now flee from the enemies.

8 ¶ Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever: ✓

✓ the latter-day

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Now go, write it amongst them upon a tablet, and mark it upon lines of a book, that it may be for a witness before me in the day of judgment for ever.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Now therefore sit down and write these things in a tablet and make a book that they may be for the appointed time even for the time to come.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *book of the covenant* rather than just *book*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “Now therefore go in and write for them upon box, and note it diligently in a book, and it shall be in the latter days for a testimony for ever.” What is the prophet to write in a book? The exegetes are divided on this matter. For instance, Delitzsch suggests that it refers to the words *already spoken* (ISAIAH 30:6–7) while Barnes to *what follows* (ISAIAH 30:9). Rawlinson says: “Isaiah received a Divine intimation that the prophecy was to be put on record, doubly, upon a tablet and in a book. At the same time, the ‘rebelliousness’ of the people was further pointed out, and fresh threats (vv. 13, 14, and

17) were uttered against them.” Delitzsch opines that upon tablet (עַל-לִיָּה) ... and upon book (עַל-סֵפֶר) are a repetition of one thought, while others (e.g., Rawlinson and Gill) believe that the tablet is to be made visible to the people at the time and the book was to be kept for posterity. Delitzsch explains: “סֵפֶר could be used interchangeably with לִיָּה, because a single leaf, the contents of which were concluded, was called סֵפֶר (Exodus 17:14). Isaiah was to write the oracle upon a table, a separate leaf of durable material; and that “with them,” i.e., so that his countrymen might have it before their eyes (compare ISAIAH 8:1; Habakkuk 2:2). It was to be a memorial for posterity.” Here we have two very beautiful expressions: לַיּוֹם אַחֲרָיו, for [the] latter-day; and לְעַד עַד-עוֹלָם, for perpetuity perpetuity forever.

9 That this [is] a rebellious people, lying children, children [that] will not hear the law of the LORD:

The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Because this is a rebellious people—lying children, who would not hear the law of God.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “For it is a people that provoketh to wrath, and lying children, children that will not hear the law of God.” This is an allusion to ISAIAH 1:2b–3, “I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.” In Zechariah 7:11 we read: “But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear.” Daily we each make countless choices to either *turn to God* or *turn our backs on Him*. When we refuse to hear the word of God, whether it is from the Holy Scriptures or from the Holy Ghost, from the Brethren or from our Bishop or Branch President, we are turning aside from the path that we ought to follow. With Rawlinson and Delitzsch and many of the translators (e.g., Bishops, NASB, JPS, ISV, ESV, ASV, AMP), I prefer to translate כִּי as *for*, הוּא כִּי עַם מְרִי הוּא, *For this [is] a rebellious people* &c. Regarding lying children, Rawlinson has, “They professed devotion to God; but their acts contradicted their words.” See also, ISAIAH 59:3, 13; Jeremiah 9:3; Ezekiel 13:7, 9. Wildberger writes, “When [ISAIAH] uses עַם מְרִי (*obstinate people*), one sees a deep disappointment that he, or Yahweh himself, has experienced from Israel. One encounters similar

vocabulary being used along with ¹⁶מַרְדָּ (rebelliousness) in Nehemiah 9:17.” Cowles comments: “Their sin involving not falsehood only but filial ingratitude...” In D&C we read: “And in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things, and obey not his commandments” (D&C 59:21).

10 Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits:

Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things. The Targum (T) has, “Who say to the prophets, Prophecy ye not: and as for doctrines, teach us not the doctrine of the law.” The LXX (G) reads, “Who say to the prophets, ‘Preach not to us,’ and to them who see visions, ‘Speak not to us.’” Instead of *right things* the Peshitta (S) has *reproof*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Who say to the seers: See not: and to them that behold: Behold not for us those things that are right.” ¶ *To seers see not*, לֹא תִרְאוּ, לְרֹאִים לֹא תִרְאוּ.

Elder James E. Faust taught, after quoting this verse: “Nephi explained, ‘The guilty taketh the truth to be hard, for it cutteth them to the very center’ (1 Nephi 16:2).”¹⁷ Barnes says, “They were offended at their plainness and their reproofs of their vices; and they preferred the false prophets, who fell in with their prejudices, and who did not denounce the judgment of God for their crimes.” ¶ *Speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits:* The Targum (T) has, “Speak ye with us with signs, relate unto us various things.” The LXX (G) reads, “Nay, speak to us and tell us another error.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Speak unto us pleasant things, see errors for us.” King Ahab of Israel (see ISAIAH 30:1 notes) was an example of someone who sought to hear smooth things, even if they were false. Also see Hananiah, who falsely prophesied that the Babylonian yoke would be broken (Jeremiah 28). ¶ Delitzsch explains regarding ISAIAH 30:10b: “Their desire was to be entertained and lauded, not repelled and instructed.”

11 Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.

¹⁶ In *their rebellion*, בְּמַרְדָּם.

¹⁷ Elder James E. Faust, *Unwanted Messages*, *Ensign* (CR), November 1986, p.8.

The Targum (T) has, “Turn us from the right path, make us to cease from tradition; put at a distance from us the Word of the Holy One of Israel.” The LXX (G) reads, “And turn us from this way, and take from us this path, and take from us the oracle of Israel.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Take away from me the way, turn away the path from me, let the Holy One of Israel cease from before us.” ¶ Ibn Ezra explains: “*Get you out of the way, etc.* These words are addressed by the people to the prophets. *Cause the Holy One, etc.* Cause the mention or the name of the Holy One of Israel to cease.” The people did not want to hear the word of the Lord. While I was a counselor in a Modesto, California Ward, one man would cover his ears when letters were read from the Brethren defending the sanctity of marriage between a man and a woman. To cover our ears at the words of the Brethren is covering our ears at the words of the Lord.

12 Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression[✓] and perverseness, and stay thereon:

✓ or, fraud

Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word. The LXX (G) reads, “Therefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, because you have disbelieved these words.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has *rejected* instead of *despise*. ¶ Prophecy in general—as well as this particular oracle about the absurdity of leaning upon Egypt. So also Ibn Ezra, who says, “*Ye despise this word*, the prophecy.” Alexander suggests: “The word here mentioned is no doubt the law of ISAIAH 30:9, both being common epithets of revelation generally, and of particular divine communications.”

¶ *In this word*, בְּדִבְרֵי. This may also be an allusion to the Word, or Christ (see ISAIAH 40:8) who was indeed rejected for the strength of Pharaoh. ¶ *And trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon:* The LXX (G) reads, “And placed your hopes on a lie: and because thou hast murmured, and been confident in this matter.” The Peshitta (S) has *murmured* (BPE) / *complained* (Lamsa) and (BPE) / *yet* (Lamsa) trusted in it. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And have trusted in oppression and tumult, and have leaned upon it.” In ISAIAH 31:1 we read, “Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD!” To *stay* וַתִּשָּׁעֲנוּ, means to lean upon, rely, have confidence in. The people are being denounced here for *staying* on Egypt or the arm of flesh, rather than upon their God.

13 Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant.

The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Therefore this sin shall be unto you as a city laid waste, and made a ruinous heap, as a bending wall, whose breaking cometh very suddenly.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Therefore this sin shall be to you like the tottering wall of a fortified city, which hath been taken by surprise; the fall of which is instantaneous.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “Therefore shall this iniquity be to you as a breach that falleth, and is found wanting in a high wall, for the destruction thereof shall come on a sudden, when it is not looked for.” ¶ Henderson suggests that the materials may well be soft such as adobe,¹⁸ “As the Orientals most frequently constructed their walls of clay, or soft brick, dried in the sun, they are extremely liable to rend, and be washed down by rain (compare Psalm 62:3¹⁹).” Once a wall is breached or broken, a city quickly falls into the hands of the enemy (see our notes in ISAIAH 29:3). Kay well notes: “The expression *lofty wall* (as of a fortress, cp. ISAIAH 25:12) occurs in Proverbs 18:11: ‘A rich man’s wealth *is* his strong city, and as a *lofty wall* in his own conceit.’ It is added (v. 12), ‘Before destruction (or, a breach, *s. w.*) the heart of man is haughty.’” So we understand what a breach in a wall means, but what is the significance of this verse? Who will experience this breach? Israel wanted to lean upon the strength of Egypt (or the world) yet the might and the proud nations would all fall like mighty towers (ISAIAH 30:25). Destruction tends to come quickly and often unexpectedly. We can be safe if we put our trust in the Lord.

14 And he shall break it as the breaking of the potters’ vessel[✓] that is broken in pieces; he shall not spare: so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water [withal] out of the pit.

✓ the bottle of potters

And he shall break it as the breaking of the potters’ vessel that is broken in pieces; he shall not spare: The

¹⁸ Our farmhouse in San Javier was made of adobe and the 2010 earthquake (8.8 on the Moment Magnitude Scale) brought portions to the ground and basically made it uninhabitable. It was constructed in the early twentieth century.

¹⁹ “As a bowing wall shall ye be” (AV).

Targum (ⲧ) specifies that the potters’ vessel shall be of clay broken without compassion. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And its fall shall be like the breaking of an earthen vessel, the fragments of which are so small.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “And it shall be broken small, as the potter’s vessel is broken all to pieces with mighty breaking.” Jerusalem would be likewise broken. Henderson has, “The meaning is, that, in punishment of their apostasy from God, the Jews should, as it respected their public affairs, experience a complete overthrow.” ¶ *So that there shall not be found in the bursting of it a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water [withal] out of the pit.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And among its fragments there shall not be found a potsherd to take fire from the hearth, or to draw (the Royal Polyglot and the Biblia Magna, reads correctly **לְמִזְלָה**, ‘to draw’) water from the cistern.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “That there cannot be found among them a sherd on which thou canst carry fire or with which thou canst scoop up a little water.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) also makes it clear that the fragments would be so broken up that they could not be used to scoop up fire or water. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “And there shall not a sherd be found of the pieces thereof, wherein a little fire may be carried from the hearth, or a little water be drawn out of the pit.” ¶ Alexander explains: “*Sherd* is an old English word, now seldom used, meaning a broken piece of pottery or earthenware, and found more frequently in the compound form of *potsherd*. A potter’s vessel, literally, *vessel of the potters*.” Rawlinson says, “From comparing Judah’s fall and ruin to the shattering of a lofty wall, he suddenly turns to a comparison of it with the breaking to pieces of an earthen pitcher. Judah shall be so broken as when the pitcher is crushed into minute fragments, so that there is no piece large enough to convey a coal from one fire for the lighting of another, or to be of even the least use for drawing water from a well.” Delitzsch goes beyond the destruction of Jerusalem: “It is the captivity which is here figuratively threatened by the prophet; for the smashing had regard to Israel as a state.”

15 For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.

For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved. The Targum (ⲧ) makes the returning to the law explicit, with a promise of rest and redemption. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Thus saith the Lord, Lord. The Holy One of Israel, when thou shalt return sighing, then thou shalt be saved.” The Peshitta

(S) has *repent for in returning*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, for the second clause, “If you return and be quiet, you shall be saved.” ¶ In returning, or בְּשׁוּבָה, or *in turning* again to the Lord, man can find peace and safety, and in no other way. We see this also in: “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee” (ISAIAH 26:3). This is an invitation to find joy in walking with God—and the spiritual, emotional and temporal safety that this provides. ¶ Young well says regarding *rest* נִחַת, “Isaiah had commanded Ahaz to be still (ISAIAH 7:14), but Ahaz would not do so.” King Ahaz did not have the faith to be still in the Lord. ¶ *In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.* The Targum (T) has, “Ye shall be quiet, and ye shall dwell in safety, and be mighty; but ye would not.” The LXX (G) reads, “And thou shalt know in what a situation thou wast, when thou didst trust in these vanities.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “in silence and in hope shall your strength be. And you would not.” We likewise see this earlier in Isaiah: “Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me” (ISAIAH 27:5). ¶ *And in confidence, וְבִבְטָחָה... your strength, וְבִגְבוּרַתְכֶם...* Wildberger²⁰ points out: “Isaiah wants to be so exact about the way he differentiates trust [confidence] in Yahweh over against trust [confidence] in one’s own plans that he never, in any formal sense, uses the same verb to describe both true and false trust. As can be seen most clearly in 32:9 ff., Isaiah uses בָּטַח from the outset to describe reprehensible behavior, from which one has to protect oneself. By contrast, he does speak about בִּטְחוֹה (trust) [i.e., confidence] in a positive sense in ISAIAH 30:15.” The Lord, also, through Jeremiah, teaches the *strong* not to rely in *strength*: וְאַל-יִתְחַלֵּל הַגִּבּוֹר בְּגִבּוּרָתוֹ (and not let the mighty man glory in his might), save it be the *strength* of the Father and of the Holy One of Israel. If we do this, “then shall [our] confidence (בְּטָחָה) wax strong in the presence of God” (D&C 121:45b). The whole idea of *in quietness* (בְּהַשְׁקָט) reminds us of the still small voice of the comforter, “The Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion” (D&C 121:46a). Also, “Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly” (ISAIAH 8:6a). ¶ *And ye would not.* In His mortal ministry, the Savior seemed to be expanding on these very words in Isaiah: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children

together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!” (Luke 13:34).

16 But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift.

The LXX (G) reads, “Your strength was vain, yet you would not hearken, but said, ‘We will flee on horses.’ Therefore flee you shall. And, ‘We will mount swift coursers,’ therefore swift shall be your pursuers.” The BPE (S) has, “But ye said, ‘It shall not be so, we shall ride upon horses and will hurry to flee’; so they will flee, but those who pursue will also hurry.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “But have said: No, but we will flee to horses: therefore shall you flee. And we will mount upon swift ones: therefore shall they be swifter that shall pursue after you.” In essence, then, the people are saying לא, or *no*, to this invitation to lean upon the Holy One of Israel. Ibn Ezra has: “You fled²¹ without a cause, you will therefore be compelled to flee by your pursuers.” ¶ Redak (in Rosenberg) explains: “If the enemy attacks us, we will have horses upon which to flee.” As Rawlinson mentions, “‘The *swift*’ (קָלִי) seems to be a mere variant for ‘horse,’ the parallelism being, as so frequently, ‘synonymous.’” Regarding *swift* יָקִילוּ, see my notes on ISAIAH 18:2. Gill explains that the time did come when they had to escape—whether in horses or camels—from the enemy: “This was fulfilled long after, when the city was taken by the Chaldeans (see 2 Kings 25:4)... [who] are represented as very swift (Jeremiah 4:13²²).” Keith points us to Amos 2:14–16: “Therefore the flight shall perish from the swift, and the strong shall not strengthen his force, neither shall the mighty deliver himself: Neither shall he stand that handleth the bow; and he that is swift of foot shall not deliver himself: neither shall he that rideth the horse deliver himself. And he that is courageous among the mighty shall flee away naked in that day, saith the LORD.” ¶ In the Hebrew Scriptures horses, horsemen, and chariots are often given as a symbol of leaning on the strength of beasts rather than the strength of God. For instance, we read: “And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother” (Haggai 2:22); and “Woe to them that go

²⁰ See also, Wildberger note on ISAIAH 10:20.

²¹ See my notes on Leviticus 26:8 in the next verse.

²² קָלִי מִנְּשָׂרִים סוּרִי, “*Swifter than eagles are his horses*,” (Leeser).

down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD!” (ISAIAH 31:1). Cheyne and Skinner²³ well point out that *horse* and *flee* rhyme in Hebrew, *flee upon horse*, על־סוס ננוס. Indeed, for we have rather than *horses*, סוסים, the word *horse* in the singular in the Hebrew. Both *horse* and *flee* end with the same sound: *sus*, *nanus*. Nägelsbach explains that Drechsler thinks that while the Israelites had intentions to flee on horses and ride on the swift, “then it must be said in opposition: therefore shall ye flee **on foot**.” Nägelsbach goes on to say that “horses will serve you only for *flight*.” Either way, by foot or on horseback, the people of Jerusalem would be fleeing from the enemy.

17 One thousand [shall flee] at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee: till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an hill.

✓ or, a tree bereft of branches, or, boughs: or, a mast

One thousand [shall flee] at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee: The LXX (6) reads, “A thousand shall flee at the voice of one; and at the voice of five, many thousands shall flee.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has *fear* instead of *rebuke* in both instances. This curse for *disobedience* is a direct allusion to the blessing for obedience found in *Rain in due Season*: “And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword” (Leviticus 26:8, *also see* Deuteronomy 32:30, Joshua 23:10). We also read in *Rain in due Season*: “And upon them that are left alive of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf

shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth” (Leviticus 26:36). The picture I have had in my mind for decades is that of the sound made by a falling leaf that is torn off a tree during the fall season. The Targum Pseudo-Jonathan (1), likewise, renders it:

קל טרפא נתיר מן אילן, “[and the] sound [of a] leaf falling from [the] tree... shall put them to flight.”²⁴

After writing my comment on the falling leaf from a tree I read in Gill: “either *the sound of a leaf that falls from the tree*, as the Targum of Jonathan, or which the wind beats one against another, as Jarchi [i.e., Rashi], which makes some little noise; even this should terrify them, taking it to be the noise of some enemy near at hand, just ready to fall on them; such poor faint hearted creatures should they be” (emphasis added). Many render נָדָה shaken as *driven away* [see HAL], especially by the wind: HCSB renders *shaken leaf* as “wind-driven leaf.” Several translations render it “driven leaf” (ASV, RV, AMP, JPS, Darby, ESV, LITV, MKJV, NASB). YLT renders it “the sound of a leaf driven away.” This, then, may represent a leaf that is already fallen but carried away from one place to another by the wind. Either way, the amount of sound made by such a shaken leaf (עֲלֵה) is for all practical purposes *absolutely imperceptible*. ¶ *Till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an hill.* The Targum (1) has *signal fire* for the first beacon. Chilton’s 1 translation uses *bonfire*, while Stenning’s 1 translation uses the same term as in the KJV, *beacon*. The LXX (6) reads, “Until you be left like a beacon on a mountain, and like a flag staff upon a hill.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “Till you be left as the mast of a ship on the top of a mountain, and as an ensign upon a hill.” In other words, until you be left desolate, alone.

vv. 18–26. We seem to transition in these verses from God’s mercy despite our weakness, to the blessings that will be poured out in the latter-day and in the millennial day. Ironside well says, of these verses, “Surely no one can think that these words have ever been fulfilled in the past [but rather point to “Israel’s glorious portion in the day” when they return to the Lord].”

18 ¶ And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the LORD [is] a

²³ Skinner further adds, “In ISAIAH 36:8 the Rabshakeh seems to taunt the Judeans with their *childish fondness* for horsemanship” (*emphasis added*). I have, from my youth, had a great passion for horsemanship. I find Skinner’s comments particularly interesting because it has taken me so long to push away this passion and more fully replace it with my love for the Holy Scriptures. While at times I feel some nostalgia for horses, when this happens I think, “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things” (1 Corinthians 11:13). In a recent conversation with my father during a visit to Santiago (15 December 2012), he reminded me that it is better that I dedicated my life to something useful at the University of California—rather than to teaching horsemanship to the rich. As a youth I asked my parents whether as an adult I might have half an hour a day to ride horses. I realize, of course, that all these things are a question of balance. After I retire I may well have a little time for horsemanship as I have a God-given talent in that field. Indeed, “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven” (Ecclesiastes 3:1).— 11 January 2013.

²⁴ Etheridge, John Wesley, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan and Targum Onkelos, Newsletter for Targumic and Cognate Studies. URL accessed 25 October 2012: <http://targum.info/targumic-texts/pentateuchal-targumim/>.

God of judgment: blessed [are] all they that wait for him.

And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you. The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And therefore the Lord will shew you pity, and he that is mighty will compassionate you.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “But again the Lord will wait to be gracious to you.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has “The Lord will begin to show *them* (BPE) / *you* (Lamsa) mercy.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, for the second clause, “That he may have mercy on you.” Some exegetes translate *and therefore* לְכֵן, as *yet therefore* (Faussett—leaning on Gesenius), *yet* or *nevertheless* (Gill), *however* (HAL), giving better sense to the transition. So also Geneva, “Yet therefore”; GNB, “And yet”; and ISV, “Nevertheless.” It means that despite the disappointments that God has experienced with His people, He will be slow to punish or that He will remember His people in the latter times (or both). Alexander thinks this verse refers back to an earlier one and does not follow directly to what has been said: “On the whole, the simplest and most probable conclusion seems to be that לְכֵן has its usual meaning, but refers, as in many other cases, to a remoter antecedent than the words immediately before it. As if the Prophet paused at this point and reviewing his denunciations said, Since this is so, since you must perish if now dealt with strictly, God will allow you space for repentance, he will wait to be gracious, he will exalt himself by shewing mercy.” Rashi (in Rosenberg) suggests that the Lord will wait to bring the good upon His children that He might have brought to them sooner had they been obedient. Kay says, “*the Lord will wait*, in resolute self-withdrawal, looking for the time when your penitence will permit Him to be again *gracious unto you*.” ¶ Speaking of this verse, Elder Marion D. Hanks exhorted that we *liken this verse unto ourselves* when we are in a position of power or authority: “But we must take people—boys and girls, men and women—where they are, as they are, in the imperfect conditions that so widely exist, in the personal imperfections which are universal. We cannot escape responsibility for our families and others whom we might touch, nor ever cease pulling for them and praying for them and trying to help them. If they make wrong decisions, follow the false programs that many of their peers pursue, still we will love them and suffer with them and work with them and wait for them, even as the father in the Lord’s parable waited for the prodigal who finally came to his senses and headed home: ‘When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him’ (Luke 15:20). We will watch and pray, even as the Lord himself waits with godly mercy, as He declared through His prophet

2,700 years ago: ‘And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you’ (ISAIAH 30:18).²⁵ It is not that punishment will be removed altogether. Sometimes we must receive chastisement: “And [though] the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction” (ISAIAH 30:20a). ¶ Wordsworth, in fact, correctly believes that true repentance must come first: “The Prophet beholds the People turning to God with penitential cries and tears, and he announces to them the blessed consequence of their repentance. This was exemplified in a remarkable manner in the person of Hezekiah, the King of Judah (and doubtless in the persons of many of his nobles and people), who at first had shown a great lack of trust in God (see 2 Kings 18:14, 16), and resorted to Egypt and Ethiopia for help (see above, on chapters 18—20; and 2 Kings 18: 21), but afterwards turned to God, in his double distress, with *prayers*, and *cries*, and *tears* (2 Kings 19:15–19 ; 20:3–5; and above, 25:8; and below, 38:14–17). The words (which are here spoken by the Prophet) were fully verified in Hezekiah: ‘Thou shalt *weep no more*: the Lord will be very gracious unto thee; at the *voice of thy cry*, when He shall hear it. He will answer thee.’ The speed of the answer to Hezekiah’s prayers is noticed in 2 Kings 20:4.” ¶ *And therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the LORD [is] a God of judgment*: The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “For the Lord is the God who doeth judgment.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “And will therefore be exalted for compassionating you. Because the Lord your God is judge.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has the Lord *sparing* instead of its synonym, showing *mercy*. Alexander writes: “That the clause does not relate to righteousness or justice in the strict sense, appears plain from the added benediction upon those who trust Jehovah. One point is universally admitted, namely, that somewhere in this verse is the transition from the tone of threatening to that of promise. The question where it shall be fixed, though interesting, does not affect the general connection or the import of the passage as a whole.” Henderson says: “The last words of this verse shew that it is not a continuation of the threatening, but contains a promise of mercy. מְשַׁפֵּט²⁶ is, therefore, to be taken in the strict sense of *rectitude*, and not in that of *punishment*.” Calvin explains that *judgment* “denotes not only punishment, but also the moderation which is exercised in chastening. In like manner Jeremiah says, ‘Chasten me, O Lord, but *in judgment* [מִשְׁפָּט]’, not in thy wrath, lest thou crush me’ (Jeremiah 10:24). And again, I will not consume thee, but will chastise thee in

²⁵ Elder Marion D. Hanks, Seeing the Five A’s, *Ensign* (CR), November 1977, p.36.

²⁶ Normally translated as *judgment*.

judgment (Jeremiah 30:11).” ¶ *Blessed [are] all they that wait for him.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Blessed are the righteous who wait for his salvation.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Happy are they who wait for him.” This idea of waiting upon the Lord is further developed in ISAIAH 40. ¶ Birks writes: “However severe God’s discipline, its design was gracious. His dealings are full of wisdom, like our Lord’s absence during the sickness of Lazarus, to make the blessing afterward more glorious and Divine. There is, on His part, no slackness or indifference, but the calm waiting of an ever-patient love.” Elder Robert D. Hales taught: “In the scriptures, the word *wait* means to hope, to anticipate, and to trust. To hope and trust in the Lord requires faith, patience, humility, meekness, long-suffering, keeping the commandments, and enduring to the end.”²⁷

19 For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee.

For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, in the first clause, “For the people of Zion shall dwell in Jerusalem.” (Chilton’s Ⲯ translation is similar.) Stenning’s Ⲯ translation renders it, “For, O people in Zion, inhabitant of Jerusalem.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Because a holy people will dwell in Sion, and Jerusalem with weeping cried, ‘Have mercy upon me.’” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “For the people of Sion shall dwell in Jerusalem: weeping thou shalt not weep.” ¶ Cheyne writes, “...to prevent any misunderstanding, or, with affectionate emphasis, the prophet adds, ‘in Jerusalem.’” Kay says, “...*In Zion* (and not only in Zion mystical, but literally) *in Jerusalem*.” LDS do make a distinction between Zion in the American West and Zion in Jerusalem, even though the names may sometimes be used interchangeably. In its full sense, this prophecy will be fulfilled during the millennium and thereafter, at a time when “He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces” (ISAIAH 25:8). We also read “For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes” (Revelation 7:17); and “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away”

²⁷ Hales, Elder Robert D. 2011 October General Conference, Sunday morning session.

(Revelation 21:4). ¶ *He will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “He will assuredly shew thee compassion: the voice (the Royal Polyglot puts in after קל the word קנל, ‘thy crying’) of thy prayer He will hear, and He will answer (Chaldee, ‘he will do’) thy supplication.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Therefore he will have mercy upon thee. When he heard the sound of thy cry, he hearkened to thee.” Compare with “Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am” (ISAIAH 58:9a); and “And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear” (ISAIAH 65:24).

20 And [though] the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers:

✓ or, oppression

And [though] the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And the Lord shall give unto you the treasures of the enemy, and the spoil of the oppressor.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “When the Lord shall have given you bread of affliction and stinted water.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “And the Lord will give you spare bread, and short water.” ¶ Alexander suggests: “The true connection seems to be, that God would afflict them outwardly, but would not deprive them of their spiritual privileges; or, as Cocceius says, there should be a famine of bread, but not of the word of the Lord (Amos 8:11).” ¶ *Yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers:* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And He will no more take away His *Shekinah* from the house of the sanctuary, and thine eyes shall behold my *Shekinah* in the house of the sanctuary.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “They who lead thee astray shall no more come near thee.” The BPE (Ⲥ) has, “Nor shall their eyes see those who turned their way (or, made them lose their way).” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “And will not cause thy teacher to flee away from thee any more, and thy eyes shall see thy teacher.” A number of translators of the Masoretic text (ⲙ) have followed after the Targum (Ⲯ) שכינתיה, *Shekinah*, or “the presence of the Lord.”

¶ *Thy teachers,* מוריך. A number of translators have suggested that rather than *thy teachers*, the Hebrew ought to be rendered *thy Teacher*, meaning the Holy One of Israel, or Christ, who will be plainly manifest and no longer put away or hidden. For instance: “yet shall not thy Teacher hide Himself any more, but thine

eyes shall see thy Teacher” (JPS, also see this line of thought from NBLH, NASB, LBLA, HCSB, ESV, ERV, CEV, AMP). Our LDS footnote on ISAIAH 30:20b also suggests that מוֹרֵי stands as an allusion for “the LORD.” ¶ Keith applies ISAIAH 30:20 to the restoration: “As evil leaders and false teachers are often represented as among the greatest of the nation’s curses; so, when finally restored, and when their judgments shall be past, among their greatest blessings will be that of faithful teachers.” ¶ To be removed into a corner (כַּנִּי), or to be hidden. This comes from the Hebrew כָּנָה, to remove to the four corners of the earth, to cover or hide (HAL). In the millennial day the Lord will be present and visible to all. But meanwhile, in applying these scriptures unto us, when we turn our back on the Lord, we may say that we have removed Him into a corner or hidden Him from us. This is also true when we turn our backs on the prophets that He has given us as guides. ¶ Elder Marion G. Hanks loved ISAIAH 30 and particularly ISAIAH 30:20: “I interpret [wisdom] to be the capacity to recognize which things in life really matter most and to identify oneself with them, to choose them. In the thirtieth chapter of the book of Isaiah is a marvelous statement which I have loved since first I read it. The Lord seriously rebukes rebellious Israel. He recognizes their failings, their unfaith, their unwillingness to rely upon Him, their insistence upon self-reliance to the exclusion of humility before Him, but then comforts them and blesses them with this marvelous promise: ‘And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left’ (ISAIAH 30:20–21). I believe it is possible for anyone ... to discover for himself what things really matter in this world. I think he may learn it through teachers and through the voice which speaks behind us.”²⁸ The voice that speaks behind us is the Holy Ghost.

21 And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This [is] the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

The LXX (6) reads, “Because thine eyes will see them who are leading thee astray and thine ears will hear the words of the deceivers behind thee who say, This is the

way let us walk in it, whether to the right or left.” After the words *walk ye in it*, the Peshitta (5) admonishes men to stay on the path and not deviate from it to the right nor to the left. The Douay-Rheims (2) has, “And thy ears shall hear the word of one admonishing thee behind thy back: This is the way, walk ye in it: and go not aside neither to the right hand, nor to the left.” Monte S. Nyman says, “Elder Thomas S. Monson cited this verse as a reference to the ‘still, small voice which testifies of truth’ (CR, April 1975, p. 23).” So also Faussett, who rightfully points us to a scripture about the Holy Ghost: “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come” (John 16:13). When we hear or read the Word—scriptures as well as addresses from the prophets who seek to guide us in the proper path—the Holy Ghost bears witness that what they have said is true. To turn to the right or to the left means to deviate from the straight and narrow path. Of King Josiah we read: “And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left” (2 Kings 22:2; see also 2 Chronicles 34:2). In Proverbs we read this beautiful admonition: “Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil” (Proverbs 4:25–27). Wordsworth beautifully taught: “Its larger fulfilment [of these verses] was in the coming of Christ. Then the Lord had waited for many generations to be gracious; and blessed were all they who waited for Him (v. 18). Blessed were they, who, like Simeon, and Anna, and many others, ‘waited for the consolation of Israel’ (Luke 2:25, 38). Then the people saw their Teacher, and He established a Visible Church, wherein His Word is preached, and His Sacraments are administered in the whole world. Then the Word went forth, saying, ‘This is the way: walk ye in it.’ The Gospel is specially called ‘the WAY’ in Holy Scripture... It extends to the times of the Messiah, and even to His Second Advent.” So also Skinner, who says that this verse represents “Jehovah, walking like a Father behind His children.” Skinner continues, “when ye turn] Whenever your steps leave the straight path off righteousness, the warning voice will check you.” ¶ Elder Marion D. Hanks quoted this verse of Isaiah and taught: “That was their promise. We have the same promise, that if we will listen to the law of the Lord, if we will see through the eyes of the seer, if we will hear the words of the prophets when they testify to us right things, if we will listen to the oracles—past and present—to wise teachers, humble parents, honest friends; if we will listen to the voice of the Spirit, to the still, small voice, then we will learn the right way and to

²⁸ Marion D. Hanks. *Spiritual Constraints In Our Changing Times*. Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, January 4, 1961, pp. 3–8.

walk in it.”²⁹ President Thomas S. Monson invited: “Like the peal of a remembered bell will be the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the soul of him who earnestly seeks. Many of you have traveled long in a personal quest for that which rings true. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sends forth to you an earnest appeal. Open your doors to the missionaries. Open your minds to the word of God. Open your hearts—even your very souls—to the sound of that still, small voice which testifies of truth. As the prophet Isaiah promised, ‘Thine ears shall hear a word..., saying, This is the way, walk ye in it’ (ISAIAH 30:21).”³⁰ In *Rain in Due Season* there is a special promise given for walking in the way: “And I [the Lord] will walk among you, and **will be your God**, and **ye shall be my people**” (Leviticus 26:12, emphasis added).

22 Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold: thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth; thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence.

- ✓ the graven images of thy silver
- ✓ ✓ scatter

Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold: The LXX (6) reads, “Therefore thou wilt defile thine idols plated with silver, and cut to pieces those overlaid with gold.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “And thou shalt defile the plates of thy graven things of silver, and the garment of thy molten things of gold.” Henderson explains: “The Jews, convinced of the abominable evil of idolatry, would cast away their idols with feelings of utter disgust.” Faussett has: “Hezekiah, and afterwards Josiah, defiled [the graven images] (2 Kings 23:8, 10, 14, 16; 2 Chronicles 31:1; compare ISAIAH 2:20; Deuteronomy 7:25).” The expression *and defile* טָמֵא, from the root טָמָא, also has an acceptation that means “to declare unclean” as in Leviticus 13:3–59; 20:25 (HAL, Gesenius). Wordsworth talks of our hidden idols: “Ye will defile the covering or veil by which your idolatrous images were shrouded from the eye in their secret shrines,” and then goes on to quote Deuteronomy: “Cursed be the man that maketh any

graven or molten image, an abomination unto the LORD, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and putteth it in a secret place” (Deuteronomy 27:15a). This, then, is a command to declare all graven images unclean and thus to throw them away from our lives. Each one of us has to throw away those things that turn us to the right or to the left of the straight and narrow path. We are to do this with vigor. ¶ *Thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth; thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence.* The Targum (7) has, “Ye shall abominate it, as they abominate the impurity of a monstrous woman, thus ye shall abominate it.” The LXX (6) reads, “And scatter them like polluted water and cast them out as dirt.” The Peshitta (5) explains that they shall be cast out as the waters of a menstruous woman, and thrown away as waste. The Douay-Rheims (9) has, for the first clause, “And shalt cast them away as the uncleanness of a menstruous woman.” The idea of this passage is that we should truly put away our sins. Lowth writes: “The very prohibition of Moses, Deuteronomy 7:25, only thrown out of the prose into the poetical form: ‘The graven images of their gods ye shall burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or the gold that is on them; nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein; for it is an abomination to JEHOVAH thy God.’” Cowles teaches: “The ‘covering of their graven images’ is specified because this was often exceedingly rich, of gold and silver, very attractive therefore, and the last thing to be given up. Considered as a special prophecy, this had a very striking fulfillment when the Jews returned from Babylon. But in the spirit of it, it is fulfilled in the case of every real penitent. He loathes his former sins and thrusts them away with all his heart.”³¹ So he ought to do; and more than this, so he actually *does* if his penitence is sincere.” ¶ *Menstruous cloth* (see ISAIAH 64:6, *filthy rags*). According to the law of Moses, a woman was considered unclean during menstruation (Leviticus 15:19). A menstrual cloth was used to contain the blood discharge over this period, before the advent of many of today’s disposable sanitary products. Leviticus 19 ff. and 20:18 also explain that in the Mosaic Law, those who would come in contact with the menstrual blood would be unclean. (With our two older children we used cloth diapers. Only part way through our third child did we switch to disposable diapers.) ¶ *Get thee hence.* The Geneva Bible notes have: “Showing that there can be no true repentance, unless both in heart and deed we show ourselves enemies to idolatry.” This is a commandment of great force, a discarding of that which is unrighteous. When Christ was tempted by Satan he quoted Isaiah: “Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only

²⁹ Marion D. Hanks. Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, May 28, 1964, pp. 4–5.

³⁰ President Thomas S. Monson, Dedication Day, *Ensign* (CR), November 2000, p.64 (also see, The Way Home, *Ensign* (CR), May 1975, p.15).

³¹ So in Alma 22:18 Lamoni’s father says, “I will give away all my sins to know thee.”

shalt thou serve” (Matthew 4:10). Elder Jeffrey R. Holland addresses this issue squarely in a powerful General Conference address, of which I only quote one paragraph: “Above all, start by separating yourself from people, materials, and circumstances that will harm you. As those battling something like alcoholism know, the pull of proximity can be fatal. So too in moral matters. Like Joseph in the presence of Potiphar’s wife, just run—run as far away as you can get from whatever or whoever it is that beguiles you. And please, when fleeing the scene of temptation, do *not* leave a forwarding address.”³²

23 Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures.

Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal. The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Then shall there be rain for the seed of thy land.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “And rain shall be given to thy seed, wheresoever thou shalt sow in the land.” This is a direct allusion to the *Rain in Due Season* chapters as well as to Leviticus 26:4, more specifically. Obedience brings blessings as well as peace and joy. Gill says, “... the earth, being watered with rain, should give its increase of corn, of which bread should be made; so that there would be seed to the sower, and bread to the eater,³³ as in ISAIAH 55:10.” Regarding *bread and fat*, Wesley says: “Which shall be the fruit of thy own land and labour: and excellent for quality, which is called, fat, Deuteronomy 32:14, and abundant for quantity.” ¶ *And bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous:* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And corn and fruit shall increase in the land, and there shall be sustenance and goodness.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And the bread of the increase of thy land shall be both abundant and nutritive.” Instead of *bread*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *grain*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “And the bread of the corn of the land shall be most plentiful, and fat.” In the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⓢ) we have *it shall be fat*, while in the Masoretic text (Ⓜ) we have, *and it shall come to pass [that it shall be] fat*, פֶּתִיחַ יִשְׂרָאֵל. It is interestingly to us as LDS that most translations leave the *and* yet drop the

³² Elder Holland, Jeffrey R. Place no more for the enemy of my soul. General Conference, April 2010.

³³ *Bread to the eater* means food in general, but can also mean flower—whether made from wheat or corn or other agronomic crops—and *seed to the sower* means that crops also provide the seeds for planting next year. For people during famine, it was a great temptation to eat their seeds now and be left without anything to plant in the future.

יָיָא (it came to pass / it shall come to pass) that appears in the literal text. ¶ *In that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And at that time, the just shall be nourished from their cattle, with the marrow of the tender and the fat ones.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And thy cattle shall feed in rich and large pastures.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *fertile pastures* (BPE) / *rich pastures* (Lamsa), The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “The lamb in that day shall feed at large in thy possession.” Note the use of the expression, פֶּתִיחַ יִשְׂרָאֵל, *in that day*, which points to the latter day. Barnes explains: “This is a description of security when their cattle should be permitted to roam at large, and have abundant pasturage—an image of prosperity that would be very gratifying to a people whose main conception of wealth consisted in abundance of flocks and herds.”

24 The oxen likewise and the young asses that ear the ground shall eat clean[✓] provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan.

✓ or, savoury, HEB., leavened

The oxen likewise and the young asses that ear the ground shall eat clean provender. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And the oxen and the asses, with which they plough the ground, shall eat fattening meslin.³⁴” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Your bulls and your cattle which till the ground shall eat provender.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) also has oxen and young bull tilling the ground. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “And thy oxen, and the ass colts that till the ground, shall eat mingled provender.” ¶ That *ear the ground*, פֶּתִיחַ יִשְׂרָאֵל. This is an expression for the oxen or cattle that *work* (עָבַד, Gesenius) *the ground*, i.e., plow, rake, or otherwise *till the ground* (HALOT). Bullinger explains, “*Ear*. Old English = to plough: from Anglo-Saxon *erian*: and this from the Latin *arare*: the Aryan root AR entering into many words with a cognate reference. ARt (ploughing being the oldest art); oAR (with which the water is ploughed); ARtos (Greek for bread); eARth; ARatrum (Latin, a plough); ARare (to plough). The verb ‘ear’ is found only here, Deuteronomy 21:4; and 1 Samuel 8:12. The noun ‘earing’ occurs in Genesis 45:6, and Exodus 34:21” (CBNotes). Likewise, in Spanish we use *arar* for plowing, and *arado* for the plow. ¶ *Savoury provender.*

³⁴ Stenning calls it *savory provender*, while Chilton renders it as *mixed provender*, which from an agronomical perspective would be mixed grasses. Faussett spells it *maslin* when speaking about מַסְלִין and say, “Or else, *well-fermented maslin*, that is, provender formed of a mixture of various substances: grain, beans, vetches, hay, and salt.”

The margin ||, savory or fermented (leavened) feed, makes the most amount of sense in this verse and is preferred by numerous translators, “The oxen likewise and the young asses that till the ground shall eat savory provender (ASV, also JPS, AMP; *finest grain*, CEV; with many others having *salted* or *seasoned*). YLT talks about *fermented* feed, “Fermented provender do eat.” This verse seems to be speaking of the fermentation process that takes place when silage is prepared.³⁵ Faussett writes, “The Arab proverb is, ‘Sweet provender is as bread to camels – salted provender as confectionery.’³⁶ The very cattle shall share the coming felicity. Or else, *well-fermented maslin*, that is, provender formed of a mixture of various substances: grain, beans, vetches, hay, and salt.” Wordsworth, brilliantly continues with his likening of this chapter to spiritual matters: “The clean provender, or the *salted fodder well winnowed*, represents the sound, wholesome, and pure doctrine, ‘seasoned with salt’ (Colossians 4:6; Cp. Mark 9:50), purged from all adulterations of God’s Word, on which they feed, that they may have strength to labour in His husbandry.” ¶ *Which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan*. The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Mixed with winnowed barley.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲫ) has, “As it was winnowed in the floor.” In order to make silage, the hay is first harvested. Man does the winnowing with the shovel (or the combine, today) and with the fan (to separate the grains from the chaff). Winnowing separates the grain from the chaff (hay). The pitch fork was used to through the matter up and with the help of the wind or air, separate the grain from the chaff.

25 And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers [and] streams of waters in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall.

✓ lifted up

³⁵ “During the ensiling process, some bacteria are able to break down cellulose and hemicellulose to various simple sugars. Other bacteria break down simple sugars to smaller end products (acetic, lactic and butyric acids). The most desirable end products are acetic and lactic acid. As the bacteria degrade starches and sugars to acidic and lactic acids, dry matter is lost. Attention to details such as speed of harvesting, moisture content, length of chop, silage distribution and compaction can greatly influence the fermentation process and storage losses. Efficient fermentation ensures a more palatable and digestible feed, which encourages optimal dry matter intake that translates into improved animal performance. Making consistent, high-quality silage requires sound management decisions and attention to details.” Schroeder, J.W., North Dakota State University Extension Dairy Specialist. “Silage Fermentation and Preservation.” AS-1254, June 2004, <http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/ansci/dairy/as1254w.htm> (URL accessed 5 November 2012).

³⁶ Or as quoted by Henderson, “Sweet provender is the food of the camels; salted provender their dessert.”

And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers [and] streams of waters. The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And there shall be on every lofty mountain, and on every high hill streams of water in that day.” Israel’s blessing is also described in Joel: “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth out of the house of the LORD, and shall water the valley of Shittim” (Joel 3:18). Slotki/Rosenberg writes: “Even on the Judean mountains and hills, which might be expected to be dry and barren, there will flow streams and watercourses that will fructify them as well as the plains and valleys.” Alexander writes: “J. D. Michaelis connects this with what goes before, and understands it as a description of the height to which agriculture would be carried, by means of artificial irrigation... The simple meaning seems to be that water shall flow where it never flowed before, a common figure in the Prophets for a great change, and especially a change for the better. The same sense is no doubt to be attached to the previous descriptions of abundance and fertility.” ¶ *In the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “In the day of the great slaughter, at the falling of the princess/armies.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “When many shall be perishing / And when towers may be falling.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲫ) has, “In the day of the slaughter of many.” Now we hear more about an idea planted in ISAIAH 30:13 and developed further in ISAIAH 30:27–28, 30–33. The breach can stand no longer and the building—the big and spacious building and all it represents—collapses and the arrogant nations fall. For מִגְדָּלִים [i.e., *towers*] ... Lowth³⁷ has, instead of towers: “When the mighty fall] מִגְדָּלִים migdalim, μεγάλους, Sym.; μεγαλυνομενους, Aquila; רַבְרַבִּין [רַבְרַבִּין] rabrebin, Chaldee; all signifying mighty sizes.” McFadyen suggests the towers stand for the “proud heathen.” Delitzsch says, regarding the falling towers, that these represent: “All the bulwarks of self-confidence, self-help, and pride (ISAIAH 2:15; Micah 5:9–10).” Wesley has, regarding the towers: “The mighty potentates, who fought against God’s people.” Rawlinson writes: “In this allegorical intention the waters stand for the streams of God’s grace. **In the day of the great slaughter**. Equivalent to ‘the day of vengeance’ (ISAIAH 34:8) the day when God shall tread down his enemies. The prophet passes from the immediate effect of Judah’s repentance to a broader view of what shall happen when God’s kingdom is established upon the earth. **When the towers fall**; i.e.

³⁷ See Lowth’s *new translation*, not his exegetical comments.

when there shall be a general ‘pulling down of strong holds,’ and a ‘casting down’ of every high thing that exalts itself against (2 Corinthians 10:4–5).” The words from ISAIAH 18:5, about the pruning out of that which is not good, also come to mind. Wordsworth has: “By the preaching of the Gospel, *the towers fall*, the strongholds of Satan are cast down, and ‘every thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God’ (see 2 Corinthians 10:4–5); as the walls of Jericho fell at the sound of the trumpets, blown by the Priests, marching before the Ark of God.” Certainly, in this sense of the word, the walls that prevented the preaching of the gospel in parts of the world have begun to come down, one by one.

26 Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.

Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days. (See ISAIAH 24:23.) The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall in future shine three hundred and forty-three times more brightly, as the light of seven days.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun; and the light of the sun shall on that day be seven fold.” The Talmud tradition (Seder Mo’ed, Pesachim 68a, see also Seder Nezikin, Sanhedrin 91b) has: “It is written, Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed;³⁸ whereas it is written, Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of the seven days? There is no difficulty: the former refers to the world to come; the latter to the days of the Messiah” (Talmud, Soncino). A footnote in the same, attributed to Rashi (Sanhedrin 91b), explains that the time will come when the light will emanate from the presence of the Lord. Wade explains: “The light of the full moon was thought to be normally one-seventh of that of the sun (Enoch 73:3). ¶ *Light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun*, אֹרֶךְ-הַלְבֵנָה כְּאֹרֶךְ-הַחֶמֶה. Or rather, literally, “*the light of the full moon shall be as the light of the sun’s glow*.” Whitehouse writes, “Poetical names are given to the moon³⁹ and the sun, viz. ‘the pale one’ and ‘the glowing one.’” LITV renders it as: “And the

moonlight shall be like the light of the sun &c.” Faussett, like many others, supposes the light to be a manifestation of spirituality and joy and take this passage to be an “Image from the heavenly bodies to express the increase of spiritual light and felicity. ‘Sevenfold’ implies the *perfection* of that felicity, seven being the sacred number. It shall also be literally fulfilled hereafter in the heavenly city (ISAIAH 60:19–20; Revelation 21:23–24; 22:5).” Barnes writes, “That this refers to the times of the Messiah there can be little or no room to doubt. It is language such as Isaiah commonly employs to describe those times; and there is a fullness and splendor about it which can suit no other period.” Birks well says, “As it denotes a change inconceivable by man, it may represent blessings inconceivable by him here, in that state in which things that it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive are prepared.” ¶ *In the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “In the day that the Lord shall turn the captivity of His people, and heal the sickness caused by His blow.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “When the Lord will heal the bruises of his people, and when he will cure thy painful wound.” Instead of *stroke*, the Peshitta (Ⲯ) has *pain*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has *wound* instead of *breach*. This will be a glorious day of restoration. Ibn Ezra explains: “When the Lord heals the wounds of Israel.” Henderson says, “The שִׁבְרָה, *breach*, is that described in ISAIAH 30:14.” Indeed, the Hebrew appears in ISAIAH 30:13 as “whose breaking” [שִׁבְרָה] and ISAIAH 30:14, “as the breaking of” [כְּשִׁבְרָה] and here in this verse, *breach* [אֶת-שִׁבְרָה]. The Hebrew has many meanings including *shattered*, *broken* (HAL). The expression translated as “as a breach” in ISAIAH 30:13, however, is כְּפֶתַח, and comes from a hole or crack as in a breached wall (HAL). These are but two of many words in Hebrew translated as *breach*. Birks writes: “The same thought appears in Hosea 6:1. ‘He hath torn, and he will heal us, hath broken and will bind us up.’” *The stroke of her wound* may represent a spiritual healing on the one hand (by returning to the Lord) and on the other a healing from that last awful future siege of Jerusalem.

vv. 27–33. There is a strong allusion in some of these verses to the Assyrian attack upon Israel and Jerusalem. The language seems to also point to the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior.

27 ¶ Behold, the name of the LORD cometh from far, burning [with] his anger, and the burden [thereof] heavy: [thereof] his

³⁸ See ISAIAH 24:23.

³⁹ Instead of the more usual חֹדֶשׁ and חֹדֶשׁ (new moon) for the *moon* and שֶׁשׁ for the *sun*.

lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire:

- ✓ or, grievousness of flame
- ✓ ✓ heaviness

Behold, the name of the LORD cometh from far, burning [with] his anger, and the burden [thereof is] heavy: The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Behold, the Name of the Lord shall be revealed, as the prophets of old have prophesied concerning Him.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Behold the name of the Lord cometh for a time, a burning wrath.” Instead of *burden is heavy*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *exaltation is glorious* (BPE) / *train is glorious* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, for the second half, “His wrath burneth, and is heavy to bear.” ¶ *Behold, the name of the LORD, הִנֵּה שֵׁם יְהוָה*. This beautiful expression is similar to what the Targum (ⲧ) often uses to express the idea of the *שְׁכִינָה*, *Shekinah*. We, however, would understand it as *the presence of the Lord*. Alexander writes, “According to Raymund Martini, the expression was applied by the old Jews to the Messiah.” Skinner says, “*the name of the Lord*” appears here to be synonymous with what is elsewhere called the ‘glory of Jehovah’ (cf. the parallelism, ISAIAH 59:19; Psalm 102:15), i.e., the visible manifestation of His presence... Amongst the later Jews the expression ‘the Name’ was commonly used, out of reverence, to avoid the use of the Tetragrammaton (cf. Leviticus 24:11).” Rashi explains that the *name of the LORD* “here is synonymous with God’s power and glory” (in Slotki/Rosenberg). Wordsworth writes about this clause: “See Revelation 19:16, describing the Victory of Christ: ‘He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a NAME written, King of kings, and Lord of lords.’” Govett brilliantly writes: “The 27th verse represents the Saviour as coming from afar, as he said himself, ‘A certain nobleman went into a *far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return*’ (Luke 19:12). His coming is a day of wrath to his enemies, ‘The great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?’ ‘By the name of Jehovah,’ says Eusebius, ‘Christ is indicated. And when he cometh and revealeth his second glorious appearance, then shall follow those avenging Powers whom the present passage calls the anger and wrath of God, by whom punishment will be inflicted on the wicked...’” ¶ *His lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire:* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “His wrath is mighty, and too heavy to bear. His curse shall go forth from before Him upon the wicked, and His word as a consuming fire.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “The oracle of his lips with glory is an oracle full of indignation, and the fury of the wrath devoureth like fire.” Skinner says “... the figure of the storm is

inseparably blended with an anthropomorphic representation of Jehovah.”

28 And his breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity: and [there shall be] a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing [them] to err.

And his breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And His word is an overwhelming river *reaching* unto the neck: He shall slay the mighty.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And his breath is like a sweeping flood in a valley, which will reach up to the neck.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has an overflowing *torrent* instead of *stream*. We here find a strong allusion to the Assyrian invasion of Jerusalem (i.e., see ISAIAH 8:7–8). The Lord permitted Israel to be attacked by Assyria in former days—and only intervened at the very last moment, *when the flood waters had reached to her neck*, on the very eve of the attack on Jerusalem. Similarly, in the latter days, Jerusalem would once again be surrounded—this time by the nations of the world—and once again these waters will be up to her neck before the Lord will intervene in her favor: “Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains” (Zechariah 14:1–5a). Alexander thinks “the whole verse as a threatening against Jehovah’s enemies.” On the power of the Lord’s breath, see ISAIAH 11:4b: “And he shall smite the earth: with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.” ¶ *To sift the nations with the sieve of vanity: and [there shall be] a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing [them] to err.* See also, regarding such a *bridle*, ISAIAH 37:29. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “He will assuredly agitate the nations with the agitation of vanity: and *there shall be* a bridle of error in the jaws of the people.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And swell to confound nations for their vain errors.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has “to cause terror upon the nations because they have

vainly gone astray” (Lamsa) / “to confuse the nations because of their erring vanity” (BPE). Furthermore, instead of *jaws of the people*, the Peshitta (S) has *jaws of the nations*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “To destroy the nations unto nothing, and the bridle of error that was in the jaws of the people.” While the Lord permits the nations to carry out the work of destruction, it ought to be clear that He will not cause the nations’ hearts to be hardened against latter-day Israel any more than he hardened the heart of Pharaoh against Israel when she dwelt in Egypt (see JST notes throughout Exodus, e.g., 7:13a ff.). The *bridle of vanity* is placed on the nations of the world through Satan’s influence. Rawlinson explains: “One of the Divine purposes, in all violent crashes and revolutions, is ‘to sift nations to separate in each nation the good from the bad, the precious from the vile; and this is done with the sieve of vanity,’ i.e. the sieve which allows the good corn to pass through, separating from it, and keeping back, all that is vile and refuse” (compare to Amos 9:9). Alexander writes: “Most interpreters prefer the more specific sense of leading astray, or in the wrong direction, with particular allusion, as J. D. Michaelis supposes, to the fact that Sennacherib was misled by a false report respecting Tirhakah, the king of Ethiopia.” With an allusion to the nations who will gather to fight against Israel in the last days, Govett says: “Here the reason of the delusion [causing them to err] is specified—because the Gentiles will then have rejected nationally the revelation of Christ, therefore will he send them this potent deceiver. Prime movers in the delusion shall be evil spirits ‘working miracles,’ to gather together all nations against Jerusalem, as is here represented by Isaiah. That dreadful day is further described in its terrible artillery of wrath, mighty voices, as the archangel’s trumpet, devouring fire, thunder and hailstones. So St. John, describing the seventh and ‘last trump,’ ... ‘when the nations are angry and his wrath is come,’ adds, ‘And there were lightning and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail’ (Revelation 11:15–19).”

29 Ye shall have a song, as in the night [when] a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the LORD, to the mighty One of Israel.

✓ Rock

Ye shall have a song, as in the night [when] a holy solemnity is kept. The Targum (T) has for the second clause, “When the festival is sanctified.” The LXX (G) reads, “When error shall pursue them and overtake them, before their face ought not you to rejoice continually and continually go to my solemnities like

them who are celebrating a festival?” The Lamsa Peshitta (S) has, “You shall have a song, even a garland which is sanctified in the night when a holy solemnity is kept.” The BPE (S) has, “To you a song shall be a consecrated crown in the feast day.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has *sanctified* instead of *holy*. After the horror; a time of rejoicing. From ISAIAH 54 the words of the Lord majestically echo: “In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer” (ISAIAH 54:8). ¶ *As in the night [when] a holy solemnity is kept.* Ibn Ezra explains this of “the night of the Passover.” So does Rashi (in Rosenberg): “On the night of the Passover shall this joy come to you.— [Rosenberg adds, Rashi from unknown Midrashic source. The only Midrashic work that states that the downfall of Sennacherib’s camp occurred on the night of Passover is *Midrash Panim Acherim*, second version, on *Megillath Esther*, ch. 6, p. 37. In no place, however, is there any indication that this verse connects the downfall of Sennacherib with that date, except in reference to what *Rashi* cites further. Perhaps *Rashi*, as well as *Ibn Ezra* and *Redak*, was in possession of a Midrash, since lost.]” Most exegetes are divided between the Feast of Tabernacles and the Passover. ¶ *And gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe*⁴⁰ *to come into the mountain of the LORD*

[בְּהַר-יְהוָה], *to the mighty One of Israel.* The Targum (T) has, “With joy of heart, as when they march with thanksgivings and the pipe, to enter the holy mountain of the Lord, to appear before the mighty One of Israel.” The LXX (G) reads, “Like them who are gladdened you should go with instrumental music to the mount of the Lord, to the God of Israel.” The Lamsa Peshitta (S) has, “And gladness of heart, as when one walks rejoicing to come to the mountain of the LORD, to the mighty One of Israel.” The BPE (S) has, “And shall have rejoicing of heart as one who walks in rejoicing until coming upon the mount of Yahweh, the Mighty of Jacob.” ¶ *With a pipe* [or, *with a flute*], בְּחִלְלִי. The rejoicing is accompanied by song and flute. Rawlinson, leaning on Vitranga, explains: “Joyful processions from the country districts to Jerusalem are alluded to. These were commonly headed by a piper or a band of pipers (Vitranga). They took place several times in the year at each of the three great feasts, and irregularly when any district sent up its firstfruits to the temple treasury. (Nehemiah 10:35–37).” This reminds me of a trip to the temple from San Javier to Santiago, during my 2002 Sabbatical leave, with the branch members singing one hymn after another on the bus. Kay writes, “It is said that each band of pilgrims on its way to Jerusalem was headed by a person who played the flute.” ¶ *To the*

⁴⁰ Musical instrument.

mighty One of Israel. Or rather, as in the margin ||, *To the Rock of Israel*, another title for Jehovah, **אל-צור ישראל**. Contrast with ISAIAH 1:24, where *mighty* is used, “**אֲבִיר יִשְׂרָאֵל**.” Alexander writes, “The *Rock of Israel* is not mount Zion or Moriah, but Jehovah himself, to whose presence they resorted, as appears from 2 Samuel 23:3.” So also Cheyne, who says, “‘Rock’ was one of the synonyms for Jehovah; so ISAIAH 17:10; 44:8, comp. Deuteronomy 32 (six times).” For instance, “He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he” (Deuteronomy 32:4).

30 And the LORD shall cause his glorious voice ✓ to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of [his] anger, and [with] the flame of a devouring fire, [with] scattering, and tempest, and hailstones.

✓ the glory of his voice

And the LORD shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of [his] anger. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And the Lord shall proclaim the brightness of the voice of His Word, and He shall reveal the strength of His arm in the fury of His anger (Chaldee, ‘in the strength of His anger’).” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “When the Lord shall cause the glory of his voice to be heard—when, to display the fury of his arm with wrath and indignation.” Instead of *lighting down of his arm* the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has the *blow of his arm*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, beginning with the second clause, “And shall shew the terror of his arm, in the threatening of wrath.” ¶ *Shew the lighting down of his arm*. Other helpful renderings include: “And the Lorde shall cause his glorious voyce to be hearde, and shall declare his stretched out arme with a terrible countenance” (Bishop’s Bible); “The LORD will get furious. His fearsome voice will be heard, his arm will be seen ready to strike” (CEV); “And the LORD will cause His voice of authority to be heard, And the descending of His arm to be seen in fierce anger” (NASB). ¶ The arm of the Lord is often given as an illustration of action. In this case, of vengeance on behalf of His people. ¶ *And [with] the flame of a devouring fire, [with] scattering, and tempest, and hailstones.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And in flames of fire, destroying the graven images with scattering (**בִּירֵר**, ‘scattering,’ is omitted in the Royal Polyglot), and storm, and hailstorms.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And consuming fire, he shall utter tremendous thunder, accompanied with a furious tempest of rain and hail.”

Instead of *scattering*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *violent rain* (BPE) / *rainstorm* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “And the flame of devouring fire: he shall crush to pieces with whirlwind, and hailstones.” These words remind us of D&C 43:23–25. Alexander helps us notice that *and hailstones* are literally *and stone of hail*,

וְאֶבֶן בָּרָד. By the way, I have noticed that while *stone* in English usually refers to something relatively small, in Hebrew these **אֶבֶן** may be of considerable size.⁴¹

Rather than *scattering*, for **נִפְץ**, many translate as a *cloudburst* or *thunderclap*, the terrible sound of thunder in a lightning storm. Such lightning and rain storms are often followed by hailstones. Young says, “The image is that of a theophany, in which a storm is an accompanying factor. Many commentators think that there is a specific allusion here to the thunder... [and this] may be, but the heart of the thought is not the storm but the appearance of God.”

31 For through the voice of the LORD shall the Assyrian be beaten down, [which] smote with a rod.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “For through the voice of the Word of the Lord the Assyrian shall be broken, he that smote *by his power*.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For by the voice of the Lord the Assyrians shall be beaten down by the stroke with which he will smite them.” Similarly, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has Assyria beaten by the rod. The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “For at the voice of the Lord the Assyrian shall fear being struck with the rod.” While the Assyrian beat her enemies with the *rod* (see also ISAIAH 10:24), now the Lord would, through the power of His mouth—and also the rod as we see in the next verse—defeat her and all that fight against His people. Such reversals of language are very typical of the Prophet Isaiah.

32 And [in] every place where the grounded staff shall pass, ✓ which the LORD shall lay upon him, ✓ [it] shall be with tabrets and harps: and in battles of shaking will he fight with it. ✓ ✓ ✓

✓ every passing of the rod founded

✓ ✓ cause to rest upon

✓ ✓ ✓ or, against them

⁴¹ For instance, the large rocks that compose the Wailing Wall are referred to as *stones*, e.g., see the book, *Touching the Stones of Our Heritage*, which Linda & I purchased while in Israel this year (we got it at *Yad Vashem*, **יָד וַשֵּׁן**, on 9 September 2012).

And [in] every place where the *grounded* staff shall pass, which the LORD shall lay upon him. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And it shall come to pass, that the Lord shall cause the rest of the vengeance of His might in every pass (or, ‘ford’) of their princes and mighty ones, *even* amongst them.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “This indeed he shall have from all around him—from every place whence they had a hope of that assistance on which he relied.” The BPE (Ⲥ) has, “And it shall come to pass that because of all his works, the rod of oppression that Yahweh shall inflict upon her.” Lamsa (Ⲥ) has “And in all his works, the staff of affliction which the LORD shall lay upon him.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “And the passage of the rod shall be strongly grounded, which the Lord shall make to rest upon him.” YLT renders

מוֹסְדָּה as *settled*, *appointed* or *ordained*; AMP, *punishing*; ASV & HCSB, *appointed*. The idea is that the rod is an appointed punishment. Assyrian here also stands for the world in the latter days. Cowles says, “What our translators understood to refer to the *place* where the staff should pass, is now generally admitted to refer to the *passing or coming down* of the rod itself.”

¶ The *grounded staff*, מוֹסְדָּה מִיָּדָה. Lowth writes, “The Syriac has דְּשׁוּעַ בְּרָדָה, *virga domans*, vel objectionis.” Clarke, who quotes Lowth, adds: “the taming rod, or rod of subjection.” Duhm suggests that the Hebrew word מוֹסְדָּה, ought instead to be read as מוֹסְרָה (with the ד changed to ר). If we follow HAL, מוֹסְרָה is from מוֹסֵר, i.e., *discipline* or *chastisement*. With this change, Whitehouse explains, “Duhm has restored to us the probable reading, and we should accordingly render: ‘and every passing over (= stroke) of the staff shall be his (i.e., Assyria’s) *chastisement*.’” In other words, “And every stroke of the staff shall be her chastisement.” Likewise, Lowth observes: “—*The rod of correction*⁴²] For מוֹסְרָה, the *grounded* staff, of which no one yet has been able to make any tolerable sense, Le Clerc conjectured מוֹסְרָה, *of correction*; (see Proverbs 22:15 {שִׁבְטֵי מוֹסֵר, *rod of correction*}); and so it is in two MSS. (one of them ancient), and seems to be so in the Bodley MS. NASB (*also see* ISV and some others) thus reads: “And every blow of the rod of punishment &c.” Gill writes: “*which smote with a rod*; other nations, particularly the Jews, whom the Assyrian is expressly said to smite with a rod; and because he was an instrument in God’s hand for the chastising of that people, he is called the rod of his anger, ISAIAH 10:5⁴³ but now he that smote shall be smitten himself; him whom God used as a rod to correct others, he will

smite with his rod, for his own correction: for this may be understood of God, and be rendered thus, ‘with a rod, he,’ that is, God, ‘shall smite’ the Assyrian, as before; so Aben Ezra and Kimhi.” Kay writes, “The ‘mighty staff,’ sent forth from Zion (Psalm 110:2)—mightier by far than that which Moses lifted over the Red Sea (Exodus 14:16)—shall take effect on each enemy in succession, and be welcomed by the Church with jubilant anthems, like those which rose on the eastern shore of the Red Sea (Exodus 15:20), or those which attended the ark on its way to Zion (2 Samuel 6:5).” Barnes has: “Who was accustomed to smite as with a rod; that is, his government was tyrannical and severe. As he had been accustomed to smite in that manner, so he would now meet the proper reward of his oppression of the nations.” ¶ [It] shall be with *tabrets and harps: and in battles of shaking will he fight with it*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The house of Israel shall praise with tabrets and harps, because of the mighty war which shall be waged for them against the people.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “They will with timbrels and the kithara fight against him, after his rout.” The BPE (Ⲥ) has, “Shall be at the sound of tabrets and harps, and He shall fight against her in violent battle.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “With timbrels and harps, and in great battles he shall over throw them.” Alexander explains it: “The sense would seem to be that every passage of Jehovah’s rod (*i.e.* every stroke which passes from it to the object) will be hailed by those whom the Assyrian had oppressed, with joy and exultation... [so that] every stroke would be attended with rejoicing on the part of the spectators, and especially of those who had been subject to oppression.”

33 For Tophet [is] ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made [it] deep [and] large: the pile thereof [is] fire and much wood; the breath of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.

✓ from yesterday

For Tophet [is] ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made [it] deep [and] large: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “For hell is made ready from eternity on account of their sins; yea, the eternal King hath prepared it deep and wide.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Of thee he will previously demand (and hast thou not provided for his reign) a deep valley and wood laid up in piles.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲥ) has, “For he has prepared his punishment of old; yea, it is prepared to be executed; he has made it deep and large in his dwelling place.” The BPE (Ⲥ) has, “Because he prepares the provisions before the beginning of days. Yes, he had

⁴² Rather than *grounded*.

⁴³ Also see ISAIAH 10:24.

prepared her to give counsel, and he deepened and widened his abode.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, following the margin ||, “For Topheth is prepared from yesterday, prepared by the king, deep, and wide.” ¶ Keith well says, regarding the end of days, and quotes Joel also: “... is confirmed by what is said in Joel of the scene of the same events, the last and terrible destruction of the enemies of God : ‘Behold in those days and at that time—the great day of the Lord—when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there.’ This valley is united with that of Hinnom, in which Tophet is situated. There, as on a vast funeral pile—as in a grave deep and large—shall the enemies of Judah perish.” Jennings writes: “As to the word ‘Tophet,’ we find it elsewhere in just one [but see others, below] place, Job 17:6⁴⁴; and there it has been completely misunderstood by the translators of the Authorized Version, who render it ‘tabret,’ and thus alter the force of the verse entirely, reading it: ‘And aforetime I was as a tabret.’ The Revised gives the opposite, the correct, meaning: ‘And I became an open abhorring,’ and in the margin ||, ‘One on whose face they spit.’ It thus bears in it the sense of vomiting, or abhorring as the vilest of the vile. Thus the very word ‘Tophet’ speaks that awful truth that what answers to this Tophet will contain only that which is so utterly abhorrent to God that He speaks of it as ‘vomit.’ But that is precisely the repellent figure that our Lord used in His letter to the Church in Laodicea, in which many of us recognize the professing Church of our very day: ‘I will spue thee out of My mouth.’ Could anything speak more strongly of utter abhorrence? It is the perfect parallel to ‘Tophet.’ ... Mark another significant correspondence: this Tophet had been prepared ‘long ago’—a word that is strongly suggestive of what had taken place before the day of man altogether. Before man had come upon the scene, before he fell in disobedience and so came under the penalty of the first death, Tophet had been ‘prepared.’ But that inevitably suggests that there had been a prior fall—a prior sin in a pre-Adamite era; and this, the word of our Lord distinctly confirms: ‘Then shall He say to them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, *prepared for the devil and his angels*’ (Matthew 25:41).” Regarding Tophet, ISBE has, “**Topheth**, (תֹּפֶת, etymology uncertain; the most probable is its connection with a root meaning ‘burning’ – the ‘place of burning’; the King James Version, **Tophet**, except in 2 Kings 23:10): The references are to such a place: ‘They have built the high places of Topheth, which is in

the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire’ (Jeremiah 7:31). On account of this abomination Topheth and the Valley of Hinnom should be called ‘The valley of Slaughter: for they shall bury in Topheth, till there be no place to bury,’ the Revised Version margin || ‘because there shall be no place else’ (Jeremiah 7:32); see also Jeremiah 19:6, 12–14. Josiah is said to have ‘defiled Topheth’ as part of his great religious reforms (2 Kings 23:10). The site of this shameful place would seem to have been either at the lower end of the VALLEY OF HINNOM (which see), near where Akeldama is now pointed out, or in the open ground where this valley joins the Kidron.” ¶ *For the king* לְמֶלֶךְ. Indeed, here we have a word that may be translated as *king*, or as *Moloch*. While most translate as *king*, AMP translates: “For Topheth [*a place of burning and abomination*] has already been laid out and long ago prepared; yes, for the [*Assyrian*] king and [*the god*] Molech it has been made ready, its pyre made deep and large, with fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, kindles it.” ISBE has, regarding Moloch, “The place where it was practiced from the days of Ahaz and Manasseh was the Valley of Hinnom where Topheth stood, a huge altar-pyre for the burning of the sacrificial victims.” Rawlinson cleverly notes: “Isaiah seems to use [Tophet] generically, as if there were many Tophets. For the king it is prepared; literally, it also is prepared for the king in the Hebrew ‘for the *melech*,’ which is the same word as ‘Moloch,’ who was looked upon by his worshippers as ‘the king’ κατ’ ἐξοχήν. Isaiah means to say, ‘As the Tophet of the Vale of Hinnom is prepared for a king (Moloch), so this new Tophet is prepared for another king (the King of Assyria).’ He hath made it deep and large a vast burning-place for a vast multitude (2 Kings 19:35), with the fire and the wood ready, only awaiting the breath of Jehovah to kindle it. As the bodies of great malefactors were burnt, (Joshua 7:25) and not buried, so the prophet consigns to a great burning the hundred and eighty-five thousand Assyrian corpses, of which it would soon be necessary to dispose in some way.” Regarding this whole verse Henderson says: “The whole passage furnishes one of the finest specimens of figurative description to be met with in the Bible; and the vengeance taken on the impious king of Assyria and his army, as here set forth, is emblematical both of the destruction of Antichrist, as described in the Apocalypse, and of the wicked generally in the world to come.” ¶ *The pile thereof [is] fire and much wood; the breath of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.* The Targum (T) has, “A fiery pyre as of abundance of fuel burns in it: the Word of the Lord, like an overwhelming torrent of brimstone, shall kindle it.” The LXX (G) reads, “The wrath of the Lord will be fire and wood in abundance like a valley burning with

⁴⁴ And **Tophet**, תֹּפֶת. Also see Barnes on this verse, with similar points made.

brimstone.” The Lamsa Peshitta (**Ⲫ**) has, “The wood and the fire are plentiful; the breath of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone, does kindle it.” The BPE (**Ⲫ**) has, “Much wood and fire; the breath of Yahweh shall be as a stream of sulfur that burns there.” The Douay-Rheims (**Ⲫ**) renders it, “The nourishment thereof is fire and much wood: the breath of the Lord as a torrent of brimstone kindling it.” Barnes explains: “**The pile thereof** – The wood that was collected there to be consumed. **The breath of the Lord** – As if Yahweh should breathe upon it, and enkindle the whole mass, so that it should burn without the possibility of being extinguished. The meaning is, that the destruction of the Assyrian would as really come from Yahweh as if he should, by his own agency, ignite the vast piles that were collected in the valley of Hinnom. **Like a stream**

of brimstone – Brimstone, or sulphur, is used in the Scriptures to denote a fire of great intensity, and one that cannot be extinguished (see Genesis 19:24; Psalm 11:6; Ezekiel 38:22; Revelation 9:17–18).” In terms of the latter days, it seems to speak of the burning fire that will consume the earth, but not the righteous (ISAIAH 33:14). Many exegetes give this verse the meaning of how hell-fire will be for the wicked. From modern revelation, however, we know that this is only representative of the punishment, and is not a literal one. In D&C 19:4–20 we read of the true nature of God’s punishment if we do not repent.

23 October 2011

Isaiah 31

Intimately related to ISAIAH 30, this chapter is yet another warning for Judah to lean on the Lord and not upon Egypt.

vv. 1–5. A warning against going to Egypt for support is reiterated. Instead, man ought to lean on the Lord who is able to protect and save.

1 ¶ **WOE** to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because [they are] many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD!

WOE to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because [they are] many. The LXX (6) reads, “ALAS! They went down to Egypt for help! They trusted in horses and chariots; for they have many.” In the Masoretic text (מ) the preposition *to* in *to Egypt* is implied (מִצְרַיִם), while in the DSS 1QIsa^a (Q) it is spelled out, לְמִצְרַיִם. Also, in the Masoretic text (מ) we have, *on [the] chariot* (where the *the* is implied), עַל-רֶכֶב, while in the DSS 1QIsa^a (Q) we have *on the chariot*, עַל הֶרֶב, spelled out. ¶ The LXX (6) reads, ALAS!, as we have noted, based on the הִי, HOI we have discussed in ISAIAH 18 and elsewhere. ¶ Here we are reminded of the injunction in Deuteronomy 17:16 of not leaning on horses nor on Egypt, “But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.” Nägelsbach well says: “We must understand by ‘those that go down,’ not only those physically going down to Egypt, but also those that accompanied them in spirit and shared their intention.” For the expression *to go down* to Egypt see discussion in ISAIAH 30:2. ¶ *Upon chariot*, עַל-רֶכֶב. Cowles suggests: “The word rendered chariots is singular. Etymologically it means a *riding*, and as has been noted (ISAIAH 21:7) seems often, as here, to mean cavalry. The ancients placed great reliance on horses of war...” To *stay on horses* means to lean on, to find support and comfort on horses (and chariots). A more sure way is to lean on the Lord: “Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that

walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God” (ISAIAH 50:10). Several exegetes—including Henderson and Alexander—note that Egypt was well known for her horses, and by implication leaning on Egypt meant leaning on horses. ¶ *And in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD!* The Targum (T) has, beginning with the second clause, “But they stay not themselves upon the Word of the Holy One of Israel, neither seek instruction from the Lord (Chaldee, ‘from before the Lord’).” The LXX (6) reads, “And their cavalry is very numerous; and did not rely on the Holy One of Israel, nor did they ask counsel of the Lord.” Instead of *look*, the Peshitta (S) has *trust*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And have not trusted in the Holy One of Israel, and have not sought after the Lord.” As a horse trainer and dressage rider I understand what it is to have a horse sensitive to every twitch in my own musculature, or slight shift in weight or movement of my leg, so the horse is merely a powerful and muscular extension of my own body. The feelings of power and euphoria are pronounced upon training and riding such horses. But what is all that compared to knowing that Heavenly Father has heard my prayer and having Christ speak to me through the Spirit of God—to give instruction, admonition and peace? All have been commanded to: “...stay themselves upon the God of Israel; The LORD of hosts is his name” (ISAIAH 48:2b). This idea that they do not seek the Lord is very close to that also found in ISAIAH 48, that they: “...swear by the name of the LORD, and make mention of the God of Israel, *but* not in truth, nor in righteousness” (ISAIAH 48:1b). Furthermore: “O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish. But to be learned is good if they hearken unto the counsels of God” (2 Nephi 9:28–29). See also Jeremiah 9:23–24. There is much danger in leaning on the philosophies of man or intellectual idolatry. Jennings well says, “We each have the danger of that ‘woe’ being on us for we each have our ‘Egypt.’”

2 Yet he also [is] wise, and will bring evil, and will not call back[✓] his words: but will arise against the house of the evildoers, and against the help of them that work iniquity.

✓ remove

Yet he also [is] wise, and will bring evil, and will not call back his words: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And also He in His wisdom will bring evil on account of what he is doing (according to the Royal Polyglot, דַּעֲבָרָהָא, i.e., ‘on account of transgression’); and He will not make to fail His words (Chaldee, ‘to make cease’).” The LXX (Ⲙ) reads, “Therefore he in his wisdom brought evils on them: and that his word may not be slighted.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲫ) has, “Yet in his wisdom, he will bring a calamity, and will not alter his words.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, “But he that is the wise one hath brought evil, and hath not removed his words.” ¶ Calvin writes: “By calling God ‘wise,’ he does not merely bestow on him the honour of an attribute which always belongs to him, but censures the craftiness of those whom he saw to be too much delighted with their own wisdom.” ¶ The ‘evil’ spoken about here represents the *consequences* of our moral agency. The Lord here tells us that there are times when he will not call back His words—when the consequences for our actions will be carried out. When the Lord calls back His words, in the KJV, this is unfortunately translated as the Lord *repenting* [נָחַם]. In 13 out of 17 instances where the word *repented* appears in the Old Testament, it is associated with the Lord and means to be *moved with compassion*. In one case, the Hebrew has been corrupted and there gladly is a JST. In two of the remaining instances where נָחַם is used of mortals, it also means to be *moved with compassion*. Only in Jeremiah 8:6 is נָחַם used as a synonym to שׁוּב, *turn* or *return* unto the Lord.¹ The word *repent* (rather than

¹ People cannot just say, “I will repent later.” The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “We should take warning and not wait for the death-bed to repent; as we see the infant taken away by death, so may the youth and middle aged, as well as the infant be suddenly called into eternity. Let this, then, prove as a warning to all not to procrastinate repentance, or wait till a death-bed, for it is the will of God that man should repent and serve Him in health, and in the strength and power of his mind, in order to secure His blessing, and not wait until he is called to die” (*History of the Church*, 4:553–54; punctuation modernized; from a discourse given by Joseph Smith on March 20, 1842, in Nauvoo, Illinois; reported by Wilford Woodruff). In the Book of Mormon we read: “For behold, this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God; yea, behold the day of this life is the day for men to perform their labors. And now, as I said unto you before, as ye have had so many witnesses, therefore, I beseech of you that ye do not procrastinate the day of your repentance until the end; for after this

repented) does have the שׁוּב meaning in both instances. In one of these the Lord complains that He ought not to be misunderstood: “God *is* not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent [נָחַם]: hath he said, and shall he not do *it*? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?” (Numbers 23:19). ¶ The Lord, through His prophets, warns that our choices can bring negative consequences. If we make a path correction, if we turn the right way, we can often avert these consequences. On the way to work this morning,² I saw a sign that caught my attention: “Turn to Jesus.” Well said! So it is that in Jeremiah we read: “If that nation, against whom I have pronounced [spoken against in *warning*], turn [שׁוּב; *and turn*, from שׁוּב] from their evil, I will repent [נָחַם; *and I will be moved with compassion*, from נָחַם] of the evil³ that I thought to do unto them” (Jeremiah 18:8). ¶ At our slightest show of repentance the Lord blesses us and forgives us. After all, He taught us to forgive 70 times 7.⁴ He is the master forgiver. But in this verse it is clear that the Lord’s patience will not last forever. In Ezekiel 24:14, we read “I the LORD have spoken it: it shall come to pass, and I will do it; I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent [*moved with compassion*] ...” Why? Because the Lord, who can see the future as well as the past, knows that in this instance there will be no coming repentance. This is precisely, then, what the expression *and will not call back his words* mean. ¶ *But will arise against the house of the evildoers, and against the help of them that work iniquity.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “help the work (literally, ‘the wearisome labor’) of a lie,” rather than *work of iniquity*. The LXX (Ⲙ) reads, “He will rise up against the houses of wicked men and against this hope of theirs which is vain.” Regarding the *house of the evildoers* and them that *work iniquity*, Henderson writes: “The בֵּית מְרִעִים and פְּעֻלַּי אֲנִי are synonymous, and designate the rebellious Jews. By

day of life, which is given us to prepare for eternity, behold, if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be no labor performed” (Alma 34:32–33). So, let us always remember this invitation to *come unto Christ* and turn our hearts and our lives to Him: “Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart and not your garments, and repent, and turn unto the LORD, your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; and he will turn away the evil from you” (JST Joel 2:12–13).

² 1 February 2013.

³ Regarding the archaic use of the word *evil* see notes under ISAIAH 30:2.

⁴ This spirit of forgiveness greatly irritated Jonah who was weary of the Lord’s forgiveness of others. Yet, what the Lord wants for us is precisely a turning of our hearts. He never ceases to invite us and call upon us to turn and repent.

עֲזָרָה [*help, aid*, HAL, from **עָזַר**] the Egyptians are meant.”

3 Now the Egyptians [are] men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the LORD shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together.

Now the Egyptians [are] men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And the Egyptians are men, and *none of them* a mighty one, and their horses *are* flesh, and not spirit.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Against an Egyptian—a man, not a god—against the flesh of horses in which there is no help.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, for the first half, “Egypt is man, and not God.” Man, when he fears man, makes giants or gods of men. So it was when Moses sent twelve spies into Canaan. While Caleb came back ready to trust in the Lord and go into battle, the rest were filled with cowardice: “But the men that went up with him [Caleb] said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight” (Numbers 13:31–33). Redak, following Psalm 33:17 has (in Rabbi Rosenberg): “A horse is a vain thing for safety.” ¶ Regarding *spirit*, **רוּחַ**, it is not just spirit, but the *Spirit of God*, **רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים**. The expression is in contraposition to mortal beings such as men and beasts. It is in no way meant to indicate that *God is a Spirit* (John 4:24a) as our AV incorrectly translates—through a false ellipsis—our received Greek text⁵ πνεῦμα ο θεος. Instead read: *God is spirit* (see also ESV, HCSB, ISV, NASB), just as *God is love* and mercy and numerous other qualities. ¶ *When the LORD shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And the Lord shall deal the stroke of His power, and he that helpeth shall stumble, and he that is holpen shall fall, and all of them together shall be destroyed.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “When the Lord shall lay his hand upon them, then shall these

helpers fail and be all destroyed together.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *annihilated* (Lamsa) / *exterminated* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “And the Lord shall put down his hand, and the helper shall fall, and he that is helped shall fall, and they shall all be confounded together.” ¶ In other words, Egypt (who *helpeth*) would extend a hand to help but would fall along with Israel (the *holpen*). The Lord *stretching forth His hand* is equivalent to the manifesting of His power. Once again, it is best to liken these scriptures unto us by thinking of Egypt as any force representing the arm of flesh and leaning on the learning of man. Regarding the words *helpeth* and *holpen* [both from the same root, *help*, **עָזַר**] Henderson writes: “In **עֲזָרָה** and **עָזַר** is an elegant paronomasia.” The KJV retains this paronomasia in English.

4 For thus hath the LORD spoken unto me, Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, [he] will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the noise[✓] of them: so shall the LORD of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof.

✓ or, multitude

For thus hath the LORD spoken unto me, Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Because the Lord hath thus said to me, ‘As the lion or the young lion will roar over the prey which he hath taken; and will repeat his roaring over it, until the mountains are filled with his voice.’ Instead of *called forth against him*, The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *shout at him*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “For thus saith the Lord to me: Like as the lion roareth, and the lion’s whelp upon his prey, and when a multitude of shepherds shall come against him.” ¶ A lion is not easily deterred or frightened by a bunch of shepherds when he has gotten himself a prey to eat. If anything, these shepherds could represent the next meal. Alexander writes: “*Growl* is to be preferred to *roar*, not only for the reason given by Bochart, that the lion roars before, not after it has seized its prey, but because **הִנָּה** more properly denotes a suppressed or feeble sound.” So also Cowles: “[The lion] has his lamb already by him and *growls* over it (so the Hebrew); bidding defiance to [whatever number of] shepherds would fain rescue the lamb. So God covers his people and defies all foreign assailants.” Henderson says, “The image of a lion, to represent the power of God, is not infrequent, Hosea 5:14; 11:10; 13:7–8; Amos 3:8; Revelation 5:5.” ¶ [*He*]

⁵ But see the JST restoration: “For unto such hath God promised his Spirit. And they who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.”

will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the noise of them: so shall the LORD of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof. The Targum (Ⲯ) has in the second clause, “Thus shall the kingdom of the Lord of hosts be revealed encamping upon the mountain of Zion, and upon its hill.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And the multitude are subdued and terrified at his wrath: so will the Lord of Hosts descend to encamp on this mountain—on this Sion—on the summits thereof.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “He will not fear at their voice, nor be afraid of their multitude: so shall the Lord of hosts come down to fight upon mount Sion, and upon the hill thereof.” ¶ The Lord will not be any more afraid of men than a lion is frightened by shepherds when He *defends* Jerusalem against the nations (to be applied as well to Hezekiah’s time as to the end of days—in that last great siege. It is not uncommon for Isaiah to give us a comforting scene from *that day* or the *end of days* in the middle of prophecies on other topics.

5 As birds flying, so will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver [it; and] passing over he will preserve it.

As birds flying, so will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “As a bird by flying, so the power of the Lord of hosts shall be revealed.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “As birds hover over their young, so will the Lord of Hosts protect Jerusalem.” Instead of *defend* Jerusalem, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *alight* (Lamsa) / *descend* (BPE) upon Jerusalem. The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, in some versions, incorrectly translated *as birds dying* when the Vulgate (ⲱ) clearly has *flying*, “Sicut aves volantes.” Ibn Ezra writes regarding *defend* or ⲙⲓⲛ [from ⲙⲓⲛ, HAL]: “*He will cover*. Compare ⲙⲓⲛ ‘shield’⁶ (Genesis 15:1). As the birds cover with their wings their young ones, in order to protect them, so will the Lord, etc.” Cheyne says: “Jehovah is like a lion to his foes, but like a mother-bird to his own. Strong and bold and courageous as the lion, tender and provident as the bird, but, unlike even the eagle, able under all circumstances to repel the assailant.” ¶ *As birds fly*, ⲉⲃⲟⲩⲧ ⲉⲃⲟⲩⲧ. A number of exegetes make a point that these are mother birds with motherly instincts. Young says, “It is probably correct to say that the feminine form of the particle⁷ alludes to the care of mothers for their young. God cares for Jerusalem as mother birds watch over their young in the nests.” Henderson explains regarding

ⲉⲃⲟⲩⲧ, [from ⲉⲃⲟⲩ] or *hover over something* (HAL) “ⲉⲃⲟⲩ is here used in the sense of *covering*, compare ⲉⲃⲟⲩ [to make dark, cloud, HAL]; and not in that of *flying*, as given in our common version, which does not furnish a suitable point of comparison. The image is taken from the protection which birds afford to their young, by throwing their wings over them.” Henderson, Wildberger and Nägelsbach point us to Deuteronomy 32:11. In context, this beautiful scripture reads: “For the LORD’s portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the LORD alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him. He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock” Deuteronomy 32:9–13.” And once again, we hear in our minds Matthew 23:37b. I daily see our queltchues (southern lapwing or *Vanellus chilensis*) who fiercely defend their territory, their nest and their chicks against much larger birds such as the bandurria (*Theristicus melanopis melanopis* or black-faced ibis) and even people. They look quite aggressive as they spread their wings in warning (although the ones in the front of our yard have come to know me and accept my presence). ¶ *Defending also he will deliver [it; and] passing over he will preserve it.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “He shall protect, He shall deliver, He shall save, and He shall make to pass away.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “He will hover over it and spring forward, and will protect and save it.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has “he shall alight to deliver, rescue, and help” (Lamsa) / “he shall protect, liberate, rescue and sustain” (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “Protecting and delivering, passing over and saving.” Alexander writes, “ⲉⲃⲟⲩ is the verb used to denote the passing over of the houses in Egypt by the destroying angel (hence ⲉⲃⲟⲩ, *passover*), to which there may be an allusion here.” In the DSS 1QIsa^a (ⲱ) we have *and deliver*, ⲉⲃⲟⲩⲧ, while the Masoretic text (ⲙ) has *and preserve*, ⲉⲃⲟⲩⲧ.

vv. 6–9. Men are commanded to turn to the Lord and cease from their apostasy and revolt. The Assyrian will fall, not because of man, but because of the might of the Lord. The King of Asshur will flee in terror. The Lord will protect Jerusalem.

⁶ See HAL ⲙⲓⲛ, *shield, protection, or covering*.

⁷ ⲉⲃⲟⲩⲧ is *feminine* for fly, while ⲉⲃⲟⲩ is the *masculine*.

6 ¶ Turn ye unto [him from] whom the children of Israel have deeply revolted.

The Targum (T) has, “Return to the law; for you have multiplied sin (or, ‘greatly sinned’ or ‘added sin to sin,’ the Royal Polyglot has אֲתִנִּיתִין לְמִטְעִי, ‘you have greatly erred’), O sons of Israel!” The LXX (G) reads, “Therefore turn to him, O children of Israel, who are taking deep and wicked counsel.” The Lamsa Peshitta (S) has, “Repent, O children of Israel, for you have made your punishment severe.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Return as you had deeply revolted, O children of Israel.” Here we have a lovely invitation to *turn unto* [לְאֲשֶׁר] *Christ*, He whom the children of Israel had turned their backs to then. And as we liken it to today, let us *turn unto Christ* who the nations have turned their back to. שׁוּבוּ is the command form—*turn ye!*

7 For in that day every man shall cast away his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, [✓] which your own hands have made unto you [for] a sin.

✓ the idols of his gold

The Targum (T) has, “At that time each man shall abhor the idols of their silver and the idols of their gold, which your hands have made for you for a god (literally, ‘sin’).” The LXX (G) reads, “Because men will in that day reject the works of their hands—their idols of silver and gold which their hands have made.” Instead of *cast away*, the Peshitta (S) has, *despise*. The day would come when Israel would indeed put away and despise her idols to embrace the Lord. Anything that separates us from our God is our idol. Henderson writes: “This verse contains an assurance that such conversion [as mentioned in ISAIAH 31:6] would take place; and that the Jews would bring forth fruits meet for repentance.”

¶ *Sin*, חַטָּא [offence, sin, HAL). Cowles has: “‘Made for yourselves *as a sin*,’ implies that this was their great sin and occasion of more sinning. This abbreviated expression calls the idol *their sin* occurs (Deuteronomy 9:21) where Moses said, ‘I took *your sin*, the calf which ye had made, burnt if with fire’ etc. Also Amos 8:14 ‘They that swear by the sin of Samaria,’ *i.e.*, her idol god.”

8 Then shall the Assyrian fall with the sword, not of a mighty man; and the sword, not of a mean man, shall devour

him: but he shall flee from [✓] the sword, and his young men shall be discomfited. [✓]

✓ or, for fear of

✓ ✓ or, tributary, HEB., for metling, or, tribute

Then shall the Assyrian fall with the sword, not of a mighty man; and the sword, not of a mean⁸ man, shall devour him: The Targum (T) correctly has, “not of man,” and adds, “not of a man.” The LXX (G) likewise reads, “Therefore Asshur shall fall—not by the sword of a man of valour, nor shall the sword of a mortal devour him.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And the Assyrian shall fall by the sword not of a man, not a human sword.” Indeed, the AV is far from being literal here, as neither the words *mighty* or *mean* appear in this verse. Rather, there are two negations, the first is that Assyrian will *not* fall by the sword of *man* (לֹא-אִישׁ), and repeated again, with a different term for *man* (לֹא-אָדָם). Most exegetes have correctly suggested

that in this instance לֹא-אָדָם means *not human*. This seems to be a double emphatic exclamation that Assyria would fall, but not by the sword of man but by the instrumentality of God. ESV has a literal translation: “And the Assyrian shall fall by a sword, not of man; and a sword, not of man, shall devour him” AMP has, “Then the Assyrian shall fall by a sword not of man; and a sword, not of men [*but of God*], shall devour him.” HCSB has: “Then Assyria will fall, but not by human sword.” We read of the Assyrian defeat: “Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they [the Israelites] arose early in the morning, behold, they [the Assyrians] were all dead corpses” (ISAIAH 37:36; also see 2 Kings 19:35) ¶ *But he shall flee from the sword, and his young men shall be discomfited.* The Targum (T) has, “And he shall betake himself to flight as from before those who slay with the sword, and his heroes shall be for destruction.” The LXX (G) reads, “And he shall flee—(not from the face of the sword) and the young men shall be for destruction.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And he shall flee not at the face of the sword: and his young men shall be tributaries.” ¶ *But for he shall flee from face of the sword.* The Masoretic text (M) reads וְנָס לִפְנֵי חֶרֶב while the DSS 1QIsa^a (Q) has, וְנָס וּלְוָא מִפְּנֵי חֶרֶב. There are no real differences⁹

⁸ The word *mean* here signifies, insignificant, but as we have said, it is not in the Hebrew text, but rather, an unfortunate gloss.

⁹ Emanuel Tov explained, in a personal letter dated 31 January 2013: “These two words [are] pronounced in the same way and interchange all the time. In this verse in particular such an interchange is expected,

between these two expressions, although there is a question as to whether (1) *he shall flee* is meant (most translators) or (2) *not flee* (ABP {LXX (6)}) / or (3) *flee but not escape the sword* (DRB, NASB). If the first interpretation is accepted, it seems to refer to the King of Asshur (see ISAIAH 30:33). The King of Assyria did flee back to his home. If the second, it may refer to the Assyrian army who would not flee but instead perish by the sword of the angel of the Lord. If the third, it fits the idea that those who did not flee would be put to work as forced labor, slaves or tributaries (לְמִסִּים). Alexander says, regarding the third option (but without favoring it): “For לָרָ, a few manuscripts and one of the earliest editions read לָרָ, *not from the sword*, i.e. he shall flee when no man pursueth (Proverbs 28:1).” A strong argument for the first, or most common interpretation, that the King of Asshur would flee, is that the same idea is contained in the next verse, “And he shall pass over to his strong hold for fear.” ¶ *And his young men shall be discomfited*. Or, as most translators have, tributaries. Regarding the issue of tributaries, Alexander has: “... in every other case the expression [i.e., לְמִסִּים] means to become tributary, with a special reference to the rendering of service to a superior. The objection that the prophecy, as thus explained [i.e., that Assyria’s young men would become tributaries], was not fulfilled, proceeds upon the false assumption that it refers exclusively to the overthrow of Sennacherib’s host, whereas it describes the decline and fall of the Assyrian power after that catastrophe.” The young men may have become tributaries to Babylon, or other nation.

9 And he shall pass over to his strong hold for fear, וְיָבוֹר וְיָבוֹר and his princes shall be afraid of the ensign, saith the LORD, whose fire [is] in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem.

✓ his rock shall pass away for fear ✓ ✓ or, his strength

And he shall pass over to his strong hold for fear. The Targum (T) has, “And his princes shall flee through fear, they shall move away.” The LXX (6) reads, “For with a rock they shall be enclosed as with a rampart.” The Peshitta (S) has something like, “And he shall abide in his rocky abode.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And his strength shall pass away with dread.”

¶ יָבוֹר, *to travel, move* (HAL). Bullinger’s Companion Bible Notes does well in pointing out that the expression pass over (“cross over, or retreat”) in this

verse comes from a different source than in ISAIAH 31:5. Here it is יָבוֹר, from עָבַר; there it is פָּסַח. We read that after the angel of the LORD killed the Assyrian army, that then: “So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.” This is what is meant by *he shall pass to his strong hold for fear*. Cowles suggests: “The words for ‘strong hold’ means primarily a rock; sometimes a fortress built (as they often were) upon a high rock.” Barnes likewise observes: “The word rendered ‘stronghold’ (Hebrew, ‘His rock’) denotes his fortifications, or the places of strength in which he trusted ... This appears to have been most strikingly fulfilled (see ISAIAH 37:37).”

¶ *And his princes shall be afraid of the ensign, saith the LORD.* The Targum (T) has, “And his princes shall be broken on account of the miracle, saith the Lord.” The LXX (6) reads, “And shall be subdued; and he who fleeth shall be taken.” The Peshitta (S) has something like, “And his princes shall be defeated from before the ensign.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And his princes fleeing shall be afraid: the Lord hath said it.” Jennings suggests: “ISAIAH 11¹⁰ of our prophet will be enough to tell us who is thus symbolized. It is Messiah! It is Christ whose Feet are now again on Olivet. Well may even the victorious besiegers of Jerusalem flee!” ¶ *Whose fire [is] in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem.* The Targum (T) has, “Whose splendour is in Zion to them that obey the law, and whose burning furnace of fire is in Jerusalem for them who transgress His word.” The LXX (6) reads, “Thus saith the Lord, ‘Happy he who hath a seed in Sion and a family in Jerusalem!’” Alexander writes, “The true explanation of the clause seems to be that which supposes an allusion both to the sacred fire on the altar, and to the consuming fire of God’s presence, whose altar flames in Zion and whose wrath shall thence flame to destroy his enemies.

Compare the explanation of the mystical name *Ariel* in the note on ISAIAH 29:1.” Delitzsch sees an allusion to the Passover: “We cannot suppose that the allusion here is to the fire and hearth of the sacrifices; for תַּנּוּר does

not mean a hearth, but a furnace (from נָרָ, to burn).

The reference is to the light of the divine presence, which was outwardly a devouring fire for the enemies of Jerusalem, an unapproachable red-hot furnace.” Keith, regarding *fire [is] in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem* suggests: “[This] refers to the fact that it is there that by fire the Lord shall plead with all flesh, when he will come with the fire of a devouring flame. It is equivalent with the last clause of the previous chapter which makes Tophet, beside Jerusalem, the scene of the outpouring of the vial of divine wrath.”

25 October 2011

2x lo' לָרָ], especially in the large Isaiah scroll. The reading of the scroll looks like a variant, a secondary one.”

¹⁰ ISAIAH 11:10, נִסִּי, *ensign*.

Isaiah 32

The Assyrian overthrow is representative of the overthrow of mystic Babylon and a triumph of God. The verses that describe wrath take us back to Isaiah's time, with a warning of the coming of Babylon upon the careless who think "all is well." Finally, we have the downpour of the Spirit of God once again upon the earth through the restoration of the Gospel in the Latter-days and eventually, the millennial reign of Christ. In the Journal of Discourses, Elder Orson Pratt spoke extensively and movingly on ISAIAH 32:13–20 and the blessings of turning a desert and wilderness into a prosperous and peaceful land. While as LDS we can certainly liken these scriptures unto us no doubt they also speak of the blessings that would fall upon the Holy Land, and the restitution of Israel and the Millennial day as well. Elder Pratt teaches that ISAIAH 32 and 35 are intimately connected to each other (Pratt, Elder Orson, JD 18:144). In 1875 he taught: "Preparatory to the time when God will come with vengeance to sweep away wickedness from the face of the earth, the house of Israel will be gathered back to their own lands, and the people of God will be permitted to dwell in the wilderness, and that wilderness will become a fruitful field. It is even said that the desert should rejoice because of those who are gathered, and should blossom as the rose. Now that is something that has been fulfilled during the last quarter of a century, here in this wilderness, barren, desert country. The great latter-day work has commenced, the kingdom of God has been reorganized on the earth; in other words, the Christian Church in all its purity and with all its ordinances, has been reorganized upon the face of the earth, and the time has at length come when the Spirit of God has been poured out from on high. Until that period arrived, there was no hope for Israel, no hope for the land of Palestine, no hope for the redemption of the tribes scattered in the four quarters of the earth; but when the wilderness should become as a fruitful field, when the spirit should again be poured out from on high, through the everlasting Gospel of the Son of God, then the people should be gathered together by the commandment of the Lord. As is here stated, his Spirit should be the instrument in gathering them together" (Pratt, Elder Orson, JD 18:145).

vv. 1–8. Govett writes: "It should be noted, that this chapter is a continuation of the last; for the destruction of Christ's foes is the time of his commencing reign. The gathering up of the tares and binding them in bundles to burn, is the time of the ingathering of the wheat into the garner. Who, then, is the king that shall in that day rule righteously, but Christ? Who 'his princes,' but the twelve apostles? ... No false names any longer shall be used to gloss over iniquity, but all the workers of wickedness shall be cut off." Keith well says: "In contrast with the previous state of ignorance and perverseness when the vision is to them, as it has now been so long, as a sealed book, and they do not hear the word of the Lord,—in the day when the king shall reign in righteousness, the eyes of men shall not be dim, and their ears shall hear." ISAIAH 32:4–8 speaks of a time when false doctrine will no longer be taught and celebrated.

1 ¶ BEHOLD, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "Behold, a King shall reign in truth, and the righteous shall be magnified to execute just vengeance on the people." The LXX (Ϟ) reads, "For behold a righteous king shall reign and chiefs shall

rule with justice." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has *justice* for *righteousness*. The expression *a King* (מֶלֶךְ) is the correct translation for the Masoretic text (מֶלֶךְ), rather than *the King* (הַמֶּלֶךְ). The Geneva Bible (1587)—along with several others—does well in capitalizing King: "Beholde, a King shall reigne in iustice, and the princes shall rule in iudgement." Of the Jewish authors, Abarbanel (in Slotki/Rosenberg) believes this to be a prophecy about the Messiah. Keith writes: "The passage opens with the expression 'behold' [הִנֵּה], implying that some remarkable announcement—one worthy of attention—followed. ¶ A number of exegetes mention the ל before *righteousness*: לְצַדִּיק. Young says: "The preposition ל may express the purpose of the reign or the manner of the reign. Hence, we may either translate '*for righteousness*' or '*according to righteousness*,' as in ISAIAH 11:4. The common English versions give '*in righteousness*,' but this would normally be expressed by the preposition כ. Whether Isaiah is stating that the king will reign for the purpose of righteousness or according to righteousness is [not clear]. In either case the word *righteousness* is placed in the foreground, for the reign of this king is wholly contrary to the reigns of ordinary kings." To me, the ל seems to indicate a similar sentiment as *after the manner*, as we see in 2 Nephi: "And it came to pass that we lived *after the*

manner of happiness” (2 Nephi 5:27). Thus, “Behold, a King shall reign after the manner of righteousness, &c.” Gladly, I found this early translation to back up my feelings: “Beholde, a kyng shall gouerne *after the rule of righteousness*,” ¶ Lowth has: “An ancient manuscript has *וְשָׂרִי*, and *his* princes.” (Bishops’ 1568). BYU Professor Craig Ostler explains: “Jesus Christ’s government will include other rulers, or, as the Bible refers to them, princes. Isaiah declared, ‘Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.’ Latter-day revelation broadens our understanding of Isaiah’s messianic declaration: ‘For in my own due time will I come upon the earth in judgment, and my people shall be redeemed and shall reign with me on earth’ (D&C 43:29). The Savior clarified that among these ruling princes would be the twelve apostles who were with him during his mortal ministry in Jerusalem. He explained that at the day of His coming these apostles would be ‘clothed with robes of righteousness, with crowns upon their heads, in glory even as I am, to judge the whole house of Israel, even as many as have loved me and kept my commandments, and none else’ (D&C 29:12). Mormon identified the twelve Nephite disciples chosen by Christ during his ministry in the Americas as the judges over the remnant of his people. The Prophet Joseph Smith suggested that ‘Christ and the resurrected Saints will reign over the earth during the thousand years. They will not probably dwell upon the earth, but will visit it when they please, or when it is necessary to govern it’ (Smith, *History of the Church*, 5:212).”¹ Henderson likewise has: “The princes or rulers spoken of, are the Apostles, who, as our Saviour declares, were in the *παλιγγενεσία*, or new state of things [and would] ‘sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel’² (Matthew 19:28).”

¹ Ostler, Craig J. Isaiah’s Voice on the Promised Millennium. *Sperry Symposium Voices of Old Testament Prophets: The 26th Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium*.

² Elder Orson Pratt taught: “...when we lay our bodies down in the grave, go to our former abode where we once were, to the mansions prepared, and that we will join with the heavenly hosts. We will not forget the earth; it is our native abode; but instead of forgetting it, we will join with them in their new song, and with them we will look forward with joyful anticipation to the day when we shall return to reign on the earth, having been made kings and priests unto our God. And Jesus and the Twelve Apostles will be in our midst. And we have an account of their thrones. ‘And Jesus said unto them, Verily, I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.’ Then the twelve tribes will come back, and twelve men sitting on twelve thrones, in the land of Palestine, will reign over them. The Twelve disciples raised up in this land, 1800 years ago, are to have their thrones; who, after being judged themselves by the Twelve at Jerusalem, will sit upon their thrones and will judge the remnant of the tribe of Joseph. And they will have that work to do in the eternal worlds. The Priesthood is not given for a few years and then to cease; but all the servants of God who have ministered here below by

2 And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

✓ heavy

And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And the just that were hidden because of the wicked, as those who hide themselves on account of a storm, shall return, and be magnified.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And this man will be one who hideth his words, and he will be hid as from a rolling flood.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “And a man shall be as when one is hid from the wind, and hideth himself from a storm.” Henderson well explains that the *אִשׁ* (see Zechariah 6:12) here mentioned is the Christ, the King, the very Messiah alluded to in ISAIAH 32:1. And though mortal man is indeed nothing beside the Lord, I do believe that through the *how beautiful are the feet* principle that the Savior shares many of the positive attributes that are rightfully His with His righteous servants and disciples who will be “clothed with robes of righteousness” (D&C 29:12). The atonement of Jesus Christ is this refreshing comfort from the winds and tempests of life. ¶ *As rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.*³ The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And their instruction shall be received quickly, like the waters that flow into a dry land, like the shadow of a great rock in a parched land.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And he will be seen on Sion like a glorious stream in a thirsty land.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “As rivers of waters in drought, and the shadow of a rock that standeth out in a desert land.” In the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲯ) we have *in [the] shade*, *בְּצֵל*, while the Masoretic text (ⲙ)

as [the] shade, *בְּצֵל*. Regarding the *rivers of water* Wordsworth beautifully ties it to John 4:14, wherein the Savior says: “But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” Lowth observes: “The shadow of a great projecting rock is the most refreshing that is possible in a hot country; not only as most perfectly

authority of the Priesthood will continue their work among immortal beings, and among those living who will not have been changed to the immortal state” (JD 19:177).

³ The Prophet Joseph Smith, speaking of the Constitution of the United States said—because of the religious freedom it provides—“is to all those who are privileged with the sweets of liberty, like the cooling shades and refreshing waters of a great rock in a thirsty and weary land” (TPJS, p. 147).

excluding the rays of the sun, but also having in itself a natural coolness, which it reflects and communicates to every thing about it.” In Matthew 7:24 we read: “Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.” Christ and His gospel are that rock. Wordsworth beautifully points us to Psalm 63:1 “O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is,” and says that: “... the same phrase is used, and is applied to God.” Kay says, “This description [i.e., ISAIAH 32:1–2, if it were not about Christ—the Son of God made flesh] is the more remarkable, because the chief sin, against which Israel is warned throughout these chapters, is, trusting in arm of flesh... There is but one explanation. The Righteous King is IMMANUEL.” Kay points us to Jeremiah: “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit” (Jeremiah 17:7–8; *also see* Psalm 1:3).

3 And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken.

The Targum (𐤒) has, “And the eyes of the righteous shall not be shut, and the ears of those who receive instruction shall hear.” The LXX (Ⲑ) reads, “And they shall no more put confidence in men; but shall apply their ears to hear.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲅ) has, not just *hearken*, but “hearken diligently.” Orelli well says that this verse is the antithesis of ISAIAH 6:9. Redak (in Rabbi Rosenberg) explains that “This prophecy resembles that of ISAIAH 29:18.” So also Jennings who says: “The key [to understanding this verse] lies in ‘the King’ being revealed, and as *He* is thus revealed, so is everything in His kingdom exposed in its true colors. Those eyes that were in the prophet’s commission to be closed (ISAIAH 6), shall then discern the truth... that Christ was and is to be found only in Jesus of Nazareth.” Regarding ISAIAH 32:3–4, Henderson suggests: “The meaning of the verses is, that the impediments to spiritual perception and obedience being removed, the subjects of Messiah’s reign would be endowed with true knowledge and right dispositions. Even those who might seem to labour under insuperable difficulties would surmount them with ease.”

4 The heart also of the rash 𐤒 shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of

the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly. 𐤒 𐤒

- 𐤒 hasty
- 𐤒 𐤒 or, elegantly

The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge. The LXX (Ⲑ) reads, “And the heart of the weak will listen attentively.” Instead of *ready* the Peshitta (Ⲑ) has *hasten* (Lamsa) / *hurry* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (ⲅ) has *fool* for *rash*. Wildberger well writes: “It is to be noted that the *heart* is to attain such *wisdom* and *knowledge*. The (𐤒) (heart) is actually the organ of (𐤒) (wisdom): 𐤒 𐤒 𐤒 𐤒 (Proverbs 14:33a [Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding]) or 𐤒 𐤒 𐤒 𐤒 (Proverbs 15:14 [The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge]; cf. also passages such as Proverbs 2:10; 16:23; Ecclesiastes 1:16).” The teaching of false doctrines may well be what is intended in these verses. We need to once again remember that “to be learned is good if [we] hearken unto the counsels of God” (2 Nephi 9:29). Jennings says: “The ‘rash’ or ‘hasty,’ [margin] of ISAIAH 32:4, are those who think it waste of time to meditate, ponder, consider; but rush to conclusions justified only their ignorance, prejudice and conceit.” I also like what Horsley says here, that instead of the *heart of the rash* it should read *the heart of the well instructed*, i.e., *the heart of the learned*. Nephi tells us: “O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish. But to be learned is good if they hearken unto the counsels of God” (2 Nephi 9:28–29). Young well says: “It may be noted that the eyes, ears, and heart, mentioned in this and the preceding verse, correspond to the same organs mentioned in both ISAIAH 6:9 and 6:10.” ¶ *And the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly.* The Targum (𐤒) has, “And the tongue of those that was tied shall be ready (Chaldee, ‘shall hasten’) to speak plainly (Chaldee, ‘white things’). The LXX (Ⲑ) reads, “And trifling tongues will soon learn to speak peace. The Douay-Rheims (ⲅ) has, “And the tongue of stammerers shall speak readily and plain.” The description or stammerers is here a spiritual one. The tongue will now, in contrast to the past, speak rightly. Luther says: “He properly calls the ungodly teachers stammerers in the metaphorical sense ... they perform the act of speaking and yet say nothing.”

5 The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said [to be] bountiful.

The Targum (T) has, “And the wicked man shall no more be called just, and he that transgresses against His Word shall not be called mighty.” The LXX (G) reads, “And they will no more order the fool to govern, nor shall thy servants any more command silence.” The Peshitta (S) has “The imprudent shall not longer be called governor, nor the unworthy, liberator” (BPE) or, “The fool shall be no more called ruler, nor shall the vain man be called a saviour” and (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “The fool shall no more be called prince: neither shall the deceitful be called great.”

Cowles says, regarding the *vile person*, נָבֵל, “Men no longer call a *nabal*⁴ (the ‘fool’ of Scripture) a *noble* man.” Many (AMP, ASV, ERV, ESV, HCSB, ISV, and LITV to name a few) translate נָבֵל as *fool* in these verses (ISAIAH 32:5–6) rather than *vile*. Both Gesenius and HAL also provide for נָבֵל an acceptance of a person who is an *unbeliever* or *detractor from the truth*, which fits very well with these verses which focus on the teaching of false and apostate doctrines. Horsley well says: “The foolish preacher of infidelity [towards God] shall no longer have the praise of greatness of mind; nor shall the atheistic churl, who envies the believer in his hope ... be held in esteem as a patriot struggling for the freedom of mankind held in thralldom⁵ by superstitious fears. They and their absurd impious doctrine shall appear to the world in the proper light, and they shall be held in general contempt and detestation.” Skinner explains: “The fool here depicted is a free-thinker, a practical atheist, as in Psalm 14:1 [“The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God” (Psalm 14:1a).].” Although Jennings writes the following thinking of ISAIAH 32:7–8, I believe it can better be applied to ISAIAH 32:5: “[This verse] deals with the man who is termed a ‘success’ in this world, for he attains his end, although by very evil means... He has, it is true, crushed the poor who stood in his way, but he has attained to the wealth that has been his magnet; now the ruin of those poorer rivals is forgotten, and by the very wealth that he has thus obtained he is able to purchase the name of ‘philanthropist’ or ‘noble.’” ¶ Lowth quotes Secker here: “Of the four sorts of persons mentioned [in ISAIAH 32:5] three [vile, churl, liberal] are described in verses 6, 7, and 8, but not the

fourth [bountiful, שׂוֹעַ].” Orelli says, “The *stammerers* also are here to be understood spiritually of those who are unable to give plain and clear expression to God’s will, and to honour God by their praises.” Ironside says, regarding the *churl* וְלִכְלִי, “... the crafty one, who plays fast and loose⁶ with divine truth, need not expect to find spiritual illumination as he pursues his self-chosen way.” Young thinks that *crafty* or *deceitful* are good translations of כְּלִי. TSK points us to two additional scriptures that fit well with this passage: ISAIAH 5:20, “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!” Rather, it shall be as in Malachi 3:18: “Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.” Wordsworth says: “The prophet is not speaking so much of social duties between man and man, as of religious obligations of man to God.” Delitzsch says: “Nobility of birth and wealth will give place to nobility of character.” Birks says: “This reign of the promised Messiah is to be marked by a higher and purer standard of moral uprightness and benevolence. Hateful sins shall no longer be disguised under specious titles. The flatteries of the world shall cease. When vice and folly are on the throne, men call evil good, and good evil... But in these days of Messiah counterfeits of goodness will be exposed, and sin be seen in its true light.” Calvin suggests: “... by means of the gospel, by which he drags into light the disgraceful actions which were formerly concealed, and openly shews what they really are, so that no man, unless he choose it, can be deceived by their outward appearance. And this is the reason why the gospel is so much hated by the world; for no man can patiently endure to have his ‘hidden thoughts’ and concealed baseness ‘revealed’ (Luke 2:35) ... In this passage, therefore, we are brought to the judgment-seat of Christ, who alone, by exposing hypocrisy, reveals whether we are covetous or bountiful.”

6 For the vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practise hypocrisy, and to utter error against the LORD, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail.

For the vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity. The Targum (T) has, “For the wicked will talk wickedness, and in their heart they meditate

⁴ Kay makes the interesting observation (in ISAIAH 32:6, but for our purposes fits best here): “Nabal refused ‘bread and water’ to David in the wilderness (1 Samuel 25:10–11).”

⁵ Now spelled *thralldom*, meaning moral or mental servitude, slave or serf.

⁶ An expression that means *irresponsible and reckless*.

violence.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “For the fool will speak foolishly, and his heart will devise vain things.” For the first clause the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has “For he who lacks understanding will speak folly.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has *fool* for *vile*. In the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲙ) we have *plot* iniquity, חושב, while the Masoretic text (ⲙ) has *work* iniquity, יעשה. Regarding כִּי נָבֵל נִבְלָה יִדְבֹּר, “For the fool will speak folly” (ASV), Wildberger says: “The נָבֵל (fool) is no longer one who wants to take the place of the noble person but is now one who speaks נִבְלָה (foolishness) ... נָבֵל (fool) has moved now into the ethical realm [because the] OT thought wickedness is also foolishness.” ¶ All three clauses in this verse point against those who teach false doctrines and are a stumbling block to those who seek for the truth. In Alma we read: “And it is requisite with the justice of God that men should be judged according to their works; and if their works were good in this life, and the desires of their hearts were good, that they should also, at the last day, be restored unto that which is good” (Alma 41:2) and likewise for those who desire evil. In the end all will be restored to what they really are, as we read in this verse of Isaiah. Alma continues: “The one raised to happiness according to his desires of happiness, or good according to his desires of good; and the other to evil according to his desires of evil; for as he has desired to do evil all the day long even so shall he have his reward of evil when the night cometh” (Alma 41:5). ¶ To practise *hypocrisy*, and to utter *error* against the LORD. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “To practice falsehood, and to speak revolt against the Lord.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “That he may commit iniquity, and utter error before the Lord.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) is missing “against the Lord.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, for the second clause, “And speak to the Lord deceitfully.” This is nothing more than priestcraft and the teaching of false doctrines, “to practice hypocrisy, and to utter error against the LORD.” So also Luther, who believes this verse describes those who falsely claim to have a right to speak in the name of Christ. Jennings well says, “[That the evil] would also rob the *spiritually* poor of the truth, and bring *him* to ruin by speaking falsely against the Lord, denying His essential deity, or the value of His blood, and in so doing take away true food from the hungry, and true refreshment from those perishing with thirst. Have we not seen this in our day?” Regarding *hypocrisy* הִנְיָ the TLOT renders it *to be perverted* and TWOT has *profaned, corrupt*. It is also rendered to practice *ungodliness* (ESV, ISV). Cheyne, regarding *error* or תוֹעֵבָה says, “Dr. Weir renders ‘heresy.’ In fact, in Rabbinic Hebrew and in Aramaic the stem does acquire the meaning of *heresy* (and in Assyrian, of *madness*).” Wildberger well says: “... it is

worth noting that אֶל־יְהוָה (against Yahweh) ... One need not articulate it in so many words, but every aspect of ‘foolishness’ is directed against Yahweh, whereas the right order that wisdom calls for is naturally the order God establishes; every disruption of right order distorts the relationship with God.” Calvin continues with his earlier thoughts: “I think that the Prophet means ... that Christ is the Judge of the world, and therefore, when he shall ascend the judgment-seat, he will shew what is the disposition of every person; for, so long as he does not exercise the office of a judge, everything remains in confusion, the wicked are applauded, because they have the appearance of piety, and the most excellent men are despised. But Christ will openly display the life of every person ...[and] ‘reveal the secret thoughts of the heart, and bring every hidden thing to light’ (Luke 2:35).” ¶ To make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “To weary the soul of the righteous, who long after instruction, as the hunger after bread; and after the words of the law, which are like water to him that is athirst, they purpose to make to cease. The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “In order to scatter hungry souls: and the thirsty souls he will send away empty.” For the last clause, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has something like, “And to deny drink from the thirsty.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, for the second clause, “And take away drink from the thirsty.” “To make empty the soul of the hungry” seems to me to be the teacher of false doctrines who lead people away from Christ and His restored Church. So also those who “cause the drink of the thirsty to fail.” Both the *hungry* and *thirsty* for spiritual matters may so continue because of the distractors. In Amos 8:11 we have: “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD.” Even today, when the Gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored in its splendor we have many who do not recognize it. In D&C we read: “For there are many yet on the earth among all sects, parties, and denominations, who are blinded by the subtle craftiness of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, and *who are only kept from the truth because they know not where to find it* (emphasis added, D&C 123:12). And as a result, the Lord commands us: “that we should waste and wear out our lives in bringing to light” (D&C 123:13b) and “let us cheerfully do all things that lie in our power; and then may we stand still, with the utmost assurance, to see the salvation of God, and for his arm to be revealed” (D&C 123:17b). Young says: “The first part of the verse ... presents the fool as opposed to God,

and then in the second part as really opposed to man also.”⁷

7 The instruments also of the churl [are] evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh right.

The Targum (T) has, “And the wicked, whose works are evil, take counsel with sinners to destroy the poor with lying words, and the words of the needy in judgment.” The LXX (G) reads, “For the counsel of the wicked will devise unlawful devices to destroy the poor with unjust pleas; and to baffle the pleas (Brenton, ‘cause,’) of the poor in judgment.” Instead of churl (*scoundrel*, BDB), the Peshitta (S) has *unworthy* (BPE) / *vain* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “The vessels of the deceitful are most wicked: for he hath framed devices to destroy the meek, with lying words, when the poor man speaketh judgment.” One way to view this as Redak in Rosenberg suggests: “The deceitful, or stingy person, who does not directly rob them, but engineers their destruction by perverting justice, and with his lies, perpetuates their exploitation.” Horsley well says: “‘He deviseth subtleties to ensnare the meek with speeches of deceit, but in the word of the poor man there is judgment.’ The subtleties (זמרות),⁸ see Psalm 10:4 [where it means *thoughts*] and speeches of deceit, are those refined theories and sophisticated arguments by which atheism and infidelity [towards God] is supported; which being uttered to the world in an imposing strain and philosophical penetration, are too often so far successful as in some degree to perplex and disquiet the modest and unassuming, who in diffidence of themselves pay too much deference to the proud claims of others.”

8 But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand.

Liberal, in this context, means *generous*. The Targum (T) has, “But the righteous counsel truth, and in their truth they shall be established.” The LXX (G) reads, “But the pious have counselled with understanding; and

their counsel shall be established.” Instead of *liberal* (נָדָב, from the root, נָדַב, *willing, noble, generous*, BDB, Gesenius), the Lamsa Peshitta (S) has *great*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “But the prince will devise such things as are worthy of a prince, and he shall stand above the rulers.” Keith writes: “... the truly liberal man shall stand, that is, shall be established or continue (margin ||). With the measure that he metes shall it be measured to him again.” ¶ Barnes says about *shall he stand*, נָקַד, “Margin ||, ‘Be *established*.’ That is, according to the connection, he shall be *confirmed*, or *approved* in the government of the virtuous king referred to.” Gill, leaning on Gataker says, be *established* (*stabilietur*). I wonder if this expression is synonymous to “be lifted up in the last days” (Alma 37:37). The Prophet Brigham Young, in speaking about the importance of paying our tithing and fast offerings—and being grateful for the many blessings that God has given us—taught: “[God] will bless any man, any family, or any people who is liberal. As it is written in the good book, ‘The liberal man deviseth liberal things,’ and if he deviseth liberal things by his liberality he shall stand. The Lord will bless that people that is full of charity, kindness and good works. When our monthly fast days come round, do we think of the poor? If we do, we should send in our mite, no matter what it is. What is it to give ten or twenty pounds of flour, or a hundred pounds of flour? What is it to give a little meat, or sugar, or a little money, or whatever is wanted? Does it impoverish us? It does not. If this people have not been sustained by the hand of the Almighty, I ask how they have been sustained? Could any other people have lived in these valleys except the Latter-day Saints? No, they could not. The elements would not have produced the corn, the wheat, the oats, the rye, the peas, the barley, the vegetables and the fruit.”⁹ Elder George Q. Cannon likewise taught: “We should feel to say that ‘anything which benefits my brethren and sisters, whether it furthers my interests or not, let it be done; let the community be blessed, whether my personal interests are prospered or not by the course taken.’ The person who cherishes this feeling will be sure to receive temporal prosperity. I know we live in the kingdom of God and serve a liberal Master, and though we may be called upon to make what we may view as sacrifices, if we do so willingly and liberally, God will give to us a liberal reward. ‘The liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand,’ was said by one of old, and can be said in truth of the day in which we live. If we act upon this principle, God will deal with us in a similar manner. I know this to be true, and that God will reward us with every blessing we need, as a people, if we take the

⁷ President Benson made similar distinctions when speaking about pride (see *Beware of Pride*, April 1989 General Conference), as enmity toward God and toward man.

⁸ Here זמרות, rendered as *wicked devices* in the AV, means *vain imaginations* or *wicked thoughts* (see 1 Nephi 12:18; Proverbs 6:18; 2 Corinthians 10:5). As Bishops 1568 Bible says, this is done that the wicked man may “beguile the poore with deceitfull words.” YLT 1898 has, “counselled wicked devices, To corrupt the poor with lying sayings...”

⁹ Young, President Brigham. *Journal of Discourses* 13:279.

course that is pointed out.”¹⁰ Elder George A. Smith taught: “The foundation being laid [to the great latter-day work], then the work has to be done. In order to be participators in this, we must be honest with ourselves, with our brethren, and with the poor among the Lord’s people. If we are, the blessings of God will flow upon us, and our knowledge will increase, and all the light and intelligence that we desire from God will be poured out upon us, and our means will increase, and our substance will be blessed unto us. But if we adopt the other principle, although men do it from covetousness, it is the identical way to become poor. The Prophet said, The liberal deviseth liberal things, and by his liberality he shall stand. This is the truth: it has been so among all generations, and with this people from the beginning.”¹¹

vv. 9–20. Govett has: “The ninth verse reverts to the time of the great tribulation, in which the condition of females will be peculiarly helpless and sad; and the desolation of Judea is depicted ... [which] shall last ‘Until the Spirit be poured out from on high ... Of the Spirit’s outpouring, Joel testifies. ‘And it shall come to pass afterwards, that I will pour out *my Spirit upon all flesh*.’ And in a following verse he gives the signs which shall precede the Saviour’s [second] coming [and] the world being thus restored to the purity of Eden... the world shall be full of holiness, it shall be also full of peace.” Elder Orson Pratt taught: “It is very evident from these predictions of the Prophet Isaiah, that he, by that spirit which opens the future, was able to see the calamities that would come upon the house of Israel, and not only upon the people, but also upon the Promised Land, the land of Canaan, now called Palestine. A curse was predicted upon that land, that instead of bringing forth those things that were necessary to sustain a people, it should bring forth briars and thorns. We are also told that this desolation should remain for a long period, until the Spirit should be poured out from on high, until, in the purposes of the Most High, he should pour out his Spirit, and that would produce a great change upon that land, but until that time it was to be desolate. All the houses of joy in the Jewish city were to be desolate, and, as it is recorded in other passages in Isaiah, they were to be the desolations of many generations. Not the desolation of seventy years, as happened to Israel in their Babylonish captivity, which only comprised about one generation, but the desolations were to be for many generations, during which that land was to lie uncultivated. The latter rains were to be withheld, and the land was to become dry and parched up, bringing forth thorns and

briars, and this was to continue until the Lord poured out his Spirit from on high. It seems, then, that the Lord had a particular set time in his own mind, when he would again pour out his Spirit from on high upon his people, and more especially upon the house of Israel; and when that time arrives, there will not only be a great moral reformation among the people, but we are told that the revolution will extend to the land also, for the Prophet says here, that when the Spirit is poured out from on high, the wilderness shall be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be counted for a forest.”¹² Elder Orson Pratt also applies the latter verses to the Saints gathered in the Wasatch Front in Utah.

9 ¶ Rise up, ye women that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters; give ear unto my speech.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Ye provinces that dwell at ease: arise, hear my voice. Ye cities that dwell in safety, listen to my word.” Chilton (Ⲯ) renders כְּרִכִּין,

fortresses instead of *cities*. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Arise ye rich women and hear my voice, hearken to my words ye daughters of hope!” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has something like, “Rise up, O you rich women; heed my voice, O you daughters that publish glad news, give ear to my speech.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, “Rise up, ye rich women (or, *Mulieres opulent*, Vulgate ⲩ), and hear my voice: ye confident daughters, give ear to my speech.”

קום, *rise*. In ISAIAH 52:2 we see a different sort of rising (קומי) than here, one of cheerfulness—taken from bondage and captivity to freedom: “Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.” But here in ISAIAH 32 we see that the women will rise (קמנה) to go into captivity and bondage.

Wordsworth says: “The Prophet, having reproved the skeptical and worldly spirit of the men of Jerusalem, passes on to censure the voluptuousness of the women, as he had done before (ISAIAH 3:16–26).” Similarly, Nägelsbach says: “As in [ISAIAH 3], so here the Prophet addresses men and women separately, having in mind especially those of the higher, and highest ranks.” Skinner suggests: “The women are addressed partly as representing best certain aspects of the public mind, luxury and complacent ease (ISAIAH 3:16 ff.; Amos 4:1 ff.); partly because of their function as mourners¹³ in

¹⁰ Cannon, Elder George Q., *Journal of Discourses* 26:47.

¹¹ Smith, Elder George A., *Journal of Discourses* 7:62.

¹² Pratt, Elder Orson. “Fulfillment of Prophecy,” 30 August 1875. (JD 18:144, OP), pp. 143–144.

¹³ Wildberger does well in pointing out: “women who are mourners by trade are not meant [here].” In Chile, women who were hired to weep at funerals were called *lloronas*. That was their trade.

seasons of calamity (Jeremiah 9:20).” McFadyen suggests that the women alluded to are aristocrats (see ISAIAH 32:14). Thompson likewise suggests: “A minatory address to the fashionable women of Jerusalem,” and compares it to ISAIAH 3:16 ff. Also Wade, who says, “A prediction, addressed to the luxurious ladies of Jerusalem.” Ironside explains that these “lived only for the present moment.” Jennings suggests that “women are here addressed because of the peculiar sensitiveness of the feminine temperament, quick to catch the first sight of coming danger and to take alarm. Even these see no cause for anything but confidence and pleasure.” Women generally seem more sensitive to the things of the spirit so it is ever more striking when they ignore or reject the warnings of the Lord or His servants.

10 Many days and years shall ye be troubled, ye careless women: for the vintage shall fail, the gathering shall not come.

The Targum (T) has, “Those who dwell at ease shall be agitated for days and years, because the corn¹⁴ is come to an end, and there is no fruit to gather.” The LXX (G) reads, “Make mention of a day of a year in sorrow, with hope. The vintage is destroyed; it hath failed! must it never come again any more?” The Peshitta (S) has, “The days of the year shall be angry against those who publish (Lamsa) / proclaim (BPE) good news.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “For after days and a year, you that are confident shall be troubled: for the vintage is at an end, the gathering shall come no more.” ¶ Regarding the expression *days and years* Kay explains: “Literally, ‘days upon a year¹⁵,’ that is, probably, ‘the days mounting up to years;’” Rashi (in Rabbi Rosenberg) explains: “‘Add year to year,’ and your sins are constantly becoming more serious,” and thus makes this expression very similar to that of ISAIAH 29:1. Skinner gives an alternative opinion when he states: “*days beyond a year*] ‘in a little more than a year,’ ... the context shows that it fixes the point of time when ease and security give place to anxiety.” So also Young, “Within a little more than a year.” ¶ The *vintage* is the *vendimia* or the harvest of wine grapes followed by the making of wine. The gathering, in contrast, is the harvest of other crops including grains, vegetables, fruits and nuts. The warning here is that all of these would cease. Redak (in Rosenberg) suggests that the enemy would destroy the crops and take the people into exile.

¹⁴ Not maize, but rather *grains*.

¹⁵ *Days upon a year*, יָמִים עַל-שָׁנָה.

11 Tremble, ye women that are at ease; be troubled, ye careless ones: strip you, and make you bare, and gird [sackcloth] upon [your] loins.

The Targum (T) has the first clause as, “They that dwell at ease shall be broken, they that dwell in safety shall tremble.” The LXX (G) reads, “Be confounded; be grieved, ye confident women! strip; make yourselves bare; gird your loins.” The Peshitta (S) has something like, “Shudder, O you rich women; *be troubled* (Lamsa) / *be indignant* (BPE), O you who publish glad tidings.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Be astonished, ye rich (or, *opulent*, Vulgate V) women, be troubled, ye confident ones: strip you, and be confounded, gird your loins.” ¶ The ESV suggests: “Tremble, you women who are at ease, shudder, you complacent ones; strip, and make yourselves bare, and tie sackcloth around your waist.” Rashi (in Rabbi Rosenberg), leaning on the Targum (T) has “... and so did Jonathan (T) render: Undress and bare yourselves and gird on your loins. Since they will undress and bare themselves of their garments, they will not gird on their garments but on their loins.”

Henderson opines: “פָּשַׁט [to take off, as in to remove clothing, HAL, פָּשַׁטָה] is very appropriately employed to denote the removal of the splendid garments in which the persons here addressed were arrayed, in order that, in their stead, they might put on sackcloth.” Cowles explains: “These are the usual manifestations of grief. Lay off your proud and gay apparel; put on the coarse sackcloth of mourning.” Wildberger would also consider the expression an implied ellipsis: “One of the rituals connected with mourning for one who has died is to gird one’s loins with sackcloth. ‘Sackcloth’ is not actually in the text, but one should think of it as the object of חָנַדָה (bind on) (cf., e.g., Jeremiah 4:8; 6:26; 49:3; Joel 1:8).¹⁶ In order to put on the proper mourning garments, one must remove one’s regular clothing, thus: ‘Undress yourselves and strip yourselves!’” Even so, Wildberger suggests that the sackcloth only went on the waist. Whitehouse, leaning on Wellhausen (author of *Remains of Arabic Heathendom*, 2nd Edition, p. 177) explains: “Even stripping the person bare, to which Isaiah makes reference, is not uncommon trait among Arab women as a sign of grief at the news of death. Wellhausen quotes from the *Kitab al aghani*, 15:139, the incident that after the death of Amir, son of al Tufail, in the land of Salul, a tall woman of that country stripped herself half naked and announced the news in

¹⁶ In each of these instances we have the word *sackcloth* spelled out and not just elliptical: שָׂק / שָׂקִים.

short rhymes to her fellow tribesmen, after which there arose universal lamentation. Here the sorrowing of the women is for the charming lands, perhaps the gardens or estates attached to the summer-houses and winter-houses which the wealthy Israelites at the time possessed (Amos 3:15; ISAIAH 9:9–10), ere long to be utterly destroyed. Cf. Jastrow, *ZATW.*, 22:317 ff.” We also find the custom described as pertaining to the Bedouins: “No one mourns for the dead except his mother, wife, sister, or daughter. In the tent they may utter, quietly, only one cry, then they go outside the camp, lament twice more, tear their dress at the breast, scratch their faces... throw dust all over themselves ... wind a white band ... around their forehead, weep, and then return to the camp.”¹⁷ Wordsworth suggests that the mourning in this Isaianic verse would take place related to exile: “This is a prophecy of what would happen to the women of Jerusalem when led captives.” In *Rain in Due Season* we read: “Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness” (Deuteronomy 28:48a). See also ISAIAH 47:1–3. This is a prophetic vision of what would soon happen to the daughters of Israel when taken captive by Babylon.

12 They shall lament for the teats, for the pleasant fields, [✓] for the fruitful vine.

✓ fields of desire

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “They beat the breasts for the pleasant fields (Chaldee, ‘fields of desire’), for the fruit laden vines.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And beat your breasts, for the lovely field—for the fruitful vine.” Instead of *lament for the teats*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) also has “beat upon your breasts.” A sign of mourning for things missed, in this case the pleasant fields and the fruitful vines. The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “Mourn for your breasts, for the delightful country, for the fruitful vineyard.” Redak (in Rabbi Rosenberg) believes that “they will lament their dried-up breasts [which will no longer supply milk for their infants]. So also Kay, who says: “*They lament for the breasts*; since God has withdrawn the ‘blessings of the breasts and of the womb’ (Genesis 49:25), giving them ‘a miscarrying womb and *dry breasts*’ (Hosea 9:14).” ¶ Regarding סִפְּדִים Henderson writes: “The primary signification of סִפְּדִים is that *beating*.” Gesenius writes: “סִפְּדִים fut. סִפְּדִי TO BEAT the breast, as a sign of grief; especially for the dead.” In this verse we have a triple repletion of the word עַל so that in the first instance it means *upon*

the breast and in the second and third, *over*, as in *mourning over*, or *mourning because*, or even *mourning for*. The ASV reads (also see JPS, and in most other translations, *beat*): “They shall smite upon the breasts for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine.” Wordsworth explains: “Compare to Nahum 2:7, where the captive maidens of Nineveh are compared to ‘doves tabering¹⁸ on their breasts.’” Wordsworth also gives Luke 23:48 as yet another example of beating upon the breast, this time in reference to the last moments in our Saviors mortal journey.

13 Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns [and] briars; yea, upon [✓] all the houses of joy [in] the joyous city:

✓ or, burning upon

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Upon the land of my people thorns and thistles shall come up, yea, in all the houses of joy in the fortified city.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “In this land of my people shall spring up the thorn and the briar, and joy shall be taken from every dwelling. O rich city! O houses wholly forsaken!” Instead of *joyous*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *powerful* (BPE) / *mighty* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, for the second half, “how much more upon all the houses of joy, of the city that rejoiced?” It is clear that these verses relate to Judah and Jerusalem as the term עַמִּי, *my people* is used.

¶ Ironside writes: “Jerusalem means, ‘Founded in peace,’ but this city has suffered more from war and strife than perhaps any other single city in the history of the world, and still greater horrors are in store for it in the future, immediately before the return of the Lord to reign as King on Mount Zion. It will never know lasting peace until that day.” In D&C the Savior says: “*My people* must be tried in all things, that they may be prepared to receive the glory that I have for them, even the glory of Zion; and he that will not bear chastisement is not worthy of my kingdom” D&C 136:31). In *Rain in Due Season* we read that in disobedience “Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store” (Deuteronomy 28:17) and “Cursed shall be... the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep” (Deuteronomy 28:18).

14 Because the palaces shall be forsaken; the multitude [✓] houses of the city shall be left; the forts and towers [✓] shall be for dens

¹⁸ Tabering. “Tabering playing on a small drum or tabret. In Nahum 2:7, where alone it occurs, it means beating on the breast, as players beat on the tabret.” Dictionary.com. *Easton's 1897 Bible Dictionary*. <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/tabering> (accessed: March 06, 2013).

¹⁷ Musil, Alois. *The Manners and Customs of the Rwala Bedouins*, New York, The American Geographical Society, 1928, p. 671.

for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks;

✓ or, cliffs and watchtowers

Because the palaces shall be forsaken; the houses of the city shall be left. Here is another interesting example of the JST, *houses* being preserved by other ancient manuscripts, some in the precise place where the JST has it, while others in the same verse albeit a different place. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “For the house of the sanctuary shall be laid waste; the noisy city shall be desolate, in which they worship: the house of our strength and hiding place shall be searched out, dug up, desolate and waste unto a time.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “They shall abandon city, riches, lovely houses.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “For the house is forsaken, the multitude of the city is left.” As Rabbi Rosenberg notes, the Targum (ⲧ) explains the palace as the temple. Rashi and Ibn Ezra (in R. Rosenberg) think it of the king’s palace. Cowles explains: “... the city, once thronged with people, is now forsaken and left desolate.” The city here spoken off is principally Jerusalem itself. ¶ *The forts and towers shall be for dens for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “The place which was a house of joy and gladness for kings is now become a spoil for armies.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And until the age the villages shall be dens—the joy of wild asses, the pastures of flocks.” Instead of *forts and towers*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *beautiful houses*.

Furthermore, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) explains that these houses have become a place for pasture and drink for these wild asses and flocks. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, for the first half, “Darkness and obscurity are come upon its dens for ever.” Henderson explains: “עד-עולם [forever, until eternity] is here to be taken in a limited sense, as intimating only a long period, as the use of עד in the following verse shews [Until the spirit &c.].”

¶ Regarding עִפְלָה, or *towers*, Lowth suggests, “[Ophel] was part of Mount Zion, rising higher than the rest; at the eastern extremity, near to the temple, a little to the south of it; called by Micah 4:8 ‘Ophel of the daughter of Zion.’ It was naturally strong by its situation, and had a wall of its own, by which it was separated from the rest of Zion.” All of these structures, including the temple, would be left desolate and only a fit abode for wild birds and beasts. McFadyen (also see Thompson) says: “The reference to the *palace*, and the hill (Hebrew *Ophel*, the southeastern spur of mount Zion on which *palace* and temple stood) shows that the women are aristocrats. Those palatial quarters were doomed to be everlasting desolation, over which the wild ass would roam.”

15 Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest.

The Targum (ⲧ) has, “All these things *shall come upon us* until refreshing shall come to us from the face of Him, whose Shekinah is in the highest heavens. The wilderness shall become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be inhabited by many cities.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Till a spirit come on you from on high. Then will a desert become a Charmel (Χερμελ, i.e., Carmel, ‘fruitful field’) and Charmel will be accounted a forest.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, for the second half, “And the desert shall be as a charmel, and charmel shall be counted for a forest.” ¶ Wildberger says: “The spirit is naturally the *spirit* of *Yahweh*, as is shown by the following word מְמָרוֹם (from on high), רוּחַ מְמָרוֹם (*spirit from on high*) seems to be a paraphrase of רוּחַ יְהוָה (*spirit of Yahweh*)” Young, alluding to ISAIAH 29:10, says: “Just as God had poured a spirit of deep sleep ‘upon you’ so now He pours out His Spirit ‘upon us,’ and we therefore receive the blessings that He brings.” Regarding the desolation described in the earlier verses, Abarbanel (in R. Rosenberg) suggests that “this desolation will persist until it is time to bring the Messiah.” Keith says: “This final outpouring of the Spirit, of which foretastes and first-fruits have been experienced from time to time in the Church of Christ on earth, the most marked of these being that on the day of Pentecost, is often predicted in connexion with the reign of Christ on mount Zion, and the conversion of all men to his service. Thus, in Ezekiel 39:29, in connexion with the last judgments that are to come upon the earth, and the conversion of Israel, it is written, ‘Neither will I hide my face any more from them, for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel.’ In Joel 2:28, this promise occurs in the same connexion, ‘I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,—and I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth;—in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance.’ In Zechariah 12:9, it is written to the same effect, ‘I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplication, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced.’ The pouring out of the Spirit upon the nation is of course synonymous with their conversion to God, and that will be marked by the return of prosperity to the land, so that the wilderness shall become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall become, in richness and increase, as a forest. This renewed fertility of the land is often connected with the conversion of the people. In the day

when Jerusalem shall be holy, ‘the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow down with milk,’ Joel 3:18.” Horsley says: “I have not seen this *mashal* [מָשָׁל, i.e., *proverb*] any where so well explained as in the marginal || notes in Queen Elizabeth’s Bible:¹⁹ ‘The field which is now fruitful shall be but as a barren forest in comparison of that it shall be then as in (ISAIAH 29:17) which shall be fulfilled in Christ’s time. For then, they that were before as the barren wilderness, being regenerate, shall be fruitful; and they that had some beginning of godliness shall bring forth fruits in such abundance, that their former life shall seem but as a wilderness where no fruits were.’” Nägelsbach suggests that this expression “which has a proverbial sound, must certainly be taken in another sense than that of ISAIAH 29:17.” Henderson suggests of this verse: “... a remarkable outpouring of the Holy Spirit yet future, when the great body of the Jewish nation (το πλῆρωμα αὐτῶν,²⁰ Romans 11:12) shall, in consequence, be converted to God.”

¶ Wildberger says: “ISAIAH 51:3 goes so far as to announce that the desert will become an עֵדֶן (an *Eden*), the very garden of Yahweh.” In the Articles of Faith we read “that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory” (Articles of Faith 1:10) during the Millennium. Elder Orson Pratt applied these scriptures to this pre-millennial time: “What are we to understand by the prediction that the wilderness shall be a fruitful field when the Spirit is poured out from on high? We are to understand the same as is recorded in the thirty-fifth chapter of this prophecy, a small portion of which I will read. Speaking of the gathering of the Israelites in the latter times, he says—‘The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God.’”²¹

16 Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field.

The Targum (T) has, “Then they that do justice shall dwell in the wilderness, and those that do righteousness shall inhabit the fruitful field.” The LXX (L) reads,

¹⁹ Normally called the Bishops’ Bible (1568). This quote also appears in the Geneva Bible (1587) notes, with some minor variations.

²⁰ That is, *their fulness*, or the restoration of the Jewish nation.

²¹ Pratt, Elder Orson. “Fulfillment of Prophecy,” 30 August 1875. (JD 18:144, OP), p. 145. See also Elder Pratt’s comments about Isaiah 35:6b, which he associates closely with ISAIAH 32.

“And judgment will make a lasting abode in the desert, and righteousness will dwell in Charmel.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, for the second clause, “And justice shall sit in charmel.” Henderson has: “This and the following verse describe the spiritual and happy results of the remarkable effusion of the Holy Spirit.”

17 And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.

The Targum (T) has, “And they that do righteousness shall be at peace, and those that adorn righteousness shall be in quietness, and they shall be in safety for ever.” The LXX (L) reads, “And the works of righteousness shall be peace; and righteousness shall enjoy rest. As for them who have kept up their confidence till that age.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has *justice* for each instance of *righteousness*. Speaking of ISAIAH 32:17–18, Birks²² brilliantly says, “The same words, used before to describe the false ease of the careless women, are here applied to the true security of the faithful.”²³ Two examples I found include: *ye careless daughters / ye careless women / ye careless ones* {ISAIAH 32:9, 10, 11 בְּטָחוֹת} vs. *and assurance forever / in sure dwellings* {ISAIAH 32:17 נְבִטָּה – ISAIAH 32:18 מְבִטָּחִים}; *ye women that are at ease* {ISAIAH 32:9 שְׁאֲנִנֹת} vs. *and in quiet resting places* {ISAIAH 32:18 שְׁאֲנִנֹת}. Whitehouse notes: Compare the same use in Amos 6:1, where we have also the identical parallelism in the original Hebrew (‘at *ease*’ [הַשְׁאֲנִנִּים] ... ‘secure’ [וְהַבְטָחִים]).” Birks explains: “The promise had partial fulfillments upon the fall of the Assyrian, and after the return from Babylon. But its full emphasis seems reserved for the last days of the Church of Christ, and the times ... when the fall of the mystical Babylon prepares the way for the grafting of Israel into their own olive-tree.” ¶ President Monson taught: “We must be vigilant in a world which has moved so far from that which is spiritual. It is essential that we reject anything that does not conform to our standards, refusing in the process to surrender that which we desire most: eternal life in the kingdom of God. The storms will still beat at our doors from time to time, for they are an inescapable part of our existence in mortality.

²² Kay makes a similar comment 15 years later, and adds ISAIAH 33:20, *quiet*, שָׁקֵט.

²³ This is also illustrative of the unity of Isaiah as it models the way Isaiah contrasted, in the second half of his writings, what he had said in the first—but with a message of comfort. See Margalioth *thesis and antithesis* (e.g., ISAIAH 1:4; 3:24 and others).

We, however, will be far better equipped to deal with them, to learn from them, and to overcome them if we have the gospel at our core and the love of the Savior in our hearts. The prophet Isaiah declared, ‘The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.’”²⁴ True peace can only come, as we see here and in ISAIAH 27, when we turn to the Lord: “Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me” (ISAIAH 27:5).

18 And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places;

The Targum (T) has, “And my people shall dwell in their habitations in peace, and in their land in safety, and in their cities at ease.” The LXX (G) reads, “His people shall then inhabit a city of peace and dwell secure, and they shall enjoy rest with riches.” Instead of *quiet* the Peshitta (S) has *hope*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And my people shall sit in the beauty of peace, and in the tabernacles of confidence, and in wealthy rest.” Once again we come to the expression עַמִּי, *my people*. Ibn Ezra explains that Judah is meant by עַמִּי. And certainly that will be one of the meanings of this wonderful prophecy.²⁵ Another is spoken of by Elder Orson Pratt who taught: “But Isaiah, are we to understand that the people are to be gathered together in that desert, and that the gathered people are to be instrumental in the hands of God, in redeeming that desert? Yes, Isaiah has told us all this. We will go back to what we read in his thirty-second chapter—‘Until the spirit be poured out upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest. Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness and righteousness remain in the fruitful field.’ What fruitful field? Why, the wilderness that will be converted into a fruitful field. ‘The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance forever; and my people shall dwell in peaceable habitations, and in sure dwellings and in quiet resting places.’ Was that the way we dwelt in Missouri or Illinois? Did we live in quietness and with assurance continually in those States? Oh, no, we were tossed about; as Isaiah says—‘tossed to and fro and not comforted.’ [ISAIAH 54:11]”²⁶

²⁴ Monson, President Thomas S. Stand in Holy Places, October 2011, General Conference, Sunday morning session.

²⁵ The Lord has not forgotten—and never will forget—His people Israel (including Judah).

²⁶ Pratt, Elder Orson. “Fulfillment of Prophecy,” 30 August 1875. (JD 18:144, OP), pp. 148–149.

19 When it shall hail, coming down on the forest; and the city shall be low in a low place.✓

✓ or, utterly abased

The Targum (T) has, “And hail shall descend and shall slay the armies of the nations, and their encampments shall be laid desolate, and come to an end.” The LXX (G) reads, “Though the hail descend, it shall not reach you: and they who dwell in the forest shall be secure as they in the plain.” Instead of a *low place* the Peshitta (S) has *plain* (Lamsa) / *crushed as a valley* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “But hail shall be in the descent of the forest, and the city shall be made very low.”

¶ Many of the gentile exegetes attempt to give the words *hail* and *forest* a negative turn although it makes no sense here. Skinner well has: “Hail is a familiar Isaianic symbol of divine judgment (ISAIAH 28:2, 17; 30:30); but it seems out of place here.” Some believe—following the margin ¶—that before the good things predicted in this chapter can come to pass, the city of Jerusalem must be abased. Nägelsbach asks: “Why thus suddenly a new judgment in the mist of the blessed, spirit-effected condition of peace?” Although Wade provides a completely context than we do, I like his comment that “a renewed prediction of disaster is inappropriate in the midst of a description of its felicity.” Of a similar opinion are some of the Jewish writers such as Ibn Ezra, Kimhi, and Metsudath David. As summarized by Slotki/Rosenberg they explain: “Even when it hails, it will not hail on plants that can be destroyed, but in the forest.” Ibn Ezra writes, “When the hailstones will come down, they will come down on the forest, not on the fields.” ¶ Elder Pratt also said the hail would not come down on the city (which is in a low place in comparison to the forest), but on the forest. Elder Orson Pratt powerfully taught: “Will they have any capital city when they get up into the mountain desert? O, yes. Isaiah says here—‘When it shall hail, coming down on the forest, the city shall be low in a low place.’ How often have I thought of this since we laid out this great city, twenty-eight years ago! How often have this people reflected in their meditations upon the fulfillment of this prophecy! They have seen, on this eastern range of mountains and on the range of mountains to the west of this valley, snow and storms pelting down with great fury, as though winter in all its rigor and ferocity had overtaken the mountain territory, and at the same time, here, ‘low in a low place,’ was a city, organized at the very base of these mountains, enjoying all the blessings of a spring temperature, the blessings of a temperature not sufficient to cut off our vegetation. What a contrast! ‘When it shall hail, coming down on the forest, the city shall be low in a low place.’

That could not be Jerusalem, no such contrast in the land of Palestine round about Jerusalem! It had reference to the latter-day Zion, the Zion of the mountains.”²⁷ ¶ Cheyne writes: “Agricultural prosperity is one of the most constant and prominent features in Messianic descriptions.” Just as rain is representative of blessings, Calvin shows how hail is representative of difficulties: “The meaning is, ‘The Lord will remove from his people distresses and annoyances, and will make them fall on others;’ because here we are liable to various storms and tempests, and must endure rain, hail, showers, winds, and tempests. He says that God, by his wonderful providence, will prevent all distresses from doing any injury to believers, because he will drive their violence in another direction.” Yet we are not free from all adversity. God places these upon us for our own good, that we may learn to be humble and obedient, and filled with compassion for others.

20 Blessed [are] ye that sow beside all waters, that send forth [thither] the feet of the ox and the ass.

The Targum (T) has, “Blessed are ye, O just, ye work out for yourselves good works: because ye are like those, who sow by watered places, sending the oxen to tread out *the corn*, and asses to gather it in.” The LXX (G) reads, “Happy they who sow on every water where the ox and the ass treadeth! The BPE (S) has, “Happy are you who sow by the waters who are tread by the feet of oxen and asses.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has *upon* rather than *beside*. ¶ Wordsworth says: “The Prophet takes up the word ‘feet’ (in a later prophecy): ‘How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that publisheth peace’ (ISAIAH 52:7). By such catchwords as these the prophecies of Isaiah are riveted together; one explains another, and all form one harmonious whole.”

So here they are represented by the רֶגֶל-הַשֹּׁר foot of the ox or the bull, (and compare to the רֶגֶל we shall see in ISAIAH 52:7). Elder Orson Pratt concludes: “We will now return to our text, the 32nd of Isaiah—‘Blessed are ye that sow by the side of all waters, and send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass.’ Why did Isaiah say that a blessing should be given to a certain people that should happen to sow by the side of streams of water? Why did he not bless the others who lived on the hills and mountains, as they do all over our States and many other countries of the globe? Because he saw, in looking at this people, that they, in their location, were to go into a desert, and the redeemed of the Lord would be under the necessity of getting along

the sides of streams; they could not go out several miles from a stream or spring and trust to the rains of heaven; no, the rains do not come here, or did not when we first located, so as to bless those who would naturally desire to reside far from a stream of water, but we were all under the necessity of getting down close to the side of some stream of water. What for? That it would be handy to build little canals to get water out to throw over the land. ‘Blessed are they who sow by the side of all waters and send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass.’”²⁸ ¶ Moving to the missionary nature of this verse, Henderson suggests: “The figure [ISAIAH 32:20], is taken from the nomadic life; and beautifully exhibits the free and unrestrained exertions of the apostles and other missionaries, in sowing the seed of the kingdom in every part of the world... [or in other words] the happiness of those who should be engaged in propagating the gospel throughout the world.” Cowles opines: “... the prophet declares the blessedness of those who, however disturbed society may be, or however much the nation may rock under hail-storms and bewail its fallen cities, yet press on with unwearied assiduity, doing what good they can, sowing seed unto salvation beside all waters and pushing every fit agency wisely and without faltering. The spirit of the verse suggests these words of the Psalmist: ‘He that goeth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him’ (Psalm 126:6).—In Christ’s gospel kingdom there will be such faithful workers. The words that affirm their blessedness of course assume their existence and their faithful work.” This last comment fits in well with what we said earlier when we quoted the D&C: “...that we should waste and wear out our lives in bringing to light” (D&C 123:13b). Keith observes: “The fertility of the land and the security of the people are represented in the last verse: where before drought and barrenness prevailed, there will be sowing beside all waters, and the beasts of burden will supplant the beasts of prey ... The chief idea... in the passage, is the contrast between the universal fertility and security of the land in the days of righteousness, and what it has been while judgment-stricken.” Barnes suggests: “The sense of this verse is, that while the enemies of the Jews would be overthrown, they themselves would be permitted to cultivate their lands in security. Instead of predicting this directly, the prophet implies that this would occur, by declaring that those who were permitted to do this were happy.”

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²⁷ Pratt, Elder Orson. “Fulfillment of Prophecy,” 30 August 1875. (JD 18:144, OP), p. 149.

²⁸ Pratt, Elder Orson. “Fulfillment of Prophecy,” 30 August 1875. (JD 18:144, OP), p. 153.

Isaiah 33

Wordsworth suggests: “The discomfiture of Sennacherib is here again enlarged upon by the prophet, as a type and specimen of the future overthrow of all the adversaries of God and His Church; and the deliverance of Hezekiah and Jerusalem is a figure of the Universal Redemption to be wrought by CHRIST.” In the last days, then, the Antichrist and Gog will come against Jerusalem but the exalted Lord will rise to defend His people. The ravages of the enemies of God will be such that the highways will lie waste and the earth will mourn. In the midst of the horror, the Lord’s arm will be made manifest. The nations who fight against God will be burnt in the Second Coming but those who love the Lord and have lived in righteousness will *abide the day of His coming* (Malachi 3:2). The whole earth shall be filled with the Glory of God. The Lord will protect Zion. The Millennial reign will be established with Christ as King.

vv. 1–12. In these verses the concept of the Lord being *lifted up, rising* or being *exalted* is repeated (ISAIAH 33:3, 5 & 10). There seems to be a bit of a chiasmus in which the Lord is praised, there is mention of despair (ISAIAH 33:7–9) and then back to praising the Lord (ISAIAH 33:10). Likewise, the idea of salvation is repeated in ISAIAH 33:2, 6, and 22. The enemy seems to be the *αντιχριστος* *Antichrist* and גוג *Gog*. About Gog—the King of Magog—and surrounding the Second Advent, we read: “[Gog] King of Magog, whose invasion of Israel was prophesied by Ezekiel (Ezekiel 38–39). The prophecy points to a time when the gentile nations of the north would set themselves against the people of God ...” (*Gog*, LDS Bible Dictionary). This is to be differentiated from the great battle of Gog and Magog at the *end* of the Millennium—which is *not* related to ISAIAH 33.

1 ¶ WOE to thee that spoilest, and thou [wast] not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; [and] when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee.

WOE to thee that spoilest, and thou [wast] not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Woe to him who is coming to spoil thee, and shall they not spoil thee? And *woe to him* that is coming to plunder, and shall they not plunder thee?” The LXX (Ϟ) reads, “Woe to them who miserably afflict you; but none can make you miserable. Even the deceiver doth not deceive you.” The Peshitta (ܣ) here suggests that those who have plundered will not continue to do so and that if any seek to plunder they will, in turn, be plundered. The

Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “Woe to thee that spoilest, shalt not thou thyself also be spoiled? and thou that despisest, shalt not thyself also be despised?” Most all exegetes apply these words fully or in part to King Sennacherib of Asshur (a few prefer to direct them toward Babylon). However well they fit these circumstances, this chapter of Isaiah seems eschatological in nature and thus the *spoiler* must refer to the *αντιχριστος* and to *Gog*, גוג.

Regarding the *Antichrist*, in the LDS Bible Dictionary we read: “A word used by John to describe one who would assume the guise of Christ but in reality would be opposed to Christ (1 John. 2:18–22; 4:3–6; 2 John 1:7). In a broader sense it is anyone or anything that counterfeits the true gospel or plan of salvation and that openly or secretly is set up in opposition to Christ. The great antichrist is Lucifer, but he has many assistants both as spirit beings and as mortals. See 2 Thessalonians 2:1–12; Revelation 13:17; Jacob 7:1–23; Alma 1:2–16; 30:6–60.” ¶ *When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; [and] when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “When thou shalt come to spoil, they shall spoil thee, and when thou shalt be weary of plundering, they shall plunder thee.” The LXX (Ϟ) reads, “The deceivers shall be taken and delivered up and like a moth on a garment they shall be crushed.” The Peshitta (ܣ) explains that those who seek to deal *treacherously* (Lamsa) / *lie* (BPE) will receive the same treatment from others. The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, for the second clause, “When being wearied thou shalt cease to despise, thou shalt be despised.” Both the Targum (ⲧ) and the Vulgate (ⲫ) render this passage a question regarding the consequences of wrongdoing. This verse speaks of the law of consequences so that all who love wrong: “are in a state contrary to the nature of happiness” (Alma 41:11). It is a similar idea that we find in Revelation: “He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword” (Revelation 13:10a). In Matthew 26:52b, we likewise hear what the Savior taught to His disciples:

“Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” Ironside writes: “In all God’s ways with men the principle abides true that whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. This applies to nations as well as individuals. The powers that have wreaked their vengeance upon Israel unprovoked must in turn be visited with judgment after God has used them for the chastening of His people ... Those who in future days will rise up to oppress the covenant people will be permitted to go only as far as God in His infinite wisdom and justice deems well, then they in turn will be destroyed and Israel delivered.”

2 O LORD, be gracious unto us; we have waited for thee: be thou their arm every morning, ~~our~~ **their** salvation also in the time of trouble.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “O Lord, be merciful unto us; we hoped for Thy Word: be thou our strength every day, our salvation also in the time of distress.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Lord, have mercy upon us! for in thee we have placed our trust. The seed of the rebellious were for destruction: but thou wast our safety in the time of trouble.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) reads something like, “Have mercy upon us, O Lord, for we have trusted in thee. Be thou our helper in the *morning* (BPE) / *every morning* (Lamsa) and our *savior* (BPE) / *our salvation* (Lamsa) in our moments of affliction.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “O Lord, have mercy on us: for we have waited for thee: be thou our arm in the morning, and our salvation in the time of trouble.” In the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲙ) we have **and be thou, יהיה**, while the Masoretic text (ⲙ) has **thou, יהיה**. This is the same familiar form for *it came to pass* or *and it shall come to pass* (יהיה). ¶ *O LORD, be gracious unto us; we have waited for thee*. Gesenius explains that when the concept of wait קוה is

associated with that of the Lord, יהוה then it means to “to fix one’s hope on Jehovah.” (See notes on ISAIAH 40:31, especially the comments by Elder Robert D. Hales.) We certainly see in יהוה **קִיְנוּ לָךְ קִיְנוּ** (LORD, *be gracious unto us; we have waited for thee*) the same pattern. ¶ *Be thou their arm every morning, their salvation also in the time of trouble*. This reminds us of the Savior’s intercessory prayer on our behalf, including: “I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil” (John 17:15). The Prophet here seems to be overcome by the Spirit of intercession as he prays for us that we might withstand the evil hour (Hymn 239, Choose the Right), or the time of trouble. Barnes explains: “The Vulgate and the Chaldee read it in this

manner [i.e., have changed the text from their arm to our arm], but there is no authority from manuscripts for a change in the text [but rather, Isaiah is ‘impelled by prophetic inspiration,’].” ¶ *Be thou their arm*

יהיה זרעם, is a request for the Lord to be a strength unto the faithful. It is the Lord’s arm, then, that protects us if we stand in holy places. ¶ The idea of **לְכָרִים** *Every morning*, means *continually* as Alma has: “Teach them an everlasting hatred against sin and iniquity. Preach unto them repentance, and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ; teach them to humble themselves and to be meek and lowly in heart; teach them to withstand every temptation of the devil, with their faith on the Lord Jesus Christ. Teach them to never be weary of good works, but to be meek and lowly in heart; for such shall find rest to their souls. O, remember, my son, and learn wisdom in thy youth; yea, learn in thy youth to keep the commandments of God. Yea, and cry unto God for all thy support; yea, let all thy doings be unto the Lord, and whithersoever thou goest let it be in the Lord; yea, let all thy thoughts be directed unto the Lord; yea, let the affections of thy heart be placed upon the Lord forever. Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good; yea, when thou liest down at night lie down unto the Lord, that he may watch over you in your sleep; and when thou risest in the morning let thy heart be full of thanks unto God; and if ye do these things, ye shall be lifted up at the last day” (Alma 37:32b–37). Wesley suggests: “[That every morning means] comprehensively, the morning being put for the whole day. The sense is, help us speedily and continually.” So, who is doing the praying here? It is all the holy prophets and the Lord’s disciples since the world began, but above all it is the Lord Himself.

3 At the noise of the tumult the people fled; at the lifting up of thyself the nations were scattered.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “At the voice of a tumultuous noise the people are afraid (Chaldee, ‘broken’), on account of the multitude of mighty actions kingdoms are scattered.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “At the terror of thy voice peoples were confounded; for fear of thee the nations were dispersed.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, for the first clause, “At the voice of the angel the people fled.” ¶ Delitzsch explains: “The noise comes from Jehovah, who is raising Himself judicially.” But when is He rising? There have been—and yet will be—many times when this scripture is fulfilled. It was fulfilled at the time of the Assyrian attack on Jerusalem, it was fulfilled multiple times when the mobs attacked the Saints in early Church history. But it seems to me that this will be especially so when the nations of the earth

have come against Jerusalem in the last days, and the Lord comes to intercede for His people: “And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for *his* only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for *his* firstborn” (Zechariah 12:9–10). And in modern times we have: “Then shall the arm of the Lord fall upon the nations. And then shall the Lord set his foot upon this mount, and it shall cleave in twain, and the earth shall tremble, and reel to and fro, and the heavens also shall shake. And the Lord shall utter his voice, and all the ends of the earth shall hear it; and the nations of the earth shall mourn, and they that have laughed shall see their folly. And calamity shall cover the mocker, and the scorner shall be consumed; and they that have watched for iniquity shall be hewn down and cast into the fire. And then shall the Jews look upon me and say: What are these wounds in thine hands and in thy feet? Then shall they know that I am the Lord; for I will say unto them: These wounds are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. I am he who was lifted up. I am Jesus that was crucified. I am the Son of God” (D&C 45:47–52). ¶ *At the noise of the tumult* (הַמִּוֶּהָל). I believe this clause is parallel to what follows, “at the lifting up of thyself.” Both refer to an action taken by the Lord on behalf of His people. Barnes explains: “Yahweh is often represented as speaking to people in a voice suited to produce consternation and alarm. Thus it is said of the vision which Daniel saw of a man by the side of the river Hiddekel, ‘his words’ were ‘like the voice of a multitude’ (הַמִּוֶּהָל), Daniel 10:6... And thus, in Revelation 1:10, the voice of Christ is said to have been ‘like the voice of a trumpet.’” ¶ *At the lifting up of thyself*. The Lord is always aware of us, and waits for the precise and perfect moment to intervene—no sooner or later than is expedient. This expression, gives the figure of the Lord standing to act. So it is that we see “The LORD standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people” (ISAIAH 3:13). This is an expression similar to that of the *Lord lifting us His hand* (see notes on ISAIAH 26:11). In both this verse and in ISAIAH 26:11, the elliptical expression—of why the Lord is *getting on His feet* or *lifting up His hand*—is missing. Nägelsbach well says: “The LORD arises ... to smite the enemy.”

¶ *The nations were scattered* נִפְצְוּ גוֹיִם here means, not the Jews, but rather אֶת-כָּל-הַבָּאִים עַל-יְרוּשָׁלַם “all the nations that come against Jerusalem” (Zechariah 12:9b). They would flee in fear.

4 And your spoil shall be gathered [like] the gathering of the caterpillar: as the running to and fro of locusts shall he run upon them.

And your spoil shall be gathered [like] the gathering of the caterpillar: The Targum (ܬ) has, “And the house of Israel shall gather the treasures of the people, their enemies, as they gather the locusts.” The LXX (Θ) reads, “Now your spoils are to be gathered; the spoils both of small and great.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And your spoils shall be gathered together as the locusts are gathered.” Keith explains, “The devastation wrought by the Jews on their enemies is expressed by a figure drawn from the habits of the caterpillar and locust, very significant in a country where the ravages of these creatures are as familiar as they are terrible. The one allusion may denote the completeness of the spoiling, the other its rapidity.” Faussett explains that “‘the wingless locust’; as it gathers; the *Hebrew* word for ‘gathers’ [אָסַף] is properly used of the gathering of the fruits of harvest (ISAIAH 32:10). Wesley has: “As caterpillars gather and devour the fruits of the earth.” Rawlinson explains: “The ‘caterpillar’ (הַחֲסִיל) is probably the grub out of which the locust develops a very destructive insect.” Gill writes: “That [Israel’s] enemies should flee, be scattered, and perish, and that [Israel] should be victorious, and enjoy the spoils of them; which they should gather as easily as the caterpillar or locust, as some render it, gathers and consumes herbs, and every green thing; or as easily as they are gathered, and laid on heaps, being weak and unable to defend themselves.” ¶ *As the running to and fro of locusts shall he run upon them*. The Targum (ܬ) has, “They shall be armed with the instruments of warfare (Chaldee, ‘arms’), as they are armed with a sling. The LXX (Θ) reads, “As if one were gathering: locusts, so will they insult you.” The Peshitta (ܣ) has something like, “As locusts in a swarm that are gathered together (Lamsa) / bunched up (BPE).” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “As when the ditches are full of them.” See Joel 2:9, “They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief.” Delitzsch explains: “The inhabitants of Jerusalem swarm in the enemy’s camp like beetles; they are all in motion, and carry off what they can.”

5 The LORD is exalted; for he dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness.

The Targum (ⓧ) has, “Mighty is the Lord who maketh His Shekinah to dwell in the highest heavens, who hath promised to fill Zion with them that do true justice and righteousness.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “Holy is the God who dwelleth on high, Was Sion filled with judgment and justice?” The Prophet Joseph Smith said that Zion, as a word and concepts, represents “a place of righteousness” (TPJS, p. 80). Now that the Lord has triumphed over Israel’s enemies, praises erupt towards God.

6 And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, [and] strength of salvation: √ the fear of the LORD [is] his treasure.

√ salvations

And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times. The Targum (ⓧ) has, “And it shall come to pass, whatever good Thou hast promised to them that fear Thee, Thou wilt bring and establish it in its time.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “By law they were to be delivered up; in treasures is our safety.” Instead of *wisdom and knowledge*, the Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *faith*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, “And there shall be faith in thy times: riches of salvation, wisdom and knowledge.”, that is, *And it shall come to pass* [יְהִי] *that wisdom &c.* Wisdom and knowledge truly refer to the same thing, as people, when they come to a true understanding of God will fully realize: “For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea” (Habakkuk 2:14). This is a true *fear of the Lord* (יְהוָה) not the false one mentioned in ISAIAH 29:13b, “and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men.” This will take place during the Millennium or times of the Messiah. ¶ [And] *strength of salvation: the fear of the LORD [is] his treasure.* The Targum (ⓧ) has, “Strength and salvation, wisdom and knowledge. For them that fear the Lord, the treasure of His goodness is prepared.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “Let there be there wisdom and knowledge and piety towards the Lord, (These are the treasures of righteousness).” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓢ) has, “And your salvation in a place of refuge; wisdom and knowledge and the reverence of the LORD is his treasure.” The DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⓢ) has *strength and salvations*, חֲסֶן וְיִשׁוּעוֹת, while the Masoretic text (Ⓜ) has *strength [of] salvations*, חֲסֶן יְשׁוּעוֹת. Regarding this strength of *salvations*, יְשׁוּעָה. The singular is יְשׁוּעָה, or *Yeshua*, we note. *Jesus*, Ἰησοῦς, is the Greek version of *Yeshua*, יְהוֹשֻׁעַ. Now, here is an interesting thing, indeed. Elder Parley P. Pratt taught that there are

several types of salvation, but that *eternal salvation*, the greatest of all, is only available to those who die before the age of accountability as well as those who embrace the Gospel and endure “till the end of this life of probation.”¹ Elder Dallin H. Oaks, likewise, taught this principle.² It becomes clear that some are saved into a Testial Glory, others into a Terrestrial Glory, and yet others into a Celestial Glory. When our Christian friends ask us if we have been saved, or “born again,” Elder Oaks explained that “our answer must be ‘yes.’” In the scriptures, however, we are commanded to “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (Philippians 2:12b). None of this denies the grace we must receive of the Savior to accomplish this. Latter-day Saints (as well as some other fellow-Christians), however, do not believe in “cheap grace,” or “grace without discipleship.”³ Indeed, as LDS we read: “For we labor diligently to write, to persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God; for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do” (2 Nephi 25:23). Brother Brad Wilcox explains that grace is what helps us to change and improve in this life, if we will accept the Lord’s help. He tells us that when his evangelical friends ask if he has been saved by grace, he responds affirmatively. But then Brother Wilcox asks if they have been *transformed by grace*.⁴ In other words, we still have to use our agency to permit the Redeemer’s grace to work in our lives, and give us the strength, desire and courage to repent. No doubt the more traditional way we think of grace will also play a role when we come before the Father and our Redeemer intercedes for us. An interesting question may be profitably asked. Does our repentance lead to grace, or does grace lead to our repentance? Or, are both of these true? Elder Jeffrey R. Holland speaks about grace in the most comforting manner. Elder Holland talks about the importance of persevering in our efforts to be disciples of Christ and the need for being less critical and more forgiving of others. About grace he said: “Our only hope for true perfection is receiving it as a gift from Heaven. We

¹ Pratt, Parley P. *The Latter-Day Saints Millennial Star*, Volume II. No. 2. June 1841.

² Oaks, Elder Dallin H. Have you been saved? April 1998 General Conference.

³ Bonhoeffer, Dietrich, *The Cost of Discipleship*, Chr. Kaiser Verlag München, 1937; and Nibley, Hugh W. The Atonement of Jesus Christ, Part 3, *Ensign*, September 1990.

⁴ Brother Brad Wilcox was a mission president in Chile and has given numerous talks and written articles on the theme of grace, including several entitled *His Grace is Sufficient*. The truth of the matter is that I never quite understood his message until he contrasted how LDS understand grace in comparison to our evangelical friends. I have struggled to comprehend grace for decades and feel I am, little by little, beginning to better understand. An important “aha moment” came when Brad Wilcox was interviewed in a podcast by Nick Galieti on 28 September 2016.

won't earn it. Thus the grace of Christ offers us salvation ... By His grace you may be perfect in Christ ... If we persevere then somewhere in eternity our refinement will be finished and complete, which is the New Testament meaning of perfection.”⁵ ¶ I wish to testify with all the power of my soul that I have indeed desired that grace and felt of that “divine means of help or strength, given through the bounteous mercy and love of Jesus Christ ... [and that] this grace is an enabling power that allows men and women to lay hold on eternal life and exaltation after they have expended their own best effort” (Grace, LDS Bible Dictionary). Elder Oaks, regarding the ultimate meaning of salvation, explains that for LDS, most often “the words *saved* and *salvation* are also used to denote exaltation or eternal life ... [and that regarding this meaning of the word] it is premature for any of us to say that we have been ‘saved’ in mortality. That glorious status can only follow the final judgment of Him who is the Great Judge of the living and the dead.”⁶ ¶ *The fear of the LORD [is] his treasure. The fear of the Lord,* **יְרֵאָה יְהוָה**, as we have said before, is nothing more than a *deep abiding love for the Lord*. It is being filled with a testimony that God’s plan will triumph and that man is nothing in comparison.

7 Behold, their valiant ones[✓] shall cry without: the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly.

✓ or, messengers

Wildberger here suggests that the use of the word **יָבִיחַ**, *behold*, marks the beginning of a new section and explains that **יָבִיחַ** “is the same as the more common **הִנֵּה**.” After the thrill of contemplating Millennial day, looking forward to that time when “Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory” (Articles of Faith 10b) we are thrust back to what will be one of the darkest moments in the earth’s history. These scriptures, especially in the Targum (**ܬ**) and Peshitta (**ܫ**), remind us of Zechariah 12:10b, “And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.” The Targum (**ܬ**) has, “When Thou shalt reveal Thyself to them, the messengers of the nations shall cry bitterly in the

street; those who had gone forth to proclaim peace, shall return to weep in the bitterness of soul.” For the first clause, the Lamsa Peshitta (**ܫ**) has, “If he should be seen by them they shall howl violently,” and BPE has, “If he were to manifest himself to them they would shout loudly.” The LXX (**ϸ**) reads, “Then behold with the dread of you they shall be terrified — they, of whom you have been afraid, will for fear of you raise a grievous cry. Messengers will be sent weeping bitterly, suing for peace.” The Douay-Rheims (**Ϲ**) has, “Behold they that see shall cry without, the angels of peace shall weep bitterly.” The Hebrew **הַצָּדִיק** (from **חָיִי**), means *outside*, or *in the street* (Gesenius, BDB, HAL). Several translations render it *in the street* or a like expression (CEV, ESV, GW, HCSB, ISV, NASB). It is possible that these verses allude to Zechariah 12:10, but the context of the Masoretic text (**מ**) seems to point to the time when the powers of the **ἀντιχριστός** or the *Antichrist* and adversary are strong and the two witnesses, or prophets, will lie in the streets of Jerusalem. “Thy sons have fainted, they lie at the head of all the streets, as a wild bull in a net: they are full of the fury of the LORD, the rebuke of thy God” (ISAIAH 51:20). In the Book of Mormon we have: “And none to guide her among all the sons she hath brought forth; neither that taketh her by the hand, of all the sons she hath brought up. These two sons are come unto thee, who shall be sorry for thee—thy desolation and destruction, and the famine and the sword—and by whom shall I comfort thee? Thy sons have fainted, save these two; they lie at the head of all the streets; as a wild bull in a net, they are full of the fury of the Lord, the rebuke of thy God” (2 Nephi 8:18–20). John gives us: “and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And

⁵ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland spoke today 30 September 2017, in the Saturday morning session of General Conference.

⁶ Oaks, Elder Dallin H. Have you been saved? April 1998 General Conference.

they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. And after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them” (Revelation 11:2b–11). So also Gill, who writes: “... ‘their valiant ones,’ such who have been valiant for the truth on earth... the two witnesses that prophesy in sackcloth openly and publicly, and who will be slain, and their bodies lie unburied in the street of the great city (Revelation 11:3). In D&C we read: “Q. What is to be understood by the two witnesses, in the eleventh chapter of Revelation? A. They are two prophets that are to be raised up to the Jewish nation in the last days, at the time of the restoration, and to prophesy to the Jews after they are gathered and have built the city of Jerusalem in the land of their fathers” (D&C 77:15).⁷ ¶ Who, then, are the ambassadors of peace who will weep so bitterly? It seems to me they will be the remaining Brethren of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve who hold the Holy Apostleship and are most definitely אַרְאֵלִים, and all of the faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. ¶ Regarding the Hebrew אַרְאֵלִים [valiant ones, messengers],

Lowth has: “Three MSS. read אַרְאֵלִים, that is, lions of God, or strong lions. So they called valiant men heroes.” Delitzsch also has: “אַרְאֵלִים is probably chosen with some allusion to ‘Ariel ... [ISAIAH 29]; but it has a totally different meaning. We have rendered it ‘heroes,’ because אַרְאֵלִים is here synonymous with אַרְאֵל in the *Nibelung*-like piece contained in 2 Samuel 23:20 and 1 Chronicles 11:22. This אַרְאֵל, which is here contracted into אַרְאֵל (compare the biblical name ‘Ar’ēlī and the post-biblical name of the angels, ‘Er’ellīm), is compounded of ‘arī (a lion) and ‘El (God), and therefore signifies ‘the lion of God.’”

8 The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth: he hath broken the covenant, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man.

The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth: The LXX (6) reads, “For their highways shall be deserted.” The Douay-Rheims (1) has, “The ways are made desolate, no one passeth by the road.” Rather than

⁷ Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote regarding these two witnesses in *The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man*, p. 390.

a street (חַוִּיץ), we now have a מַסְלָה (plural for מַסְלָה) also a path or a road, sometimes lined up with stones (HAL). Bishops’ Bible translates it as “Their streetes are waste,” while Geneva renders it: “The pathes are waste.” This first part of the verse seems to be a continuation of the last verse. Because of fear, the people have abandoned the streets. No one dares remove the bodies of the dead prophets from the streets and so they “And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city” (Revelation 11:8a). ¶ *He hath broken the covenant, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man.* The Targum (7) has, “Because they have forgotten the covenant: they shall be removed far from their cities; they have not considered the sons of men, evil shall come upon them. The LXX (6) reads, “The dread of the nations is at an end and the treaty with them broken. And you will account them common men.” The Peshitta (5), for the first clause, has *the covenant is broken* (Lamsa) / *the covenant was esteemed as naught* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (1) has, “The covenant is made void, he hath rejected the cities, he hath not regarded the men.” In this clause the prophet seems to speak of Satan, who is the master of covenant breaking—and he regards no city and no man and is the enemy of God and of man. Satan’s greatest joy is when he seduces men into breaking their covenants. We read these reassuring words: “Protection against the influence of the devil is found by obedience to the commandments and laws of the gospel of Jesus Christ.”⁸

9 The earth mourneth [and] languisheth: Lebanon is ashamed [and] hewn down: Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off [their fruits].

✓ or, withered

The earth mourneth [and] languisheth: Lebanon is ashamed [and] hewn down: The Targum (7) has, “The land mourneth, it is laid desolate; Lebanon is withered, it shakes off its leaves.” The LXX (6) reads, “The land mourned; Lebanon was ashamed.” Instead of *hewn down*, the Peshitta (5) has *confounded* (Lamsa) / *confused* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (1) has, for the second clause, “Libanus is confounded and become foul.” This is not the only time we hear in Isaiah of the earth convulsing for the evil that she has seen (see ISAIAH 24:4–5). ¶ *Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off [their fruits].* The Targum (7) has, “Sharon has become like a desert; Bashan is laid desolate, and Carmel.” The LXX (6)

⁸ Satan, LDS Bible Dictionary.

reads, “Saron was become fens (Brenton, ‘marshes’); Galilee and Charmel were bare.” Instead of *shake off [their fruits]*, the Peshitta (S) has *are desolate*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And Saron is become as a desert: and Basan and Carmel are shaken.” The YLT renders it: “Withered hath been Sharon as a wilderness, And shaking are Bashan and Carmel.” The Hebrew has *as the Arabah* (desert) כַּעֲרָבָה. So also the RV, NASB, ESV, Darby, CEV, ASV, AMP as well as most Spanish versions). The BBE uses the Hebrew word, “Sharon is like the Arabah.” Barnes explains, “Lebanon was distinguished for its ornaments of beautiful cedars. Here iris represented as being stripped of these ornaments, and as covered with shame on that account ... Sharon was the name of a district south of mount Carmel along the coast of the Mediterranean, extending to Cesarea and Joppa. The name was almost proverbial to express any place of extraordinary beauty and fertility (see 1 Chronicles 5:16; 27:29; Song of Solomon 2:1; ISAIAH 35:2; 65:10). There was also another Sharon on the east side of the Jordan, and in the vicinity of Bashan, which was also a fertile region (1 Chronicles 5:16). To this, it is more probable that the prophet here refers, though it is not certain. The object seems to be to mention the most fertile places in the land as being now desolate.”

10 Now will I rise, saith the LORD; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself.

The Targum (T) has, “Now I will reveal myself, saith the Lord; now will I lift myself up on high; now will I be exalted.” The LXX (G) reads, “Now will I arise, saith the Lord, now shall I be glorified; now shall I be exalted; now you shall see: now you shall feel.” In ISAIAH 33:10, we have the force of a three-fold repetition: *now rise*, עֲתָה אֲקוּם ~ *now exalted*, עֲתָה אֲנִישָׂא ~ *now lift up*, עֲתָה אֲרִמָּם (also see ISAIAH 33:3, 5). We note, in this verse, the Lord alluding to His upcoming triumphs. When the two witnesses are raised up, this will be a manifest show of His glory: “And after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them” (Revelation 11:11–12).

11 Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble: your breath, [as] fire, shall devour you.

Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble: The Targum (T) has, “Ye, O people! have purposed for yourselves purposes of iniquity; ye have worked for yourselves evil works, because your works are evil.” The LXX (G) reads, “The strength of your spirit shall be vain.” Instead of *chaff*, the Peshitta (S) has *thorns*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has *heat* instead of *chaff*. The words *conceive* (תִּלְדֶּה) and *bring forth* (תִּלְדֶּה) or *give birth*, from יָלַד are a direct allusion to giving birth. Elsewhere we see similar wording, such as give birth to wind (ISAIAH 26:18). Not only would the enemy conceive useless *chaff* and *stubble* (both of these representing the wheat or other cereal plants whose fruit has been *removed*) but these would only serve to be burnt (next clause) by the Lord (see D&C 64:24b, *I will burn them up*). This verse seems to refer to Satan and the ἀντιχριστος *Antichrist* as well as those people (verse 12) who follow them. ¶ *Your breath, [as] fire, shall devour you.* The Targum (T) has, “My Word shall consume you, as a whirlwind consumes chaff.” The LXX (G) reads, “A fire shall utterly devour you.” It appears as if the very breath of the enemy of God’s people will kindle the chaff and stubble that was ready to be burnt. Alternatively, the Targum (T) has *my Word* (מִימְרֵי, from מִימָר, i.e., the word of the Lord) consuming the chaff and several modern translators likewise suggest it is the breath of the Lord who will start the fire: “You have conceived chaff, you will give birth to stubble; My breath will consume you like a fire” (NASB).

12 And the people shall be [as] the burnings of lime: [as] thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire.

Rather, as Kay mentions, *peoples* עַמִּים, or *nations*. It is correctly rendered by the ASV (and several others), “And the peoples shall be as the burnings of lime, as thorns cut down, that are burned in the fire.” Govett writes: “At this very height of his enemy’s power, shall Christ come, and with ‘flaming fire’ take vengeance on him and his host: ‘And the nations shall be burned as lime; as thorns in a field, cut up and burned.’ To which last time the reference of the parable of ‘the tares bound in bundles to burn them,’ is not improbably intended by our Lord. So the destruction of Christ’s enemies in the fire of Tophet is alluded in those terrible words of warning.” The Targum (T) has, “And the people shall be as the burning of fire, as thorns are cut up and burnt in the fire.” The LXX (G) reads, “And nations shall be burned up, as thorns in a field are rejected and burned.” Instead of *cut up*, the Peshitta (S) has *gathered together* (Lamsa) / *piled up* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (V) has,

“And the people shall be as ashes after a fire, as a bundle of thorns they shall be burnt with fire.” Dry thorns (ISAIAH 9:18; 27:4), as well as chaff and stubble, are ideal for starting a fire. So also Redak [in Rosenberg], “The simile is to severed thorns rather than to growing ones, since the latter are moist and do not burn as quickly as dry, severed thorns.” Young says: “Thorns that are cut up are dry and flammable.” Regarding lime, Redak [in Rosenberg] thinks the people will be burnt as “as stones burned to lime.” Luther and Skinner have, “As if burned to lime” (*see also* Kaiser, Thompson). Skinner adds, “An image probably suggested by Amos 2:1⁹.” Wordsworth says, “In Palestine, the low matted thorns are cut up with mattocks and hooks to be burnt in the lime-kilns near the spot where they grow (*Dr. Thompson*, ‘The Land and the book,’ p. 59).” Barnes has: “As if placed in a burning lime-kiln, where they must certainly be destroyed (*see* ISAIAH 30:33).” Likewise, Faussett writes: “Perhaps alluding to their being about to be burnt on the funeral pyre (ISAIAH 30:33).” Rawlinson has: “**As the burnings of lime; as thorns.** Things that fire consumes utterly and quickly.”

vv. 13–24. In the last days, the wicked will be burnt while the righteous will be able to endure the devouring fire. Christ, the King, will dwell with the people and only a faint memory of suffering will remain in the days of Millennial bliss.

13 ¶ Hear, ye [that are] far off, what I have done; and, ye [that are] near, acknowledge my might.

The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “Hear ye, O righteous, that keep the law from of old, what I have done; and know ye, ye sinners (the Royal Polyglot reads תְּבָרִיִם, ‘good men’) that have returned to my law, that my strength is nigh.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “The far distant nations shall hear what I have done, they who are near shall know my power.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has *know* rather than *acknowledge*. In this verse we are called upon to confess our faith in the Lord and to praise His strength. Rawlinson has: “Jehovah speaks by the mouth of his prophet, and calls on the nations of the earth, far and near, to consider and acknowledge his might ... (compare Exodus 15:14–16). Gill explains that this is “the ruin of antichrist, the beast, and false prophet, and the burning of the city and whore ... for, whoever will be the instruments, the work is the Lord’s, and therefore

it will be done: ‘she shall be utterly burnt with fire, for strong is the Lord who judgeth her’ (Revelation 18:8), and this shall be heard of far and near, who shall applaud the mighty work, and give God the glory of it (Revelation 19:1) ... [so that] even his omnipotence, which will be seen, observed, and owned by multitudes, who will say, ‘Allelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth’ (Revelation 19:6).” Nägelsbach says, “According to ISAIAH 33:10 [also 3], Jehovah was about to arise and come to the rescue. He has done so. The rescue is accomplished in an astounding fashion. The present passage belongs to a time after the rescue. It presupposes it. For it contains glances into the future, that rest upon that deed as their foundation.”

14 The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?

The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. The Targum (Ⓢ) has in the second clause, “Terror hath seized the wicked.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “The transgressors in Sion are fled; terror will seize the ungodly.” Instead of *fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites*, the Peshitta (Ⓟ) has the idea that *shuddering has fallen upon the heathen*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, for the second clause, “Trembling hath seized upon the hypocrites.” The effect of the everlasting burnings (below) will be different to those who have rejected the Word in contrast to those who have fully embraced Him. Barnes writes: “The sentiment here is, that those who professedly are the friends of God, but who are secretly and really his enemies, are often alarmed at his judgments... That the punishment of hypocrites in the church will be dreadful and terrific. This seems to have been the conviction here. They saw that if such judgments came upon those who had no knowledge of the true God, it must be infinitely more terrible on those who had been trained amidst the institutions of religion, and who had professed attachment to Yahweh. And so it will be in a preeminent degree among those who have been trained in the Christian church, and who have been the professed but insincere followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.” Gill, in the same vein, has: “... formal professors, and hypocritical persons, in the reformed churches, or Protestants¹⁰ *having only a form of godliness, without the power of it*, are meant; who, observing God’s judgments upon antichrist, shall be

⁹ “Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he burned the bones of the king of Edom into lime” (Amos 2:1).

¹⁰ John Gill (1697–1771) speaks of his own churches, being that he is a protestant.

seized with a panic, lest the like should come down upon them for their hypocrisy and deceit; unless it should be rather thought that antichrist, and his followers themselves, are designed, who himself is said to sit in the temple of God, and who claim to themselves the name of the church of God, and pretend to be Christians, though they are not” (emphasis added). Horsley says, about the sinners in Zion, that they are the “wicked, false professors” of religion. ¶ President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “Some shall rise to the everlasting burning of God; for God dwells in everlasting burnings; and some shall rise to the damnation of their own filthiness, which is as exquisite a torment as the lake of fire and brimstone (D.H.C., Vol. 6, p. 317).”¹¹ Throughout the scriptures we so read, such as: “For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall burn as stubble; for they that come shall burn them, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch” (JS-H 1:37, compare to Malachi 4:1); “Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame” (ISAIAH 47:14a); and “For after today cometh the burning—this is speaking after the manner of the Lord—for verily I say, tomorrow all the proud and they that do wickedly shall be as stubble; and I will burn them up, for I am the Lord of Hosts; and I will not spare any that remain in Babylon” (D&C 64:24). After the Martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Elder John Taylor wrote: “And that if the fire can scathe a green tree for the glory of God, how easy it will burn up the dry trees to purify the vineyard of corruption” (D&C 135:6b, compare to Luke 23:31, where the Savior applied this expression to Himself). ¶ *Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?* The Targum (ܬ) clearly follows a corrupted and uninspired exegesis¹², “Who, when they were committing theft said: Who of us shall dwell in Zion, in which the brightness of His Shekinah is like devouring fire? Who of us shall sojourn in Jerusalem, where the wicked shall be judged, to be delivered into hell, into everlasting burning?” The LXX (Ϯ) reads, “Who will tell you that a fire is kindled? who will proclaim to you the place which is everlasting?” The Douay-Rheims (Ϯ) has, “Which of you can dwell with devouring fire? which of you shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” ¶ I love this and many other scriptures with a *who* **נִי** question (Psalm 15:1–5; 24:3–5; Malachi 15:1). ¶ Skinner says, “The word ‘dwell’ [**יָשַׁב**] means strictly ‘sojourn as a protected guest,’ and is the same as

that used in Psalm 15:1 [*who shall dwell*, **נִי-יָשַׁב**].” Cheyne writes: “‘Perpetual burnings,’ not with reference to the eternity of the punishment ... but because the fire of Jehovah’s self-manifesting love and wrath is, like himself, eternal.”¹³ Rawlinson explains: “The man who alone can dwell in the ‘devouring fire’ is the good man. He that is able to abide ‘the everlasting burnings’ is ‘the man that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly.’” So also Meyer, who beautifully says: “The devouring fire and everlasting burnings of ISAIAH 33:14 are clearly the emblems of the divine presence. The righteous dwell in God as the bush which was baptized in the Shekinah-glory and was not consumed. The fire of His holy presence makes them holy ...” Skinner says that it is “the righteous who dwell securely with the consuming fire of divine holiness.” Ironside writes: “The verses that follow give the answer to the passage. ‘Our God is a consuming fire’ (Hebrews 12:29). They only can abide before Him who ... are seeking now to walk before Him in truth and uprightness.” Nägelsbach says, “This fire is harmless for the pious, the lovers of truth, the righteous.” ¶ President John Taylor, who also quoted some of these same verses (plus also Psalm 89:4), explained that “There is an inexorable law of God that requires from His professed followers the principles of virtue, honor, truth, integrity, righteousness, justice, judgment and mercy.”¹⁴ Our beloved Prophet Joseph Smith explained the right context for **מוֹקְדֵי עוֹלָם**, *everlasting burnings*: “What is it [to rise again to dwell in everlasting burnings in immortal glory, not to sorrow, suffer, or die anymore; but be heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ]? To inherit the same power, the same glory and the same exaltation, until you arrive at the station of a God, and ascend the throne of eternal power, the same as those who have gone before. What did Jesus do? Why; I do the things I saw my Father do when worlds came rolling into existence. My Father worked out his kingdom with fear and trembling, and I must do the same; and when I get my kingdom, I shall present it to my Father, so that he may obtain kingdom upon kingdom, and it will exalt him in glory. He will then take a higher exaltation, and I will take his place, and thereby become exalted myself. So that Jesus treads in the tracks of his Father, and inherits what God did before; and God is thus glorified and exalted in the salvation and exaltation of all his children. It is plain beyond disputation, and you thus learn some of the first principles of the Gospel, about which so much hath

¹¹ Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 1:40.

¹² As in the previous verse, the ‘good’ **טָבִיא** was turned into ‘evil.’

¹³ Cheyne’s comments can well be compared to D&C 19:10–12.

¹⁴ Taylor, John. *Mediation and Atonement: An Examination into and an Elucidation of the Great Principle of the Mediation and Atonement of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*. Chapter 23. Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1882.

been said. When you climb up a ladder, you must begin at the bottom, and ascend step by step, until you arrive at the top; and so it is with the principles of the Gospel—you must begin with the first, and go on until you learn all the principles of exaltation. But it will be a great while after you have passed through the veil before you will have learned them. It is not all to be comprehended in this world; it will be a great work to learn our salvation and exaltation even beyond the grave.”¹⁵

15 He that walketh righteously, ✓ and speaketh uprightly; ✓ he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, ✓ that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, ✓ ✓ and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil;

- ✓ in righteousness
- ✓ ✓ uprightnesses
- ✓ ✓ ✓ or, deceits
- ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ or, bloods

Edward J. Young says, “The righteous one will not look at evil with delight, nor will he desire to become a participator in evil deeds. His organs of receptivity, the eyes, the ears, the hands, are not at the service of evil; and his organs of activity, the tongue and feet, likewise will have not part therein. The man who is to inhabit high places wishes that none of his members be yielded as instruments of unrighteousness.” Elder Boyd K. Packer taught: “The ordinances of washing and anointing are referred to often in the temple as initiatory ordinances. It will be sufficient for our purposes to say only the following: Associated with the endowment are washings and anointings—mostly symbolic in nature, but promising definite, immediate blessings as well as future blessings.”¹⁶ ¶ *He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood.* The Targum (ⓧ) has, “The prophet said, The just shall live in it, every one who walketh in righteousness, and speaketh honest things; removing himself to a distance from the mammon of iniquity (literally, ‘which deceives’); removing himself from oppressions, that restraineth his hands from holding a bribe, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of the shedding of innocent blood.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “He who is walking in

righteousness, speaking of a straight way; who hateth iniquity and injustice; who shaketh his hands from bribes; who stoppeth his ears that he may not hear a bloody sentence.” Instead of *the gain of oppressions*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *deceit and oppression*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓜ) has, “He that walketh in justices, and speaketh truth, that casteth away avarice by oppression, and shaketh his hands from all bribes, that stoppeth his ears lest he hear blood.” Young well says: “When others press into his hands the gain acquired from oppression he shakes his hands so that the gain falls to the ground. His action represents an indignant refusal of all such gain and money ... The righteous man not merely speaks against evil, but refuses to take part in it.” ¶ *He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly.* Regarding this clause, Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: “We must speak the truth and work the works of righteousness. We shall be judged by our thoughts, our words and our deeds.”¹⁷ See also ISAIAH 58:13a. Speaking uprightly also includes returning a soft answer.¹⁸ ¶ *He that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes.* Then Elder Spencer W. Kimball taught: “I began to think of many of our people whose minds are upon their wealth; who are increased with goods; who though clothed elegantly are naked and not in white raiment; who with eyes wide open see not; who are ‘greedy for filthy lucre.’ Now, all money is not lucre—all money is not filthy.”¹⁹ Elder Dallin H. Oaks has written about the dangers of materialism: “Those who set their hearts upon the things of the world usually focus on some combination of that worldly quartet of property, pride, prominence, and power. When attitudes or priorities are fixed on the acquisition, use, or possession of property, we call that condition materialism... Whatever its degree, an interest becomes materialism when it is intense enough to override priorities that should be paramount ... Some have charged that modern Latter-day Saints are peculiarly susceptible to the gospel of success and the theology of prosperity. According to this gospel, success in this world—particularly entrepreneurial success—is an essential ingredient of progress toward the celestial kingdom. According to this theology, success and prosperity are rewards for keeping the commandments, and a large home and an expensive car are marks of heavenly favor... Objective observers differ on whether

¹⁷ Elder Bruce R. McConkie, “Think on These Things,” *Ensign* (CR), January 1974, p.45.

¹⁸ For more on this subject, see my book, *Party-Directed Mediation*, especially Chapters 4 & 2. The book is a free PDF download on the Web from the University of California. URL: <http://nature.berkeley.edu/ucce50/ag-labor/7conflict/>

¹⁹ Elder Spencer W. Kimball, General Conference, 1 October 1953, pp. 51–53.

¹⁵ Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, selected and arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith, p.347–348 (also see TPJS 361, 367).

¹⁶ Packer, Elder Boyd K. “Come to the Temple,” 2007 *Ensign*.

Latter-day Saints are more susceptible to get-rich-quick proposals than other citizens. However that may be, it is disturbing that there is no clear evidence that Latter-day Saints are less susceptible... We must ... be so indifferent to material or earthly things that we are willing to give up cheerfully whatever is necessary to become 'equal' in those things (D&C 70:14; 78:5–6)... If Latter-day Saints are especially susceptible to materialism, this may be because materialism is a corruption of a virtue in which Latter-day Saints take special pride. Materialism is a seductive distortion of self-reliance."²⁰ ¶ *That stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood.* We will not rejoice in the shedding of blood or in war. Why is it, I ask myself, that people so easily rejoice in the beginning of war? People seem to be filled with euphoria. ¶ *And shutteth his eyes from seeing evil.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "And shutteth his eyes from looking at the workers of iniquity." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "Who shutteth his eyes against the appearance of injustice." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, "And shutteth his eyes that he may see no evil." To some degree, this is a command not to be judgmental. Not to see the worse in a situation. Just as important; an injunction against lustful thoughts. The Talmud tradition (Seder Nezikin, Baba Bathra 57b, also see Makkoth 24a) has a beautiful and poetic injunction against looking at women to lust after them, and instead, to look away and avoid those paths altogether: "Rabbi Johanan said in the name of Rabbi Bana'ah: Joint owners of a courtyard can stop one another from using the courtyard for any purpose save that of washing [clothes], since it is not fitting that the daughters of Israel should expose themselves to the public gaze while washing [clothes]. It is written: [The righteous one is] he that shutteth his eyes from looking upon evil, and [commenting on this] Rabbi Hiyya ben Abba said: This refers to a man who does not look at the women when they are washing [clothes]. How are we to understand this? If there is another road, then if [he does not take it] he is wicked. If there is no other road, then how can he help himself?—We suppose that there is no other road, and even so it is incumbent on him to hide his eyes from them" (Talmud, Soncino). Wildberger suggests that the expression מִן־רְאוֹת "does not simply mean to 'see something' but has the sense: 'his desire is to feast his eyes on something.'" I love the words of the Prophet Joseph Smith: "Let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven. The Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion, and thy scepter an unchanging scepter of righteousness and

truth; and thy dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, and without compulsory means it shall flow unto thee forever and ever" (D&C 121:45b–46). With the Psalmist I pray: "Create in me a clean heart, O God" (Psalm 51:10a) that I might "[lose] every desire for sin (History of the Church 2:8)."²¹

16 He shall dwell on high: ᵐ his place of defence [shall be] the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters [shall be] sure.

✓ heights, or, high places

He shall dwell on high: his place of defence [shall be] the munitions of rocks: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "The house of his inhabitation shall be in a high and exalted place; in the house of the sanctuary shall his soul be satisfied." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "He shall dwell in a lofty cavern of a strong rock." Instead of *munitions*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *precipice* (Lamsa) / *shear* or *cliff* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, "He shall dwell on high, the fortifications of rocks shall be his highness." Cheyne says, regarding ISAIAH 33:16–17, "We are already in the atmosphere of the Messianic age." Barnes suggests: "The literal translation of this place would be, 'The strongholds of the rocks shall be his lofty fortress.'" Christ is our Rock. Such a disciple of the Lord as we have been discussing in these verses shall *dwell on high* or be exalted in the Celestial Kingdom of our Lord. But even in this earth such a person will be protected (contrast this with ISAIAH 2:21). This is not to say that challenges will not have to be endured in

²¹ The Prophet Joseph Smith taught "That the nearer man approaches perfection, the clearer are his views, and the greater his enjoyments, till he has overcome the evils of his life and lost every desire for sin; and like the ancients, arrives at that point of faith where he is wrapped in the power and glory of his Maker, and is caught up to dwell with Him" (*History of the Church* 2:8). Elder Neal A. Maxwell explained: "When people are described as 'having lost their desire for sin,' it is they, and they only, who deliberately decided to lose those wrong desires by being willing to 'give away all [their] sins' in order to know God (Alma 22:18)" (According to the Desire of [Our] Hearts, October 1996 General Conference). In addition, these verses from the Prophet Moroni are instructive: "And awake, and arise from the dust [away from our spiritual bondage], O Jerusalem; yea, and put on thy beautiful garments, O daughter of Zion; and strengthen thy stakes and enlarge thy borders forever, that thou mayest no more be confounded, that the covenants of the Eternal Father which he hath made unto thee, O house of Israel, may be fulfilled. Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God. And again, if ye by the grace of God are perfect in Christ, and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission of your sins, that ye become holy, without spot" (Moroni 10:31–33).

²⁰ Oaks, Dallin H. *Pure in Heart*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1988, pp. 73, 76, 81, 83–85.

mortality, for that would defeat one of the very purposes of this probationary state. Someday—after we have passed the veil—we will see with more clarity how the Lord has protected us from harm. ¶ *Bread shall be given him; his waters [shall be] sure.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “His food shall be sufficient; his waters shall continue; like a fountain of water, whose waters fail not.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Bread shall be given him and his water shall not fail.” These are the very blessings pronounced in *Rain in Due Season* to all those who come unto Christ: both *bread* (food) and *water* (in the form of rain and blessings), such as Leviticus 26:4 and others in those chapters. Bread and water are also representative of spiritual gifts, not just temporal (see ISAIAH 3:1, *the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole staff of water*). Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: “Those who do come to quench their thirst, and who are true and faithful, shall drink forever from the pure fountain. As Isaiah expressed it, their ‘waters shall be sure’ (ISAIAH 33:16), meaning they shall be as their Lord, enjoying and possessing the same eternal life which he lives. As he said in our day: ‘Unto him that keepeth my commandments I will give the mysteries of my kingdom, and the same shall be in him a well of living water, springing up unto everlasting life’ (D&C 63:23).”²² The Savior said: “But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14).

17 Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.[✓]

✓ of far distances

Of the promises made to a righteous Israel, none is greater than, “And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people” (Leviticus 26:12, *Rain in Due Season*). This is, in fact, what is alluded to here, in that the people shall see the *king in his beauty* מֶלֶךְ בְּיָפִי. A few versions prefer to translate the *king in his glory* (Bishops, Geneva, CEV, BBE). The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “Thine eyes shall see the Shekinah of the king of the worlds in his beauty (or, ‘praise’); thou shalt behold and see those that descend down to hell.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “You shall see a king with glory; your eyes shall see a far distant land.” Who is the King but Christ, the Holy Messiah! Skinner says, “The reluctance of many expositors to interpret this phrase of the Messiah is incomprehensible.” Rawlinson has,

“When Christ appeared on earth at his first coming, he ‘had no beauty that men should desire him’ (ISAIAH 53:2). Roughly clad and toil-worn, whatever the heavenly expression of his countenance, he did not strike men as beautiful, majestic, or even as ‘comely’ (ISAIAH 53:2). But at his second coming it will be different ... / *a far stretching land*] (literally ‘a land of distance’), the spacious and ever-extending dominions of the Messiah (cf. Micah 5:4; Zechariah 9:10; Psalm 72:8).” ¶ *The land that is very far off, אֶרֶץ מֵרָחֵק.* Or, “Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold a land that reacheth afar” (ASV). AMP has “a land of wide distances that stretches afar”; ESV and ISV, “a land that stretches afar / far”; HCSB, “a vast land.” Ironside likewise has, “These shall behold the King in all His beauty and glory when He returns to fulfill prophetic scripture. They shall behold the land, that is, the land promised by God to Abraham’s seed, far extended, rather than ‘far off,’ as our Authorized Version reads.” So we have: “And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God; and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth” (Micah 5:4); “And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth” (Zechariah 9:10); and “He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth” (Psalm 72:8). Wesley has, “Christ, triumphing over all enemies, and ruling his own people with righteousness. Very far – Thou shalt not be shut up in Jerusalem, but shalt have free liberty to go abroad with honour and safety.” Jennings also has: “For this last line does not mean, as our Authorized Version intimates, that the land is far away; but when in it, the boundaries shall not be contracted, but as far as their eye can see or foot can carry, shall be theirs: as it was said to their father Abraham, ‘Lift up now thine eyes, for all the land that thou seest, to thee I will give it’ (Genesis 15:14, 15).” Govett writes: “Then follows the blessedness of the ransomed, even as the Saviour, in his interpretation of the parable of the tares, adds, ‘Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.’ So Isaiah,—‘Their eyes shall behold the King in his beauty.’” Wildberger says: “It is noteworthy that, for Israel’s faith, parallel to beholding God, a land is mentioned—a broad land. To be sure, אֶרֶץ מֵרָחֵק (a *broad land*) needs comment. In other passages, אֶרֶץ מֵרָחֵק means ‘land far away’ (see Jeremiah 4:16; 8:19) ... One is forced, as well, to stay with the common translation, but one still ought to be aware of the fact that ‘wide’ is meant in the sense of ‘far away, reaching far into the distance.’ In the time of salvation

²² Bruce R. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ*, p.207.

the narrow borders of the land of Israel will fall away.” When speaking of a faraway land, we must especially think of Zion in America. ¶ President Brigham Young said some things that directly bear on these verses of Isaiah (especially note the beholding of our Savior, the gathering of Israel, the requirements to dwell in righteousness, and the extent of Zion): “When will Zion be redeemed? When will the Saviour make his appearance in the midst of his people? When will the vail be taken away, that we may behold the glory of God? ... We must be pure to be prepared to build up Zion ... We are gathering a few that will be faithful in the midst of this people, and prepare themselves to be crowned kings and priests unto God ... When Joseph first revealed the land where the Saints should gather, a woman in Canada asked if we thought that Jackson County would be large enough to gather all the people that would want to go to Zion. I will answer the question really as it is. Zion will extend, eventually, all over this earth. There will be no nook or corner upon the earth but what will be in Zion. It will all be Zion ... We are going to gather as many as we can, bless them, give them their endowments, etc., preach to them the truth, lay the principles of eternal life before them, inform their minds all we have power to do, and lead them into the path of truth and righteousness; and those who will not abide the truth will apostatize. A few will remain, and a good share of them will cleave to the promises of the Lord, will be true in every respect, and will be accounted worthy to enter in at the strait gate.”²³

18 Thine heart shall meditate in terror. Where [is] the scribe? where [is] the receiver? where [is] he that counted the towers?

✓ weigher?

The Targum (ܬ) has, “Thy heart shall meditate great things: where are the scribes? where are the rulers? where are the mathematicians? Let them come, if they are able to count the number of the slain of the chief of the camp of the mighty.” The LXX (Ϝ) reads, “Your soul will meditate on terror. Where are the scribes? Where the counsellors? Where is he who numbereth them who are fed—the people small and great?” The Lamsa Peshitta (ܣ) has, “Your heart shall learn reverence. Where is the scribe? Where is the weigher? Where is he who counted towers for a mighty people?” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Thy heart shall meditate fear: where is the learned? where is he that pondereth the words of the law? where is the teacher of little

ones?” Regarding the counting of towers, we see: “According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of righteousness. Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments. Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death” (Psalm 48:10–14). Gill writes: “The apostle [Paul] cites these words, or at least alludes to them, 1 Corinthians 1:20, when he says, ‘where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world?’ triumphing over the wise doctors of the Jews, and the philosophers of the Gentiles, as not being able to face and withstand the power and wisdom of the Gospel. So here, when the people of God will be recovered from their fright, and be brought out of their low estate, and will have ascended into heaven, or be come into a glorious church state, they will then triumph over their enemies, who will be no more.” Govett likewise has: “Then shall the wisdom and might of the world be scattered, according to the passage of Paul—words, which agree exceedingly well with the scope of this passage: for in that day will it be seen that no counsel can prosper, no wisdom avail, against the design of Jehovah.” The Vulgate, in this case, is most closely associated with Paul. The whole idea here is that none of these things that one might have meditated in error exist anymore—not physical, not intellectual. Barnes wrote: “Where is the scribe? – How soon, how suddenly has he vanished! The word scribe here (ספּר) evidently refers to some prominent class of officers in the Assyrian army. It is from ספּר, to count, to number, to write; and probably refers to a secretary, perhaps a secretary of state or of war, or an inspector-general, who had the charge of reviewing an army 2 Kings 25:19; Jeremiah 37:15; 52:25. Where is the receiver? – Margin ||, as in Hebrew, ‘Weigher.’ ... Probably the word refers to him who weighed the tribute, or the pay of the Soldiers; and means, doubtless, some officer in the army of the [enemy]; probably one whose office it was to have charge of the military chest, and to pay the army. Where is he that counted the towers? – That is, who made an estimate of the strength of Jerusalem ... someone appointed by him to reconnoiter and report on the means which the city had of defense (compare ISAIAH 36:4).” Cheyne wrote, “Made a recognizance of the city to be besieged.” McFadyen, likewise explains that the towers were counted “with a view to attack.” To summarize, Jennings suggests: “The terror is gone forever, and is now but such a matter of memory as gives sweetness to the present peace. Those happy dwellers in that future Jerusalem muse on the time when they were trembling with fear, and ask, ‘What has

²³ Young, President Brigham. Gathering Of the Saints. Remarks made in the Bowery, Great Salt Lake City, July 28, 1861. *Journal of Discourses* 9:137–138.

become of the man who took stock of our goods? Where is he who followed him in taking those goods in the way of taxes? And as to the enemy who rode around our city counting its defensive towers before the attack—where has he gone? All have departed never to return.” Nor would those who taught *false doctrines* be found—regarding spiritual warfare.

19 Thou shalt not see a fierce people, a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive; of a stammering[✓] tongue, [that thou canst] not understand.

✓ or, ridiculous

The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Thou shalt not be able to see the government of a mighty people, whose language is so unintelligible (Chaldee, ‘deep,’ in the idea of searching after) *that thou canst* not understand it, whose tongue stammereth, because *there is* no understanding in them.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Alas! they gave no counsel; nor did they understand him whose voice was so low that a despised people could not hear, and he who heareth hath not knowledge.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “The shameless people thou shalt not see, the people of profound speech: so that thou canst not understand the eloquence of his tongue, in whom there is no wisdom.” In *Rain in Due Season*: “The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand” (Deuteronomy 48:49). Now, instead, there would be peace.

20 Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle [that] shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.

Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle [that] shall not be taken down. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “O Zion, thou shalt see their fall; O city of our festivals, thine eyes shall see the consolation of Jerusalem in her prosperity *and* security, like a tabernacle that is not taken (Chaldee, ‘broken’) down.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Behold the city Sion is our salvation. Thine eyes will look upon Jerusalem. It is a rich city composed of tents which should not be shaken.” Instead of *quiet habitation*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *rich habitation*; instead of *be taken down*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *shaken to and fro* (Lamsa) / *shaken* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has,

for the second half, “A rich habitation, a tabernacle that cannot be removed.” ¶ Wordsworth explains: “The Church of God is compared to a Tent, extended and fastened by cords, attached to stakes (pegs, or pins of wood), driven into the ground.” Skinner says, “*a tent that shall not be removed*] i.e. her people shall no more go into exile.”²⁴ Young says, “Travellers in the desert are compelled each morning to pull up their stakes and move their tent. A tent that does not have to be moved is permanent.” Ironside says, “Glorious is the prospect here presented. Jerusalem, so long a city of strife and warfare, will become a peaceful habitation, for the Prince of Peace will dwell there and His law go forth to all the world.” Jerusalem will indeed be one of the two world capitals, with Zion the other. The narrative on the peaceful condition continues where the Saints can look and enjoy the view of Zion, its tabernacles and temples, the places where her solemn assemblies take place, all in peace and quietness—and not in danger of being conquered. This is certainly during the millennium, as no such descriptors will properly fit for long periods of time before then. Horsley says, “Could Jerusalem in the time of Hezekiah be called ‘the quiet habitation, the tabernacle not to be shaken, whose stakes should not be removed for ever, of whose cords not any should be broken,’ when it was destroyed first by the Babylonians, and a second time by the Romans? To suppose that these promises had their accomplishment in the deliverance of the city from Sennacherib, and the prosperity of the remainder of Hezekiah’s reign ... [is to misunderstand the language of prophecy].” ¶ *Not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And whose pegs are not drawn out for ever, and whose cords shall not be broken.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Nor should the pins of her tabernacle ever be moved, nor its cords broken.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, for the first clause, “Neither shall the nails thereof be taken away for ever.” Barnes describes it: “The ‘stakes’ here refer to the poles or fixtures which were driven into the ground in order to fasten the tent, to enable them to spread it, or to the small stakes or pins that were driven in the ground in order to secure the cords by which the tent was extended.” Gill says that this verse: “allud[es] to tents and tabernacles made of curtains, fastened by cords to stakes, by which they are supported.” Rawlinson has: “By ‘the stakes’ are meant ‘the tent-pegs,’ to which the ropes are fastened which keep the tent firm.” Kay says, “There shall be no need to move the tent about in search of fresh pasturage, for the site of the New Zion shall be like that of Paradise [with broad

²⁴ Skinner points us to an example of the very opposite: “My tabernacle is spoiled, and all my cords are broken: my children are gone forth of me, and they are not: there is none to stretch forth my tent any more, and to set up my curtains” (Jeremiah 10:20).

rivers and streams].” That the stakes would not *ever be removed* means that the Church would be safe and established in a sure way. Likewise, the expression *neither shall any cords thereof be broken*, means that the establishment of Zion would be made sure. We might also say, that these stakes shall never be moved because they also are as ‘a nail in a sure place’ (ISAIAH 22:23b), because they are strengthened by the triumph of the Lord Jesus Christ over sin and death.

21 But there the glorious LORD [will be] unto us a place of broad rivers[✓] [and] streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby.

✓ broad of spaces, or, hands

But there the glorious LORD [will be] unto us a place of broad rivers [and] streams. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Yea, surely from thence the power of the Lord shall be revealed, to do good unto us from the place whence overflowing rivers of broad span shall flow (Chaldee, ‘broad of hands,’ or ‘space’).” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Because the name of the Lord is great to you, it shall be to you a place of streams and canals broad and spacious.” The BPE (Ⲯ) has, “Because Yahweh is a glorious name for us; for us He shall be an illuminated place, splendidous and wide.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “Because only there our Lord is magnificent: a place of rivers, very broad and spacious streams.” Broad rivers are those who have existed for a long time and generally wind their way with waters that flow slower and quietly, and are great for irrigation of the land. ¶ Simeon writes: “Jerusalem was despised as having no river to protect it ... but God promises that ‘he himself will be to it as a broad and rapid river.’ But it may be said that if, in one view, a river defends a city, in another view it affords means of attacking it to advantage. But God fully obviates this by saying, that he will be such a river as shall not be navigated by vessels, either great or small: yea, that in protecting his Church, he will shew himself to be ‘the glorious,’ the irresistible ‘Jehovah.’” Rawlinson explains that a *place of broad rivers* may mean: “Of refreshment and spiritual blessing.” Note that *broad rivers* would not be established, but rather, the Lord would be in place of broad rivers, and would provide the blessings directly. This is also the sense Skinner finds in this verse: “The key to the right understanding of the verse is the rendering **instead of** (see margin ||²⁵ and cf. Hosea 1:10) for a *place of* in R.V.” ¶ *Wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby.*

²⁵ Margin || or RV reads, OR, *in the place* of broad rivers.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Through which shall not pass the fishermen’s boat, nor the large pinnace²⁶ go through it.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Thou shalt not pass this way; nor shall a galley with oars cross. For my God is great and will not pass me by.” The BPE (Ⲯ) has, “Thus the authority of a prince shall not govern, nor the powerful that may be found shall not transgress upon him.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “No ship with oars shall pass by it, neither shall the great galley pass through it.” Keith says, “A river—even more a broad river—still more a place of broad rivers—is a familiar symbol of beauty and fertility: and a river without the gallant ship, or ship of war, is a symbol of peace: and what these are to a country, Christ will be to Judah during the reign of righteousness on earth.”

22 For the LORD [is] our judge, the LORD [is] our lawgiver,[✓] the LORD [is] our king; he will save us.

✓ statute-maker

The DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲯ) introduces three *ands* that are not present in the Masoretic text (Ⲯ), וְיְהוָה / וְיְהוָה / וְיְהוָה. That is, “**And** [the] LORD [is] our lawgiver, **and** [the] LORD [is] our king; **and** he will save us.” ¶ *For the LORD [is] our judge.* The Targum (Ⲯ) adds, “Who by His power brought us out of Egypt.” What great comfort this scripture brings us, to know that it will be Christ who will be our Judge: “O then, my beloved brethren, come unto the Lord, the Holy One. Remember that his paths are righteous. Behold, the way for man is narrow, but it lieth in a straight course before him, and the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there; and there is none other way save it be by the gate; for he cannot be deceived, for the Lord God is his name” (2 Nephi 9:41). No one but Christ Jesus could balance judgment and mercy. Thus we read: “Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments” (Psalm 119:164). ¶ *The LORD [is] our lawgiver.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The Lord, who is our teacher, who gave us the doctrine of the law from Sinai.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “The Lord our chief.” Not only are the Lord’s judgments perfect, but so are the laws He has given us to guide us back to the Father: “Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them” (Psalm 119:165). The Lord will once again be Israel’s Judge and King.²⁷ ¶ *The LORD [is] our king,*

²⁶ Stenning’s Ⲯ τρᾶνσλατιον uses “great galley”

²⁷ Andrew F. Ehat noted: “Joseph Smith called ISAIAH 33:22 the political motto of ancient Israel.” Ehat, Andrew F. “It Seems Like Heaven Began on Earth: Joseph Smith and the Constitution of the

יְהוָה מֶלֶכְנוּ. When Israel wanted Samuel to anoint a king like all the other nations, she was rejecting the Lord as her King (1 Samuel 8:7; 1 Samuel 10:19a; 1 Samuel 12:17b). Gladly, this would change. See *Rain in Due Season* introduction as well as notes under ISAIAH 26:4. ¶ *He will save us* (also see ISAIAH 25:9). The Targum (ⲧ) has, “He will redeem us, and execute for us vengeance of judgment on the host of Gog.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “The Lord will himself save us.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *he is our Savior*. Kay writes, “HE—the King—will save us. Cp. Hosea 13:10; Exodus 15:2.” Jesus, ἰησοῦς or **יֵשׁוּעָה**, is our **Savior** and Christ, indeed, *He will save us*, **הוּא יִשְׁעֵנוּ**.

23 Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not well strengthen their mast, they could not spread the sail: then is the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame take the prey.

✓ or, They have forsaken thy tacklings

Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not well strengthen their mast, they could not spread the sail: The Targum (ⲧ) has, “At that time the people shall be bereft of their strength, and shall be like a ship, whose ropes are broken; neither shall there be strength in their mast, which is cut down, so that it is not possible to spread a sail upon it.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Thy tackling broke, for they had no strength, thy mast gave way. It will not support the sails.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “Thy tacklings are loosed, and they shall be of no strength: thy mast shall be in such condition, that thou shalt not be able to spread the flag.” This verse is a continuation of ISAIAH 33:19 and 33:21, where the *impotence* of Israel’s enemies is made plain. ¶ Gill explains: “This is spoken to and of the enemies of the church [so that the enemy is] compared to a ship in great distress at sea, when its tacklings are shattered, the mast is split, and the sails cannot be spread. The metaphor is taken and carried on from ISAIAH 33:21, where mention is made of a galley with oars, and a gallant ship.” ¶ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, in one of my all-time favorite talks, taught: “Parents simply cannot flirt with skepticism or cynicism, then be surprised when their children expand that flirtation into full-blown romance. If in matters of faith and belief children are at risk of being swept downstream by this intellectual current or that cultural rapid, we as their parents must be more certain than ever to hold to anchored, unmistakable moorings clearly recognizable to those of our own household. It won’t help anyone if we go over the edge with them, explaining through the roar of the falls all the way down

that we really did know the Church was true and that the keys of the priesthood really were lodged there but we just didn’t want to stifle anyone’s freedom to think otherwise. No, we can hardly expect the children to get to shore safely if the parents don’t seem to know where to anchor their own boat. ISAIAH once used a variation on such imagery when he said of unbelievers, “[Their] tacklings are loosed; they could not ... strengthen their mast, they could not spread the sail.”²⁸ ¶ *Then is the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame take the prey.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Then shall the house of Israel divide the treasures of the people, the abundance of spoil and prey; and although the blind and the lame are left among them, they also shall divide the abundance of spoil and prey.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Nor rear a standard until it be delivered up for a spoil; therefore many who are lame will seize the prey.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *a multitude of lame* (Lamsa) / *many lame* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “Then shall the spoils of much prey be divided: the lame shall take the spoil.” Barnes explains: “The word ‘divided’ here means shall be distributed or apportioned, as plunder was usually among victors. The sense is, that much booty would be taken from the army of the [enemy]. Regarding the last clause, Rawlinson explains that “Even the lame shall have their portion.” It is an expression that the very weakest will be strengthened in the day of the Lord.

24 And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein [shall be] forgiven [their] iniquity.

The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Henceforth they shall not say to the people which dwell round about them, I shall return to the Shekinah (i.e., ‘I shall not depart henceforward from the Shekinah, hence I shall not say that I shall return to it.’). (From you is come upon us the evil plague.) The people, the house of Israel, shall be gathered together, and they shall return to their land, their sins being forgiven.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “But let not the people who dwell among these say, ‘I am wearied out’ for their sin is forgiven them.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “Neither shall he that is near, say: I am feeble. The people that dwell therein, shall have their iniquity taken away from them.” These words are spoken of regarding the resurrection of the just, when sickness and infirmities, including spiritual ones, will be done away. This is opposite to what we read earlier: “From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up,

Kingdom of God,” BYU Studies, vol. 20 (1979–1980), Number 3 – Spring 1980, p. 254.

²⁸ Holland, Elder Jeffrey R. “A Prayer for the Children,” *General Conference*, April 2003.

neither mollified with ointment” (ISAIAH 1:6). Those so blessed as to come forth in the morning of the first resurrection will have had their sins purged. We read: “Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies” (Psalm 103:1–4). Young says, “[Forgiveness of sins] is the heart of the whole matter; the ground for the peace, security, and blessedness that will come upon God’s people.” Keith

quotes Jeremiah 50:20, “In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.” Whitehouse says, “A final touch in the picture of the Messianic age. No illness befalls the inhabitant.” The Lord, in his earthly sojourn, cured individuals both of their physical and spiritual ailments.

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Isaiah 34

The best exegetical aid to ISAIAH 34 and 35 is given in D&C 133. Ibn Ezra explains that this prophecy revolves around the Messianic period, or in other words, it is eschatological. Cheyne suggests that the subject of this chapter “is the Divine judgment upon the world.” Division into kingdoms of glory will be a vital part of that judgment. Govett says: “The opening verses of [ISAIAH 34] are an appeal to ‘ALL NATIONS’ to listen. It is, therefore, some prophecy that concerns the whole world. Therefore it is yet future, since nothing has occurred that at all comes up to the descriptions of the text.” From the Sperry Symposium we read: “The Lord revealed to Isaiah that as the Millennium begins dramatic physical changes will occur on the earth and in the heavens ... It may be that the changes on the earth, of which Isaiah spoke, will cause the heavens to appear to move above the inhabitants of the earth as if the stars in the heavens are actually falling” (*The Sperry Symposium Voices of Old Testament Prophets: The 26th Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium*, p.71). When the earth is moved back into the presence of God, as we discussed in ISAIAH 24:20, these phenomena would be seen under that light (see Brigham Young, JD, 17:143). Principles of Eternal Marriage are laid out. About ISAIAH 34 & 35 Bishop Lowth says: “These two chapters make one distinct prophecy; an entire, regular, and beautiful poem, consisting of two parts: the first containing a denunciation of Divine vengeance against the enemies of the people or church of God; the second describing the flourishing state of the church of God...” Nägelsbach suggests that some of the same sublime language that we find in the second half of Isaiah can be found in these chapters. Nyman suggests that the last two verses of ISAIAH 34 better belong with ISAIAH 35. Perhaps more than the last two, as we shall see, seem to point to the glorious promises to those who abide the highest law, even that of Celestial glory.

vv. 1–8. Our beloved Prophet Joseph Smith encouraged us thus: “When I contemplate the rapidity with which the great and glorious day of the coming of the Son of Man advances, when He shall come to receive His Saints unto Himself, where they shall dwell in His presence, and be crowned with glory and immortality: when I consider that soon the heavens are to be shaken, and the earth tremble and reel to and fro; and that the heavens are to be unfolded as a scroll when it is rolled up; and that every mountain and island are to flee away, I cry out in my heart, What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness!” (TPJS 29). Elder Wilford Woodruff taught: “Let the Saints read the revelations of God, and they will see that there are important events at our doors. Let us hearken and wake up, and be doing the things required of us. Let the missionaries first get their lamps trimmed and burning, and then go among the people, and go with the Spirit of God and the salvation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ” (JD 4:149a).

1 ¶ COME near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; [✓] the world, and all things that come forth of it.

✓ the fulness thereof

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “and all that dwell in her” for the last clause. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Attend nations, and hearken ye chiefs. Let the earth hear and the inhabitants

thereof—The world and the people who are therein.” Instead of *come forth of it*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *dwell in it* (Lamsa) / *inhabitants* (BPE). This reminds us of “Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken” (ISAIAH 1:2a). The whole earth or nations (*Idumea*) and peoples [ⓁⓂⓂ], are invited to hear and heed and *turn to God*. NASB has, “Draw near, O nations, to hear; and listen, O peoples! Let the earth and all it contains hear, and the world and all that springs from it.” It is as if the Lord is giving us *one last chance to become a disciple of Christ*, while it is still possible. We are in this earth to find out what it is that we *truly love* (Alma 41). ¶ President Brigham Young taught: “Men should act upon the principle of righteousness, because it is right, and is a principle which they love to cherish and see practiced by all men. They should love mercy, because of its benevolence, charity, love, clemency, and of all of its lovely attributes, and be inspired thereby to deal justly, fairly, honorably ...”¹ That is, indeed, what repentance is all about. Realizing that *wickedness never was happiness* (Alma 41:10b). I hear the invitation of a loving Father. It solicitously summons us to partake of the good fruit of the tree of life and lay hold of the plan of happiness. Do you feel the pain of our Father who is pleading with us?

¶ Alexander explains that *nations* (ⓁⓂⓂ)² and *peoples* (ⓁⓂⓂ) are “poetical equivalents.” ¶ *And fullness*,

¹ JD, Vol.1, p.119, Brigham Young, February 27, 1853.

² ⓁⓂⓂ is also translated as *gentiles* at times.

וּמְלֵאָהּ. Young writes: “Employing language reminiscent of the twenty-fourth Psalm, Isaiah speaks of the earth and ‘its fullness, the world and its issue.’”

¶ *And all things that come forth of it*, וְכָל-צִמְצָאֵיהָ.

Of this, Henderson writes: “Though צִמְצָאֵים is used in several instances metaphorically of children ... yet is seems here to be employed literally to denote the various productions which spring out of the earth. Whatever exists on the face of the globe is summoned to witness the execution of the Divine wrath.”

Wildberger has: “Mother earth causes young green plants to sprout (וּצְיָא, Genesis 1:12), and the plants

that sprout forth from it are thus called the צִמְצָאֵים ([everything] that sprouts).” Gill has, “Which may either be understood of those that dwell in it, as the Targum interprets it; of the people that are in it, as the Septuagint and the Oriental versions; and so the phrase may denote the original of them, being of the earth, earthly, and to which they must return again; and may be designed to humble men, and hide pride from them; or else the fruits of the earth, trees, and everything that spring out of it, which are called upon to hear the voice of the Lord, when men would not; and so is designed to rebuke the stupidity and sluggishness of men to hearken to what is said to them, even from the Lord, when upon the brink of destruction.” ¶ [FROM D&C 133](#):

“HEARKEN, O ye people of my church, saith the Lord your God, and hear the word of the Lord concerning you—The Lord who shall suddenly come to his temple; the Lord who shall come down upon the world with a curse to judgment; yea, upon all the nations that forget God, and upon all the ungodly among you” (D&C 133:1–2)

2 For the indignation of the LORD [is] upon all nations, and [his] fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter.

The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “For the wrath from before the presence of the Lord is upon all the nations, and the slaughter upon all their hosts: He hath condemned them and delivered them over to the slaughter.” The LXX (Ⓢ) reads, “Because the wrath of the Lord is against all the nations, and his anger against this number of them to destroy them and deliver them up to slaughter.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓢ) has, for the last half, “He hath killed them, and delivered them to slaughter.” ¶ *Upon all nations* וְכָל-הַגּוֹיִם. Or rather, *upon all the nations*.

The expression is translated *against / upon / with / on all the nations* by many including the ABP {LXX (Ⓢ)}, ASV, BBE, Darby, ERV, ESV, GNB, GW, HCSB, ISV,

JPS, LITV, NASB, RV, and YLT. Alexander says that כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם “is the strongest expression possible in Hebrew for *all nations*.” ¶ *Destroyed them*. The expression הַחֲרִימָם (from the root חָרַם) is quite an interesting one. It is often used in the scriptures of something that is *banned* or *dedicated to the Lord* and cannot be redeemed but must be sacrificed or totally destroyed or annihilated. Birks says that this is a *curse* and the literal rendering of the verse is: “he hath devoted them to a *cherem* חָרַם,’ or curse of utter destruction.” Several exegetes have pointed out the certainty of its accomplishment rendering it in the prophetic past tense: “*he hath utterly destroyed them &c.*” The vision is spoken of as if it was already accomplished, for all things are present to the Lord, both future and past and present, in one eternal round. I was asked that if God knew the future, did that not mean that He controlled it and thus we did not have true moral agency. In helping this individual understand, I asked, “Would you say that God controlled your past because He knows your past?” “No, of course not,” came the response. I explicated that God can see the future with the same ease that He can see the past as all things are present unto Him. In latter-day Scripture we read: “The same which knoweth all things, for all things are present before mine eyes” (D&C 38:2); “...where all things for their glory are manifest, past, present, and future, and are continually before the Lord” (D&C 130:7); and “all things are present with me, for I know them all” (Moses 1:6). ¶ [FROM D&C 133](#): “Go ye out from Babylon. Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord. Call your solemn assemblies, and speak often one to another. And let every man call upon the name of the Lord. Yea, verily I say unto you again, the time has come when the voice of the Lord is unto you: Go ye out of Babylon; gather ye out from among the nations, from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other” (D&C 133:5–7).

3 Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood.

The LXX (Ⓢ) reads, “Therefore their wounded and dead shall be cast out, and the stench of them shall ascend; and the mountains shall be drenched with their blood.” Instead of *melted*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *drenched* (Lamsa) / *contaminated* (BPE). I cannot help but think that this verse makes allusions to being cast out of the presence of God—so that those who do wickedly will not behold the face of the Lord. Gill notes, “... the great number of the slain upon the mountains, and the great

quantity of blood shed there; which should run down in large streams, and carry part of them along with it, as large and hasty showers of rain wash away the earth, and carry it along with them.” Alexander explains: “*And their slain shall be cast out.* The Hebrew word strictly means *their wounded*, and is so translated in the Septuagint and some other versions. But usage gives it the specific sense of *wounded mortally*, and for the most part in battle. *Cast out*, i.e. unburied. This suggests the several ideas of contemptuous neglect, of a multitude too vast to be interred, and perhaps of survivors too few to perform the duty (compare ISAIAH 14:18–20). They shall not lie unburied merely for a time, but until they rot upon the ground... *And their corpses ... their stench shall go up ...* With reference to the same revolting circumstance, Lucan calls a battle-field *olentes agros* (compare Amos 4:10, Joel 2:20).” Delitzsch points us to Ezekiel and the times of Gog and Magog related to the Second Coming: “And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the noses of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it The valley of Hamongog” (Ezekiel 39:11). **FROM D&C 133**: “Calling upon the name of the Lord day and night, saying: O that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence. And it shall be answered upon their heads; for the presence of the Lord shall be as the melting fire that burneth, and as the fire which causeth the waters to boil. O Lord, thou shalt come down to make thy name known to thine adversaries, and all nations shall tremble at thy presence—When thou doest terrible things, things they look not for; Yea, when thou comest down, and the mountains flow down at thy presence, thou shalt meet him who rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, who remembereth thee in thy ways” (D&C 133:40–44).

4 And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling [fig] from the fig tree.

And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: The Targum (ܬ) has, “All the pleasant (or, ‘beloved’) host of heaven shall be dissolved, and they shall be blotted out from beneath the heavens, as it is said concerning them in this book.” The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “And all the powers of the heavens shall waste away; and the heaven shall be rolled up like a scroll.” The Douay-Rheims (ϣ) has, “And all the host of the heavens shall pine away,

and the heavens shall be folded together as a book.” Here is an example where the DSS 1QIsa^a (ϙ) is quite different than the Masoretic text (מ). The latter (מ) reads: “*And all [the] host [of] the heavens shall be dissolved,*” **וְנִמְקוּ כָּל-צְבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם**, while the DSS (ϙ) has: “*And the valleys shall split and all [the] host [of] the heavens shall fade away,*” **וְהַעֲמֻקִּים יִתְבַּקְעוּ וְכֹל צְבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם יִבֹּלוּ**. The Accordance DSSB–C has *fall away* (יפול) rather than *fade away* (Logos). ¶ *And all the host of heaven*. Victor Ludlow says, “The ‘host of heaven’ could refer either to heavenly bodies (sun, moon, stars, etc.) or to celestial beings (spirits, angels, etc.) in God’s presence... [and relating to the latter] or there will be fewer beings in the Lord’s presence (since his spirit children come to earth to acquire mortal bodies and some do not return to him).” Ludlow is speaking in a permanent returning, for we know that all return at least once to the Father: “Now, concerning the state of the soul between death and the resurrection—Behold, it has been made known unto me by an angel, that the spirits of all men, as soon as they are departed from this mortal body, yea, the spirits of all men, whether they be good or evil, are taken home to that God who gave them life” (Alma 40:11). Yet another possible meaning is that before the final judgment the spirit world will be made empty and dissolved. ¶ *And the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll*. The Book of Revelation contains these words: “And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled [spoken of the righteous martyrs of the faith]. And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places” (Revelation 6:11–14). ¶ **Scrolling together or scrolling apart?** There seems to be two ways of looking at the topic of the scrolls being rolled together as either being scrolled or spread out from the scrolled position: (I.) Alexander says: “The best explanation seems, however, to be that proposed by Pfeiffer in his *Dubia Vexata*, to wit, that as God is elsewhere described as having stretched out the heavens like a curtain, their destruction or any total change in their appearance would be naturally represented as a rolling up of the expanse.” Cowles likewise explains: “The rolling together of the heavens as a scroll, parchment, or map, is rolled up, is the natural counterpart of the figure which appears both in Psalm 104:2, and in ISAIAH 40:22: ‘That stretcheth out

the heavens like a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.’ Reversing the process to indicate a general dissolution of the frame-work of nature ...”So also Jenour, who writes: “The books of the ancients were written upon dyed skins, or parchment, and when not in use were rolled round a roller, something like large maps in modern times... Of the force of this image, the manner in which maps mounted upon a spring roller are made to coil themselves up, may serve to give us some idea.” Next we see the scroll being extended rather than gathered: (II.) Elder Orson Pratt taught: “The curtain of heaven will be unfolded as a scroll that is rolled up. You know how our great maps are rolled out to expose their contents to the people; and the Lord has said the heavens shall be unfolded as a scroll that is rolled up in unfolded. What will be seen when this takes place? Our Saviour, our Redeemer, will unveil his face. That Being who was born in Bethlehem—that being who has saved the world by offering his own life, how will he appear? Will he come as a common man? or how will he make his appearance? He will appear as a being whose splendour and glory will cause the sun to hide his face with shame.”³ Hoyt W. Brewster suggested: “Following an outpouring of tumultuous events preceding the Second Coming, a period of silence—described as half an hour in length—will occur in heaven ‘and immediately after shall the curtain of heaven be unfolded, as a scroll is unfolded after it is rolled up, and the face of the Lord shall be unveiled’ (D&C 88:95; see also JST, Revelation 6:14; Isa. 34:4). The curtain of heaven is symbolic of the barrier which separates the earth and her inhabitants from the presence of God. Commenting on ISAIAH 34:4, Elder Orson Pratt said: ‘... School children, who are in the habit of seeing maps hung up on the wall, know that they have rollers upon which they are rolled up, and that to expose the face of the maps they are let down. So will the curtain of heaven be unrolled so that the people may gaze upon those celestial beings who will make their appearance in the clouds’ (JD 16:328).”⁴ ¶ Elder Moses Thatcher taught: “When the universe shall roll up like a scroll, the earth melt with fervent heat, and mountains run down like wax, unregenerate man, full of pride, will learn what God hath in reserve for those who hate Him and despise His works. As this earth was cleansed by a literal baptism of water, so will it be purified by a literal baptism of fire, and all the proud and those who love iniquity, will be burned up, even as stubble is consumed by fire. Happy then will ye be if you have been tried as gold in the furnace seven times heated. Better welcome a few trials now, that tend to increase your love of God

and of your fellow man, than to go heedlessly like the dumb brute, to the sacrifice. Let us pray only for deliverance from such trials as harden the heart and wither the soul, but not from such as, bearing patiently, testify of integrity. What matters trials, persecutions, scorns, scoffs and contempt so long as we remain true to God, and the covenants we have made with Him and each other? So long as we violate neither these nor our consciences, which should be void of offense, we are safe” (JD 26:211–212). President Brigham Young puts the time of these events at the end of the Millennium: “... for when the Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed, *after the termination of the thousand years’ rest*, he will summon the armies of heaven for the conflict, he will come forth in flaming fire, he will descend to execute the mandates of an incensed God, and, amid the thunderings of the wrath of Omnipotence, roll up the heavens as a scroll, and destroy death, and him that has the power of it.”⁵ This dissolving heat seems to take place both at the very end of the Millennium as well as before its commencement. Revelation 16:9 is one example of the dissolving heat associated with the Second Coming; Revelation 20:14 is an example for the final fire as the earth is transformed into its Celestial glory. ¶ The face of the Lord shall be seen by the righteous. We read in the chapter summary for D&C 88:62–73, *Draw near unto the Lord, and ye shall see his face.*” And in D&C 88:68, “Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God, and the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, and it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will.” This seems to be an allusion to both those who have their calling and election made sure⁶ in this life, as well as all of the righteous who will see the Lord in His coming. We also read: “And angels shall fly through the midst of heaven, crying with a loud voice, sounding the trump of God, saying: Prepare ye, prepare ye, O inhabitants of the earth; for the judgment of our God is come. Behold, and lo, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. And immediately there shall appear a great sign in heaven, and all people shall see it together. And another angel shall sound his trump, saying: That great church, the mother of abominations, that made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, that persecuteth the saints of God, that shed their blood—she who sitteth upon many waters, and upon the islands of the sea—behold, she is the tares of the earth; she is bound in bundles; her bands are made strong, no man can loose them; therefore, she is ready to be burned. And he shall sound his trump both long and

³ JD, Vol.8, p.51, Orson Pratt, April 8, 1860.

⁴ Hoyt W. Brewster, Jr., *Doctrine and Covenants Encyclopedia*, p.117.

⁵ JD, Vol.1, p.118, Brigham Young, February 27, 1853 (emphasis added).

⁶ See Elder Marion G. Romney, “Making Our Calling and Election Sure,” October 1965 General Conference.

loud, and all nations shall hear it. And there shall be silence in heaven for the space of half an hour; and immediately after shall the curtain of heaven be unfolded, as a scroll is unfolded after it is rolled up, and the face of the Lord shall be unveiled” (D&C 88:92–95). ¶ *And all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling [fig] from the fig tree.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And all their armies shall come to an end, as the fading leaf from the vine, and as the withering fig from the fig-tree.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And all the stars shall fall like leaves from a vine and as leaves fall from a fig tree.” Instead of *falling [fig]*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *premature* (Lamsa) / *green* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, “And from the fig tree,” but not, *as a falling [fig]*. In D&C the Lord warns us: “Abide ye in the liberty wherewith ye are made free; entangle not yourselves in sin, but let your hands be clean, until the Lord comes. For not many days hence and the earth shall tremble and reel and to fro as a drunken man; and the sun shall hide his face, and shall refuse to give light; and the moon shall be bathed in blood; and the stars shall become exceedingly angry, and shall cast themselves down as a fig that falleth from off a fig-tree” (D&C 88:86–87). FROM D&C 133: “And so great shall be the glory of his presence that the sun shall hide his face in shame, and the moon shall withhold its light, and the stars shall be hurled from their places” (D&C 133:49).

5 For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment.

The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Because my sword is revealed in heaven; behold, it shall be uncovered upon Edom, and upon the people which I have condemned to judgment.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “My sword hath drunk deep in the heaven; behold it shall come down on Idumea and on the people justly doomed to destruction.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲫ) has, “For my sword shall be sharpened in heaven; behold, it shall come down upon the Edomites and upon a people that is condemned in judgment.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, “For my sword is inebriated in heaven: behold it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my slaughter unto judgment.” In the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲙ) we have *shall be seen*, תראה, while the Masoretic text (ⲙ) has *shall be bathed*, רִיָּתָהּ. Jennings says: “... we shall see another single symbolic representative of all those nations in Edom, which, by its close relation to ‘Adam,’⁷ fits perfectly as a

symbolic name for all the nations. It is a fearful picture of bodies unburied, scattered in such numbers that the air is rendered fetid with the stench; and the very mountains are melted by the blood. It is evidently intended to impress the mind with the awful ‘severity of God,’ when He thus arises to judge the earth.” ¶ Gill, speaking about the sword, says: “That is, the sword of the Lord, as it is called in the next verse (ISAIAH 34:6), and it is he that is speaking; it designs the vengeance of the Lord, the punishment he will inflict on the wicked, said to be ‘bathed in heaven,’ because determined and prepared there.” Calvin suggests: “But why does he say that it is *in heaven*? ... Here the Prophet looks at the ... decree of God, by which he appoints and determines everything before it is executed ...” Similar to things created spiritually before they are created physically. That is, the thought that precedes the action.⁸ ¶ FROM D&C 133: “For he shall make bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of their God. Wherefore, prepare ye, prepare ye, O my people; sanctify yourselves; gather ye together, O ye people of my church, upon the land of Zion, all you that have not been commanded to tarry [i.e., leave Babylon and go to Zion]” (D&C 133:3–4). Also see D&C 135:45–48; 133:50–51). ¶ Monte S. Nyman points out: “The Lord ... used the language of ISAIAH 34:5 in the preface to the Doctrine and Covenants in referring to the day of his coming (see D&C 1:12–14).”

6 The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, [and] with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea.

The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, [and] with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: The Targum (ⲧ) has, “The sword before the presence of the Lord is filled with blood, it is fattened, it is fattened with the blood of kings and rulers, it is fattened with the kidneys of princes.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “The sword of the Lord hath been glutted with blood; it is pampered with suet (Brenton and NETS, ‘fat’)—with the blood of he-goats and lambs, and with the suet (Brenton and NETS, ‘fat’) of goats and rams.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, beginning with the second clause, “It is made thick with the blood of lambs and buck goats, with the blood of

⁷ That is, אָדָם vs. אֱדוֹם.

⁸ In the case of men, this is why in the Book of Mormon we read about the importance of controlling our thoughts, not just our words and our actions.

rams full of marrow.” Lowth well points us to Ezekiel 39:16–17; and Revelation 19:17–18 (see JST 18a), *the great supper of the Lamb*, with figures that are very similar. Barnes explains: “With the blood of lambs and goats — These were the animals which were usually offered in sacrifice to God among the Jews. And to speak of a sacrifice was the same as to speak of the offering of rams, lambs, bullocks, etc. Yet it is evident that they denote here the people of Idumea, and that these terms are used to keep up the image of a sacrifice. The idea of sacrifice was always connected with that of slaughter, as the animals were slaughtered before they were offered. So here, the idea is, that there would be a great slaughter in Idumea; that it would be so far of the nature of a sacrifice that they would be devoted to God and to his cause. It is not probable that any particular classes of people are denoted by the different animals mentioned here, as the animals here mentioned include all, or nearly all those usually offered in sacrifice, the expressions denote simply that all classes of people in Idumea would be devoted to the slaughter.” Henderson says: “The idea introduced in the preceding verse is illustrated in this by language borrowed from the slaughter of sacrificial victims—a figure which the prophets frequently employ when setting forth the destruction of a people by war.” Alexander suggests: “The allusion is not to the fatty part of the blood or to the fat combined with it (Gesenius), but to fat and blood as the animal substances offered in sacrifice.” Whitehouse says: “The fat of the kidneys of rams reminds us of Leviticus 3:4, 10, 15.” ¶ *For the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Because there is a slaughter before the Lord in Bozrah, and a great sacrifice in the land of Edom.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Because there is a sacrifice for the Lord in Bosor, and a great slaughter in Idumea.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, instead of sacrifice, *victim* (victim, Vulgate Ⲳ). Regarding *in Bozrah* בִּזְרָה, ISBE has: “בִּזְרָה ‘sheepfold.’ The capital of Edom, a city of great antiquity (Genesis 36:33; 1Chronicles 1:44; ISAIAH 34:6; 63:1; Jeremiah 49:13; Amos 1:12). It may be identical with Buseirah, which lies about 7 miles Southwest of Tufleleh, on the main road to Petra.” So, while the Isaiah, as inspired by the Lord, uses an actual place in Edom, the whole world or Idumea is meant—much the same way as when the word is applied to mystic Babylon. Elder McConkie wrote: “In two graphic passages outlining the destructions incident to the Second Coming, Isaiah speaks of the sword of judgment falling upon Idumea or Edom, and in one of them he specifies that the Lord’s garments shall be red as he comes from Bozrah (ISAIAH 34; 63), all of which destructions are confirmed by latter-day revelation (D&C 133), as also is the fact that Idumea is the world.

(D&C 1:36).”⁹ Some have suggested that those who are not righteous will have to pay for their own sins—and be sacrificed in Bozrah, so to speak. Even after the *utmost farthing* or sore sufferings have been paid, I cannot imagine that we would be any less dependent on the Savior’s atoning sacrifice if we are to inherit even the least degree of glory in the mansions of our God. At the end, we are fully dependent on the Savior. ¶ **FROM D&C 133:** “And his voice shall be heard: I have trodden the wine-press alone, and have brought judgment upon all people; and none were with me; And I have trampled them in my fury, and I did tread upon them in mine anger, and their blood have I sprinkled upon my garments, and stained all my raiment; for this was the day of vengeance which was in my heart” (D&C 133:50–51, and again see, D&C 133:3–4).

7 And the unicorns reem [רָאֵם] shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness.

And the reem shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And the mighty men shall be slain with them, and the rules, and the princes.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Therefore the fatlings shall fall with them, namely the rams and the bulls.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲫ) has, “And unicorns / buffalo (BPE) shall fall with them, and bullocks with the bulls.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “And the unicorns shall go down with them, and the bulls with the mighty.” Rather than the KJV *unicorns*, the JST has *reem*, which appears to be a transliteration of the Hebrew רָאֵם, meaning, *wild bull*. So also YLT, “And come down have reems with them, And bullocks with bulls, And soaked hath been their land from blood, And their dust from fatness is made fat.” Except, just as *deer* can be singular or plural, so *reem* in English can stand for the plural or the singular. The Masoretic text (ⲙ) has the plural, רָאֵמִים. Gesenius describes it as: “a wild animal, fierce and untamed, resembling an ox, as a wild ass resembles an ass... possessed of horns, with which it prostrates everything (Deuteronomy), and injures men (Psalm 22:22).” ¶ Calvin says, “I have preferred to follow those who explain it to mean *bulls*, which it means also in Psalm 50:13, though in this passage the Prophet employs the word *bulls* to denote metaphorically those who are very strong and powerful.” Whitehouse leads us to an interesting book by Delitzsch, “We know now,” says Delitzsch, “by the

⁹ Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed., p.374.

cuneiform inscriptions and the pictorial representations on the Assyrian sculptures, that the **רָאִים** is the Assyrian *rimu*, that strong-horned, fierce-looking wild bull, skilled in climbing the mountains, whose colossal and formidable likeness was placed by the Assyrian kings before the entrance of their palaces to ward off and terrify the approaching enemy.”¹⁰ ¶ The fact that the Prophet Joseph Smith transliterated the word from the Hebrew (rather than provide a translation) may well mean that this animal, like some mentioned in the Book of Mormon, are no longer known and are extinct. For instance, Cheyne, leaning on a Mr. Houghton and on Delitzsch suggests the reem is an “auroch¹¹ or wild bull [which] is now extinct.” Else, it could be that the animal, such as the Rimu, was not well known. ¶ We have seen elsewhere in Isaiah that sometimes figures are given for different classes of people. Gill writes: “With the lambs, goats, and rams; that is, either the rhinoceros, as some, there being no such creature as the unicorn; or the buffaloes, as others; these ‘shall fall,’ as the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions render it, they shall be slain, as well as the rest; meaning, that along with the common soldiers, and inferior officers, the general officers should fall; and so the Targum, ‘and the mighty shall be slain with them.’” The *Geneva Bible Translation Notes* likewise suggest: “The mighty and rich will be as well destroyed as the inferiors.” Barnes adds: “Here it represents that portion of the people which was strong, warlike, and hitherto unvanquished, and who regarded themselves as invincible.” Henderson supposes: “According to the Scripture representations, the **רָאִים** were strong and fierce, and were therefore appropriately used in a figurative sense to denote powerful and formidable enemies, especially those of elevated rank, such as princes or rulers.” No doubt, whatever the precise meaning in terms of animals, those various classes of people who have fought against the Lord and Zion are meant. ¶ **And shall come down, יִרְדּוּ**. Gill explains it as “Shall be subdued, humbled, destroyed.” Keith writes: “‘Shall come down’ is, ‘shall fall, shall perish.’” HALOT describes **יִרְדּוּ** as something which flows or runs down a hill or mountain, such as water. Here, it is blood that comes down. So much blood as to melt the mountains [see ISAIAH 34:3, 5]. Alexander has, “To *come down* in the first clause is by some explained as meaning to come down to the slaughter (Jeremiah 50:27, 51:40); by others to fall or sink under the fatal stroke (Zechariah 11:2).” ¶ **And their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust**

made fat with fatness. The Targum (**ܬ**) has, “And their land shall be drunken with their own blood; and their dust made fat with their own fat.” The LXX (**Ϛ**) reads, “And the land shall be drenched with blood, and glutted with their suet (Brenton and NETS, ‘fat’).” The Lamsa Peshitta (**ܣ**) has, “And the land shall be soaked / *drunk* (BPE) with their blood, and the soil enriched with their fatness.” The Douay-Rheims (**ϣ**) has *ground* instead of *dust*. In other words, the soil would be filled with blood, which was considered ‘fatness’ in relationship to sacrifices. Wildberger explains: “**עָפָר** does not mean ‘dust’ here, as it normally does elsewhere; the word refers to the fine, loose soil into which moisture could soak quite easily ...”

8 For [it is] the day of the LORD’s vengeance, [and] the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.

The Targum (**ܬ**) has, “For it is the day of vengeance before the presence of the Lord; the year of recompense, to take vengeance of judgment *on* account of the ignominy of Zion.” The LXX (**Ϛ**) reads, “For it is the day of the Lord’s vengeance, and the year for a judicial retribution to Sion.” Instead of *controversy*, the Peshitta (**ܣ**) has *cause*. The Douay-Rheims (**ϣ**) has *judgment* instead of *controversy*. Ibn Ezra explains: “This verse shows that the prophecy refers to the Messianic period [although] some believe that it was fulfilled already in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, after the conquest of Zion.” Calvin well says: “What was formerly said about the Edomites must undoubtedly be extended to the enemies of the Church.” ¶ **Day of the LORD’s vengeance**. Wildberger says: “...the **יְהוָה (ל) יוֹם** has its roots in the thought world connected with holy war [and ...] a **יּוֹם נִקְמָה** (day of vengeance)...does not simply suggest that an emotional desire to take vengeance has been quieted but that a balance has been achieved once again, which alone can guarantee that all will be well... Such an explanation is supported by the parallel term **שְׁלוּמִים** (retribution) ...[punishment] is not an end in itself, but rather the means toward a goal...” ¶ President Brigham Young taught: “Our Heavenly Father does not always reveal to his children the secret workings of his providences, nor does he show them the end from the beginning; for they have to learn to trust in him who has promised to fight our battles, and crown us with victory, if we are faithful as was faithful Abraham. The contest which we have now on hand is chiefly against sin in ourselves ... Then let us fight on, ‘For it is the day of the Lord’s vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.’ He has commenced it with this,

¹⁰ Delitzsch, Friedrich (1883). *The Hebrew language viewed in the light of Assyrian research*. Williams and Norgate: London, pp. 6–7.

¹¹ *Aurochs*: “A species of ox, whose bones are found in gravel and alluvial soil” (Webster’s 1828 dictionary).

our once happy nation, and he will continue until Jesus shall rule and reign triumphantly in the midst of his Saints, over sin, death, and hell. The Lord is gracious and is waiting for us to purify ourselves, and thus be better prepared to receive the providences of God when he arises to shake terribly the earth, and bring to pass the perfect deliverance of his people. ‘For the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.’”¹² Edward Young well says, regarding *vengeance* נָקָם: “It is not mingled with malice and evil as is the case with human vengeance. It is a quality that in God is divine and praiseworthy and in the execution of which God is honored and glorified.” In the Book of Mormon we read: “For it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my Beloved Son, them will I cut off from among my people, O house of Israel; And I will execute vengeance and fury upon them, even as upon the heathen, such as they have not heard” (3 Nephi 21:20–21). Rawlinson says: “(compare with *ISAIAH* 61:2; 63:4) In all three places the ‘day’ of God’s vengeance is contrasted with the ‘year’ of his recompense, to show how infinite is his mercy, how short-lived, comparatively speaking, his anger. Mr. Cheyne well compares the concluding clauses of the second commandment, where ‘retribution is declared to descend to the third and fourth generation, but mercy to the thousandth.’” ¶ *Controversy of Zion*, לָרִיב צִיּוֹן. Cowles explains: “The original word [*controversy*, רִיב] is often used for a case litigated in court. So here, the Lord comes down to sit on his throne of judgment and adjudicate the case between his people and their foes.” ¶ *FROM D&C 133*: “And now the year of my redeemed is come; and they shall mention the loving kindness of their Lord, and all that he has bestowed upon them according to his goodness, and according to his loving kindness, forever and ever” (D&C 133:52).

vv. 9–17. Destruction of Idumea would be like that of Sodom and Gomorrah and left in total desolation. Wild animals would possess the land. Because we know that the earth will be converted into its paradisiacal glory at the time of the Lord’s Second Coming, instead of wild animals, this may be an allusion to the state of those humans in the spirit world who do not come forth in the first resurrection. There would be a precise line of separation between those who inherit kingdoms of glory, as if separated by a line and plummet. Those who ruled this earth with unrighteousness will no longer have any rule. *ISAIAH* 34:14–17 seem to follow the same vein, but well may be symbolic of the blessings

awaiting those spirits who were disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ and who are to be exalted—who now would have peace, the joy of eternal marriage and whose names would be written in the book of life. Indeed, as HALOT mentions, “the meaning of צִיּוֹן is uncertain” and can even mean *inhabitant* or dweller and even a ship or vessel! (HAL, Gesenius). Much of translation is based on context, and Isaiah may well have hidden the context from those *unholy hands on the Bible*.¹³ שָׁעִיר can be associated with rain and fertility (HAL). Likewise, קָרָא usually means *call* but can also mean cry. In D&C the word *cry* is used in the Lord’s commandment that we invite others unto Christ. Perhaps, some of the other expressions have been corrupted in the original and certainly my theory cannot be proven. The Lord has commanded the gathering of His disciples and it has been done through the Holy Ghost.

9 ¶ And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch.

The Targum (ܬ) has, “And the rivers of Samaria (the Royal Polyglot has כְּחִלְתָּא דְּרוֹמִי, ‘the rivers of Rome’) shall be turned into pitch, and her dust into brimstone, and the land shall become burning pitch.” The LXX (Ϯ) reads, “And its torrents shall be turned into pitch, and its land into sulphur.” The Douay-Rheims (Ϯ) has *ground* instead of *dust*. Barnes paints a vivid mental picture: “The idea here is, that there would be as great and awful a destruction as if the streams everywhere should become pitch or resin, which would be set on fire, and which would fill the land with flame. This image is very striking, as we may see by supposing the rivers and streams in any land to flow not with water, but with heated pitch, turpentine, or tar, and that this was all suddenly kindled into a flame... The image is evidently taken from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:25–28), an image which is more fully used in reference to the same subject in Jeremiah 49:17–18: ‘And Edom shall be a desolation; ... as in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbor cities thereof, saith the Lord, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it.’ The ruin shall be as entire as if all the soil were turned into brimstone, which should be ignited and left burning.” ¶ Cowles

¹³ I have a two-volume book entitled *Unholy Hands on the Bible: An Introduction to Textual Criticism*. It is clear that such unholy hands began their work centuries before our present Bible was constituted as such, and the corruption does not just come from modern critics.

¹² JD, Vol.11, p.13 – p.14, Brigham Young, 11 December 1864.

suggests: “By a new figure the prophet sets before us Idumea burning after the manner of ancient Sodom, its rivers covered to pitch and its dust to brimstone, and one all-imbosoming¹⁴ conflagration covering the whole land and utterly refusing to be extinguished.” Wade likewise has: “The description that follows (suggestive of a conflagration caused by the ignition of bitumen) was perhaps inspired by the proximity of Edom to the site of Sodom and Gomorrah (see Genesis 19:24): cf 13:19; Jeremiah 49:18.” Faussett points us to a scripture in *Rain in Due Season*: “And that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath” (Deuteronomy 29:23).

10 It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.

The LXX (6) reads, “And its land shall be like pitch burning day and night, and which shall not be extinguished: for a long time the smoke of it shall ascend. During its generation it shall be desolate.” Alexander writes, “These sublime and fearful images are copied in the book of Revelation (14:10–11), but it does not follow that the copy, though inspired and prophetic, was intended to determine the sense of the original.” Delitzsch has: “The unquenchable fire (for which compare ISAIAH 66:24), and the eternally ascending smoke (cf., Revelation 19:3), prove that the end of all things is referred to. The prophet meant primarily, no doubt, that the punishment announced would fall upon the land of Edom, and within its geographical boundaries; but this particular punishment represented the punishment of all nations, and all men who were Edomitish in their feelings and conduct towards the congregation of Jehovah.” Gill makes allusions to Babylon, “The land shall be no more manured¹⁵ and cultivated, nor the city rebuilt; when Babylon is once fallen, it shall never be raised up again, but always remain desolate (Revelation 18:2).” ¶ Parry, Parry and Peterson well say: “When Christ comes to destroy the world (Edom) at his second coming, the effects of this destruction will last ‘for ever and ever,’ for the world will be renewed and become a paradisiacal sphere during the Millennium. ‘None shall pass through it for ever and ever’ for the same reason—

¹⁴ Something that is covered. See last acceptance in 1828 Webster.

¹⁵ That is, fertilized.

that state of the earth will no longer exist.” In D&C we read: “For, behold, the mystery of godliness, how great is it! For, behold, I am endless, and the punishment which is given from my hand is endless punishment, for Endless is my name. Wherefore—Eternal punishment is God’s punishment. Endless punishment is God’s punishment” (D&C 19:10–12).

11 But the cormorant[✓] and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness.

✓ or, pelican

But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: The LXX (6) reads, “And for a long period fowls and porcupines, ibises and crows shall dwell therein.” Regarding the *cormorant* or עֵרָב, it is translated as *raven* in Genesis 8:7; Leviticus 11:15; Deuteronomy 14:14; Psalm 147:9; Job 38:41). *Oreb* עֵרָב is also the name given to one of the princes of the Midianites (see Judges 7:25; 8:3; Psalm 83:11). It is not untypical for Isaiah to give us a figure of wild animals being the only ones left to inhabit what previously was the abode of the prideful in Babylon or Idumea. ¶ As Linda & I visited Jerash, one of the torn down ruins in our 2012 trip to Israel and Jordan, I did see one such example. What had been in its heyday a magnificent Greco-Roman city was now destroyed. A shepherd came through with his goats and these ate grass among the ruins for just a few minutes and then they all moved on. It reminded me of Isaiah’s prophecies. ¶ Yet, this mention of wild animals may well represent those spirits who are not worthy to come forth in the first resurrection but must remain until the resurrection of the unjust. As the wild animals inhabited destroyed Babylon, so now the disobedient continue to inhabit spirit prison until the end of the millennial day. ¶ *And he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness.* The Targum (7) has, “And the line of devastation shall be extended over her, and the plummet of desolation.” The LXX (6) reads, “And over it shall be stretched a line of devastation; and in it the onocentaurs (NETS, ‘donkey-centarus,’ Brenton, ‘satyrs’) shall dwell.” The Peshitta (8) has for the second half, “Line of the sword, and there shall be no rejoicing in it.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “And a line shall be stretched out upon it, to bring it to nothing, and a plummet, unto desolation.” ¶ *Confusion ... emptiness* קוֹ-תֵהוּ וְאַבְנֵי-בִהוּ. A definite play on words on תֵהוּ וְבִהוּ, “without form, and void” as found in Genesis 1:2. The GNB paraphrase has: “The LORD will

make it a barren waste again, as it was before the creation.” HCSB renders it: “*The LORD* will stretch out a measuring line and a plumb line over *her* for her **destruction and chaos**.” The JPS: “He shall stretch over it the line of **confusion**, and the plummet of **emptiness**.” Redak and Ibn Ezra (in Rosenberg) believe that while the line and plummet are often used to build, that in this instance they will be used to destroy. So also Gill, “‘He,’ that is, God, as Kimhi interprets it; the allusion is to builders, that make use of the line and plummet, as to build, so to pull down, that they may know what is to be pulled down, and how far they are to go; see 2 Kings 21:13 and hereby it is signified, that as the destruction should be entire, nothing should be left but confusion and emptiness; and all should become ‘**tohu**’ and ‘**bohu**,’ [תהו ובהו] ... so likewise that it should be by line and level, by rule and measure; or according to the rules of justice and equity.” Calvin says, “And to make it more clear that this is Isaiah’s natural meaning, we read the same word in the Prophet Malachi, who lived a long time afterwards. That passage may be regarded as an approbation of this prophecy. ‘If Edom shall say, We have been diminished, we shall therefore return and rebuild the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of Hosts, They shall indeed build, but I shall pull down, and they shall call them the borders of wickedness, and the people against whom the Lord is angry for ever. And your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, Let the Lord be magnified on the borders of Israel’ (Malachi 1:4–5). What Isaiah had foretold more obscurely, Malachi explains with greater clearness. The latter declares that ‘the Edomires shall build in vain,’ and the former that ‘they shall stretch an empty cord.’ As if he had said, ‘In vain shall the masterbuilders bestow their exertions on rebuilding the cities;’ for builders make use of cords and plummets in all their measurements. He therefore shews that the efforts of those who shall intend to restore the land of Edom will be fruitless; for his meaning is, that they shall be destroyed in such a manner that they cannot at all recover from that destruction ...” ¶ One gets the impression that once the weight is attached to the line, and the line is dropped, everything is moved or destroyed to make room for the unimpeded passage of the weight upon the line. But beyond that, more than a line that destroys buildings that have to come down, I sense a virtual fence through which there is no passage. Something like the void or gap between the kingdoms of glory. Elder Melvin J. Ballard taught: “The question is often asked, ‘Is it possible for one who attains Telestial Glory in time in the eternal world to live so well that he may graduate from the Telestial and pass into the Terrestrial, and then after a season that he may progress from that and be ultimately worthy of the Celestial Glory?’ That is the query that has been asked, I have just read the answer,

so far as the Telestial group is concerned. ‘Where God and Christ dwell they cannot come, worlds without end.’¹⁶ I take it upon the same basis, the same argument likewise applies to the Terrestrial World. Those whose lives have entitled them to Terrestrial Glory can never gain Celestial Glory. One who gains possession of the lowest degree of the Telestial Glory may ultimately arise to the highest degree of that glory, but no provision has been made for promotion from one glory to another.”¹⁷ Elder Orson Pratt taught, “But how about these terrestrial, can they come up into the celestial? No, their intelligence and knowledge have not prepared and adapted them to dwell with those who reign in celestial glory...”¹⁸ Finally, in terms of this line and plummet one also has the sense of *exactness* and *precision* within which judgment will take place.

12 They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none [shall be] there, and all her princes shall be nothing.

The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “They said, we are the sons of free men, and they were not willing to accept over them a kingly government; and all her princes shall come to nothing.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “The chiefs of it shall be no more; for its kings and its nobles shall be for destruction.” The BPE (Ⓟ) has, “There, they shall not proclaim any kingdom at all, for all their princes shall be for devastation.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “The nobles thereof shall not be there: they shall call rather upon the king, and all the princes thereof shall be nothing.” NASB has: “Its nobles—there is no one there *Whom* they may proclaim king—And all its princes will be nothing.” JPS offers: “As for her nobles, none shall be there to be called to the kingdom; and all her princes shall be nothing.” Barnes offers a couple of suggestions: “A more correct rendering of this would be, ‘As to the nobles, they shall call them, but there shall be there no kingdom.’ The idea is, that the kingdom would be desolate; there would be no people to rule. Or, there will be no nobles there who shall survive the destruction, and who can undertake the government of the state.” Cowles prefers the AV rendition and explains: “In harmony with the context which represents the land as utterly void of men and peopled only with such animals as dwell in the most dismal solitudes, this verse must be taken as a way of saying, not that there was an actual call from the people to their princes to assume the reins of government, but that

¹⁶ “And they shall be servants of the Most High; but where God and Christ dwell they cannot come, worlds without end” (D&C 76:112).

¹⁷ Ballard, Melvin J. “Three Degrees of Glory,” Discourse pronounced at the Ogden Tabernacle, 22 September 1922, p. 37.

¹⁸ JD, Vol.15, p.323, Orson Pratt, January 19, 1873.

there was neither government, princes, nor people to call them.” Calvin states: “To those stately nobles who vaunted themselves so much, he says in mockery, that they shall be princes without subjects.” All this probably means that those who have ruled through abuse of power will have no one to rule in the eternities.

13 And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation of dragons, [and] a court for owls. ✓

✓ or, ostriches, HEB. daughters of the owl

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And in her palaces shall spring up thorns, *and* the nettles, and the brambles in their fortified city: and she shall become a habitation for dragons, a place for the daughter of the ostrich.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And in their cities shall spring up brakes; and brambles shall be its fortresses: and they shall be cots for Sirens (NETS, ‘habitation of sirens’), and for the ostrich’s court.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “And thorns and nettles shall grow up in its houses, and the thistle in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be the habitation of dragons, and the pasture of ostriches.” Following the same ideas as ISAIAH 34:11a, only wild beasts shall inhabit what used to be the courts of the mighty and great and spacious buildings of those who mockingly pointed their fingers towards the Lord’s servants (1 Nephi 8:33). After sharing my experience about Jerash, Jordan, above, I read this quote in Barnes about Petra, Jordan, which we also visited: “‘I would,’ says Stephens, when standing amidst the ruins of Petra, the capital of Idumea, and with this passage of Isaiah in his eye, ‘I would that the skeptic could stand as I did, among the ruins of this city among the rocks, and there open the sacred book, and read the words of the inspired penman, written when this desolate place was one of the greatest cities in the world. I see the scoff arrested, his cheek pale, his lip quivering, and his heart quaking with fear, as the ancient city cries out to him in a voice loud and powerful as one risen from the dead; though he would not believe Moses and the prophets, he believes the hand-writing of God himself, in the desolation and eternal ruin around him.’ (*Incidents of Travel in Egypt*, etc., vol. ii. p. 76.)” Once again, this all seems an allegory for the desolation of the spirit prison.

14 The wild beasts ✓ of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, ✓ ✓ and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech owl ✓ ✓ also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest.

- ✓ Ziim
- ✓ ✓ Ijim
- ✓ ✓ ✓ or, night monster

FROM D&C 133: [Gospel taken to all the world and from the desert of Utah to the islands of the sea] “Send forth the elders of my church unto the nations which are afar off; unto the islands of the sea; send forth unto foreign lands; call upon all nations, first upon the Gentiles, and then upon the Jews. And behold, and lo, this shall be their cry, and the voice of the Lord unto all people: Go ye forth unto the land of Zion, that the borders of my people may be enlarged, and that her stakes may be strengthened, and that Zion may go forth unto the regions round about. Yea, let the cry go forth among all people: Awake and arise and go forth to meet the Bridegroom; behold and lo, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Prepare yourselves for the great day of the Lord. Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour. Let them, therefore, who are among the Gentiles flee unto Zion. And let them who be of Judah flee unto Jerusalem, unto the mountains of the Lord’s house. Go ye out from among the nations, even from Babylon, from the midst of wickedness, which is spiritual Babylon. But verily, thus saith the Lord, let not your flight be in haste, but let all things be prepared before you; and he that goeth, let him not look back lest sudden destruction shall come upon him. Harken and hear, O ye inhabitants of the earth. Listen, ye elders of my church together, and hear the voice of the Lord; for he calleth upon all men, and he commandeth all men everywhere to repent” (D&C 133:8–16); “And this gospel shall be preached unto every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. And the servants of God shall go forth, saying with a loud voice: Fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come” (D&C 133:8–16). ¶ Calvin says: “These animals ... it is not fully agreed what is the exact meaning of the Hebrew words; but it would serve no good purpose to give ourselves much uneasiness about them, for it is quite enough if we understand the meaning and design of the Prophet.” The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And there shall meet one another, martens and wild cats, and demons, each shall report with its companion: verily dryads (לילי, ‘night birds’) shall dwell there, and they shall find rest for themselves.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And demons shall meet onocentaurs; and bellow one to the other. Onocentaurs shall there enjoy repose having found for themselves a place of rest.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓛ) has, “And insane men shall meet in it (BPE, *the spirits shall attack each other*), and demoniacs (BPE, *the evil spirit*) shall cry out one to another.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “And demons and monsters shall meet, and the hairy ones shall cry out one to another, there hath the lamia lain down, and found rest

for herself.” Ibn Ezra writes: “לילית *The screech owl*. A bird that flies abroad by night.” Alexander contradicts the view that these animals are related to bad spirits: “Ghosts as well as demons would be wholly out of place in a list of wild and solitary *animals*.” ¶ A careful reading of verses 14–17 makes it clear that those spoken of here are greatly blessed of the Lord. Verse 13, then, completes the description of what would happen to all the places of habitation representing man’s pride. In ISAIAH 34:14, we have a vital transition—but still using some of the same animal elements—in which the great blessings and felicity that await the righteous are described: mainly peace and eternal marriage. Why would the Prophet do that? The answer is quite simple: he had to hide many precious truths from those who would corrupt the Scriptures. ¶ It seems that the inhabitants of the desert may well represent the Saints who first settled in the desert of Deseret or Utah while those of the islands may represent those growing converts in the islands of the sea and other parts of the world. Did not the pioneers find a place of rest in the desert of Utah? Did not many of the descendants of Lehi find a place of rest in the islands of the sea and in the American continent?

15 There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate.

The view of the Gentile authors is well summarized by Rawlinson who says: “God, who allots to all the nations of the earth their several countries, has now allotted Idumea to the unclean beasts and birds and reptiles which have been mentioned; henceforth it is formally assigned to them as their habitation. It is throughout to be understood that Idumea stands for the world power, which resists God and will be finally abased and put to shame.” Isaiah often changes topics quickly, however. The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And the hedgehog shall make its nest there, and shall breed there; partridges shall chirp in the shady *boughs*: surely, the vultures shall be gathered thither, every one with her mate.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “There the porcupine hath made its nest; and the land hath safely kept its young. There the deer have assembled and seen each other’s face.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “There hath the ericius had its hole, and brought up its young ones, and hath dug round about, and cherished them in the shadow thereof: thither are the kites gathered together one to another.” ¶ Jennings recognizes that these words speak about *marriage* but he misses the point completely misquotes the scripture that in the resurrection they “neither marry, nor are given in marriage” (Mark 12:25; Luke 20:35).

¶ Elder Orson Hyde, speaking of these verses quoted by Jennings about marriage suggests that the parties in question were not righteous enough to be sealed.¹⁹ Elder Orson Pratt was of the same opinion and also explained that there are “Those who never received the everlasting covenant of marriage for eternity; those who have not continued in nor received that law with all their hearts, or who, perhaps have fought against it. They become angels. They have no power to increase and extend forth to kingdoms. They have no wives, no husbands, and they are servants to those that sit upon thrones and rule over kingdoms, and are counted worthy of a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. These, no doubt, were the kind of angels Jesus had reference to when speaking to [the Sadducees and Pharisees].”²⁰ Finally, Elder Orson Pratt explained the most important point of all: “In that state they do not marry nor give in marriage. Why? Because marriage is an ordinance that has to be attended to here, and unless it is secured in this life for eternity it cannot be secured in the resurrection, for they neither marry nor are given in marriage there. They do not baptize after the resurrection, they do not confirm and administer the ordinances pertaining to this life after the resurrection. All these things have to be attended to here, then we have a claim to the blessings here and hereafter.”²¹ ¶ Barnes has: “They shall make their nests there; that is, this shall be their secure, undisturbed retreat.” Which of course is true, those who are so greatly blessed in the highest degree of the Celestial Kingdom will be undisturbed. Rawlinson also explains: “*Gather under her shadow*] i.e. ‘gather her young ones under her.’” Once again, a statement of felicity and peace and non-disturbance. In terms of the animals depicted, there is much disagreement. Her shadow is an emblem of *protection*.

16 Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read the names written therein; no one of these shall fail; none shall want her mate; for my mouth it hath commanded, and his my Spirit it hath gathered them.

Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read the names written therein. The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “Search ye out the book of the Lord, and seek.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “I counted them and there is not one of them lost.” The BPE (Ⓢ) has, “Ponder the book of Yahweh and read.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “Search ye diligently in the

¹⁹ JD, Vol.2, pp.85–86, Orson Hyde, October 6, 1854.

²⁰ JD, Vol.13, p.187, Orson Pratt, October 7, 1869.

²¹ JD, Vol.14, p.243 – p.244, Orson Pratt, August 20, 1871.

book of the Lord, and read.” ¶ Some have focused on the *book of the LORD* (סֵפֶר יְהוָה) as Scripture. For instance, Faussett explains: “the volume in which the various prophecies and other parts of Scripture began henceforward to be collected together (ISAIAH 30:8; Daniel 9:2).” So also Elder L. Tom Perry taught: “All the standard works of the Church instruct us to read and ponder their sayings. From the Old Testament we read, ‘Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read’ (ISAIAH 34:16). From the New Testament, ‘Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me’ (John 5:39). Nephi, in the Book of Mormon, observes, ‘My soul delighteth in the scriptures, and my heart pondereth them, and writeth them for the learning and ... profit of my children’ (2 Nephi 4:15). Counsel from the Pearl of Great Price promises, ‘And whoso treasureth up my word, shall not be deceived’ (JS—M 1:37). And finally, in the Doctrine and Covenants we read: ‘First seek to obtain my word ... Study my word which hath gone forth among the children of men’ (D&C 11:21–22). The scriptures are one of our greatest treasures. They contain God’s instructions to His people from the beginning of time. In a world so full of the doctrines of men, how grateful we are to have a sure anchor on which to build our faith!”²² ¶ Many exegetes have been thrown off by the expression סֵפֶר יְהוָה, *book of Jehovah*. Such an idea has given commentators much trouble. Whitehouse, leaning on Duhm, says: “Duhm ... declares it to be ‘one of the strangest sentences in all the prophetic writings.’ What is the ‘book’ here meant!” Nägelsbach similarly asks some pointed questions: “But then why does he think this only of this prophecy? Even though elsewhere there is mention of recording *single* prophecies for the purpose of appealing to them afterwards (ISAIAH 8:1; 30:8), still there is nowhere, beside the present, any mention of an entire book that deserved to be called ‘the book of the LORD.’” Finally, Whitehouse, in 1905, himself comes so very close to the prophetic view found in the JST regarding το βιβλίον της ζωης (*the book of life*) “... the phrase should be combined with Psalm 139:16. The expression is a bold poetic appeal to search God’s *book of fate* ...” (*emphasis added*). The alluded verse in the Psalms reads: “Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.” Regarding *book*, TSK for Psalm 139:6 leads us to Revelations 20:12 that makes mention of *the book of life* as does our own LDS footnotes (these point to Revelation 17:8, also making mention of *the book of life*). Lange mentions *the book of*

life (even though his translator greatly objects). ¶ The JST gives us the necessary guidance, as it becomes clear that yet another meaning is *the book of life*. The LDS Bible Dictionary reads in part: “In one sense the book of life is the sum total of one’s thoughts and actions—the record of his life. However, the scriptures indicate that a heavenly record is kept of the faithful, whose names are recorded, as well as an account of their righteous deeds.” In the book of Revelation we read: “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels” (Revelation 3:5). Alma writes: “And now I say unto you, all you that are desirous to follow the voice of the good shepherd, come ye out from the wicked, and be ye separate, and touch not their unclean things; and behold, their names shall be blotted out, that the names of the wicked shall not be numbered among the names of the righteous, that the word of God may be fulfilled, which saith: The names of the wicked shall not be mingled with the names of my people; For the names of the righteous shall be written in the book of life, and unto them will I grant an inheritance at my right hand” (Alma 5:57–58a). In D&C 128 we have: “And further, I want you to remember that John the Revelator was contemplating this very subject in relation to the dead, when he declared, as you will find recorded in Revelation 20:12—*And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.* You will discover in this quotation that the books were opened; and another book was opened, which was the book of life; but the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works; consequently, the books spoken of must be the books which contained the record of their works, and refer to the records which are kept on the earth. And the book which was the book of life is the record which is kept in heaven (D&C 128:6–7a). ¶ *No one of these shall fail; none shall want their mate.* The LDS *Old Testament Student Manual* has, “Of those whose names are recorded in the heavenly book, ‘no one of these shall fail’ (ISAIAH 34:16). The promise that ‘none shall want [lack] their mate’ (JST, ISAIAH 34:16) is particularly interesting to Latter-day Saints since we know that only through the ordinance of celestial marriage can we have our mate eternally.”²³ The Targum (ܬ) has, “No one of them shall fail, none shall tarry for her mate.” The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “They have not had occasion to seek each other.” The Lamsa Peshitta (ܣ) has, “No one of these shall fail, none sought for her

²² Perry, Elder L. Tom. Back to Gospel Basics. General Conference, April 1993.

²³ *Prophecies of the Dispensation of the fullness of Times, Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi*, (1982), 161–69.

mate.” The **S**, as well as the other ancient texts, are closer to the JST than the Masoretic text (**מ**). The **מ** has *her* and the Prophet has corrected this to be *their* meaning that both men and women who are worthy would not be lacking a mate. Wade (also see Whitehouse) also comes very close to the JST: “The Hebrew is defective and ... should be rendered as there, *none shall want her mate.*” Calvin says, “Not one of those; that is, of the animals; for the Hebrew writers employ these terms, **אִשׁ** (ish) and **אִשָּׁה**, (ishshah,) not only for men and women, but for males and females of any species.” But indeed these very well may have been given to represent precisely **husband and wife** (**אִשׁ וְאִשָּׁה**). Regarding the Book of Life the Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “Until we have perfect love we are liable to fall and when we have a testimony that our names are sealed in the Lamb’s book of life we have perfect love and then it is impossible for false Christs to deceive us” (TPJS). ¶ *For my mouth it hath commanded, and my Spirit it hath gathered them.* For my mouth (**פִּי**) is the mouth of the Lord, for whom Isaiah speaks through Divine Investiture; *and my spirit* (**רוּחִי**) (**מ** *and his spirit* **רוּחוֹ**) is the Spirit of the Holy Ghost. ¶ The Targum (**ܬ**) has, “For by His Word they shall be gathered together, and by His pleasure they shall be brought together.” The LXX (**Θ**) reads, “For the Lord hath issued orders to them; and his spirit hath brought them together.” The Lamsa Peshitta (**ܣ**) has, “But he with his own mouth has commanded, and his spirit it has gathered them.” The BPE (**ܣ**) has, “But commanded with his mouth, and his Spirit gathered them.” The Douay-Rheims (**ܕ**) has, “Not one of them was wanting, one hath not sought for the other: for that which proceedeth out of my mouth, he hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them.” Ibn Ezra says: “*my mouth*: the decrees that come from the mouth of the Lord.” Slotki/Rosenberg make Ibn Ezra’s comment clearer: “The prophet is speaking in the name of God.” Horsley well explains: “For the mouth of Jehovah itself hath commanded, and his Spirit itself hath gathered them.” Henderson also believes it to speak of **Jehovah**: “**הוא** [he] is the pronoun used emphatically for **הוא**, and may therefore admit of **פִּי** [mouth] in the construct state.” Skinner says, “The change of person is harsh.” It is clear indeed that it is Jehovah who is spoken of here. ¶ Gladly, we have the JST who has it in first person. Isaiah is speaking for Jehovah through Divine Investiture. It is the Spirit of the Lord who invites each person to come unto Christ and to gather with His Church. ¶ **FROM D&C 133**: “And the graves of the saints shall be opened; and they shall come forth and stand on the right hand of the Lamb, when he shall stand upon Mount Zion, and upon the

holy city, the New Jerusalem; and they shall sing the song of the Lamb, day and night forever and ever. And for this cause, that men might be made partakers of the glories which were to be revealed, the Lord sent forth the fulness of his gospel, his everlasting covenant, reasoning in plainness and simplicity—To prepare the weak for those things which are coming on the earth, and for the Lord’s errand in the day when the weak shall confound the wise, and the little one become a strong nation, and two shall put their tens of thousands to flight. And by the weak things of the earth the Lord shall thrash the nations by the power of his Spirit. And for this cause these commandments were given; they were commanded to be kept from the world in the day that they were given, but now are to go forth unto all flesh—And this according to the mind and will of the Lord, who ruleth over all flesh. And unto him that repenteth and sanctifieth himself before the Lord shall be given eternal life” (D&C 133:56–62). Also see again, D&C 133:5–7.

17 And he hath I have cast the lot for them, and his hand hath I have divided it unto them by line; they shall possess it for ever; from generation to generation shall they shall dwell therein.

And I have cast the lot for them, and I have divided it unto them by line. The Targum (**ܬ**) has, “And He by his Word hath cast the lot for them; and by His will He hath divided *it* unto them by line.” The LXX (**Θ**) reads, “And he will himself cast the lots for them, his hand hath meted the place for them to feed.” Alexander comments: “An evident allusion to the division of the land of Canaan, both by lot and measuring-line (see Numbers 26:55–56; Joshua 18:4–6.) As Canaan was allotted to Israel, so Edom is allotted to these doleful creatures.” Young says: “... it is His own hand that divides for them by the line. The division will be exact and precise, as it should be, for it has been measured by the measuring line. Inasmuch as God Himself has made the allotment, it cannot be changed by man at will. It is a permanent arrangement which will endure for ever.” Indeed, the JST makes it clear that it is the Lord who is speaking in this verse through Isaiah, once again, through the principle of Divine Investiture. The division of the kingdoms of glory once again seems to be the subject. There will be no mistake made. ¶ *They shall possess it for ever; from generation to generation they shall dwell therein.* The LXX (**Θ**) reads, “For a long time you shall inherit it. For generations of generations let them rest therein.” Calvin says: “[for these animals] there hath been granted a secure and permanent habitation, from which they cannot be easily banished

or driven out; because God hath allotted it to them as their portion by inheritance ... If he shall be pleased to give us a peaceable habitation for a long time in one place, it will only be by his special favor that we shall dwell there ... Besides, if we acknowledge that a residence in this or that country has been appointed to us by God, we may dwell in it with safety and composure; for if he keeps wild beasts in possession of the place which he has allotted to them, how much more will he preserve men, for whose sake he created heaven, earth, the seas, and all that they contain?" Precisely, if

this be an allegory of animals and no humans intended, how much more to humans who have been faithful will the Lord provide an eternal habitation with their beloved spouses and children. Furthermore, the habitations in each of the kingdoms of glory will be forever.

26 October 2011

Isaiah 35

Our 10th Article of Faith teaches: “We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.” A substantial portion of this Article of Faith is covered in ISAIAH 35—and even more so when we consider ISAIAH 35’s parallel text, D&C 133. This glorious chapter of ISAIAH gives the blossoming of the Utah desert as a rose—along with other attendant blessings—as a type of the earth being converted into its paradisiacal glory in the millennium. From Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith: “The land of America is a promised land unto [the descendants of Joseph], and unto it all the tribes of Israel will come, with as many of the Gentiles as shall comply with the requisitions of the new covenant. But the tribe of Judah will return to old Jerusalem. The city of Zion spoken of by David, in the one hundred and second Psalm, will be built upon the land of America, ‘And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads.’ (ISAIAH 35:10); and then they will be delivered from the overflowing scourge that shall pass through the land. But Judah shall obtain deliverance at Jerusalem. See Joel 2:32; ISAIAH 26:20 and 21; Jeremiah 31:12; Psalm 1:5; 10. The testimonies that the Good Shepherd will put forth His own sheep, and lead them out from all nations where they have been scattered in a cloudy and dark day, to Zion, and to Jerusalem; besides many more testimonies which might be brought.” Elder Orson Pratt taught: “I say those who will travel through this Territory [Utah] may see some of the effects of the gathering out of the Saints who have made a covenant with the Lord by sacrifice. If we had gathered together into a country that was well timbered, where we could go out and get a load of fence poles or firewood before breakfast; if we had settled in a country that was not, comparatively a desert, and that was blessed with the rains of heaven, we could no doubt have accomplished far more than we now see. But the Lord purposely led us into this desert to fulfil prophecy.” (Pratt, Elder Orson, JD 15:57–58). Horsley says that this chapter relates to the “final triumph of the Church over the apostate factions.”

vv. 1–4. Simeon writes: “The believer, blessed in himself, make the very place of his residence a blessing; according to that description given of him by the Prophet Ezekiel; ‘I will make them, and the places round about my hill, a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season¹; there shall be showers of blessings.’² Thus by the power of his Gospel ‘the Lord comforts Zion; he comforts all her *waste places*; he makes her *wilderness* like Eden, and her *desert* like the garden of the Lord: joy and gladness are found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody.’³”

1 ¶ THE wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “They that dwell in the wilderness, in a thirsty land, shall rejoice; and those that inhabit the desert shall rejoice, and shall shine as the lilies.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Rejoice, O desert; shout for joy, O thirsty desert and blossom like a lily.” Instead of *rose*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *crocus* (Lamsa) / *azafrán*

¹ *Rain in Due Season*, Leviticus 26:4.

² Ezekiel 34:26.

³ ISAIAH 51:3.

(BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “The land that was desolate and impassable shall be glad, and the wilderness shall rejoice, and shall flourish like the lily.”

Alexander says of the *rose*, רֹז, “[It is best to retain] the English word *rose*, as more familiar and a conveying a more striking image of beauty. The poetry, if not the botany, of this translation is superior ...”

¶ The wilderness or *desert*, in Hebrew, עֲרָבָה *Arabah*.

Gill observes: “... the church, in the wilderness, being obliged to fly there from the persecution of antichrist.” If we take antichrist as also a type for all who persecute the Saints, this statement is certainly correct about the Latter-day Saint pioneers who suffered horrible persecutions as they were driven to into the wilderness.

¶ *Glad for them*, יִשְׂשׁוּם. Probably those who were driven to the desert. The desert is glad for those who have driven to the עֲרָבָה. Of this verse, Rawlinson says: “The highest resources of the poetic art are called in to give some idea of the glory and happiness of the final Church of the redeemed.” ¶ In D&C we read that the blossoming is both related to the land as well as to the Lamanites uniting themselves with the Church—and that all of this would happen *before* the Second Coming: “Wherefore, be not deceived, but continue in steadfastness, looking forth for the heavens to be shaken, and the earth to tremble and to reel to and fro as a drunken man, and for the valleys to be exalted, and for

the mountains to be made low, and for the rough places to become smooth—and all this when the angel shall sound his trumpet. But before the great day of the Lord shall come, Jacob shall flourish in the wilderness, and the Lamanites shall blossom as the rose. Zion shall flourish upon the hills and rejoice upon the mountains, and shall be assembled together unto the place which I have appointed” (D&C 49:23–25). Joseph Smith the Prophet said: “One of most important points in the faith of the Church of the Latter Day Saints, through the fullness of the everlasting Gospel, is the gathering of Israel (of whom the Lamanites constitute a part)—that happy time when Jacob shall go up to the house of the Lord, to worship Him in spirit and in truth, to live in holiness; when the Lord will restore his judges as at the first, and His counselors as at the beginning; when every man may sit under his own vine and fig tree, and there will be none to molest or make afraid; when He will turn to them a pure language, and the earth will be filled with sacred knowledge, as the waters cover the great deep; when it shall no longer be said, the Lord lives that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, but the Lord lives that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither He has driven them.”⁴ Elder J. Thomas Fyans spoke about prophecies about the Lamanites flourishing as a rose and quoted several LDS prophets, including President Kimball, whose love for the descendants of the Lamanites was unsurpassed: “Now may we consider the book of revelations of today as shared with us by the present prophet, President Spencer W. Kimball: ‘The Lamanites must rise in majesty and power’ (Conference Reports, Oct. 1947, p. 22). This prophetic statement was made on October 3, 1947, when in Central America we had fewer than 100 members and in that great land of Mexico fewer than 5,000, half of whom were in the Mormon colonies. ‘The Lamanites must rise in majesty,’ I repeat. The fewer than 100 in Central America when these prophetic words were uttered has blossomed into more than 40,000 as of today. From the fewer than 5,000 in Mexico at that time, a rich harvest of over 150,000 stand tall in the field white already to harvest; the total membership of 1947 but represents harvest of a pair of months today. To continue the statement of President Kimball, ‘We must look forward to the day . . . when they shall have economic security, culture, refinement, and education; when they shall be operating farms and businesses and industries and shall be occupied in the professions and in teaching’ (Ibid). When these words reached our ears in 1947 it wouldn’t have required the fingers of one hand to number the professional people in the Church in Mexico and Central America—or the number of cars owned or the number of homes with

modern conveniences.”⁵ Much the same could be said of Chile, when at the time of my conversion we mostly met in homes and there were few members or chapels. Elder LeGrand Richards said about this verse, “[Isaiah, regarding Utah] saw our irrigation system. He saw our people come and sing in the heights of Zion. He saw the reservoirs in the mountains that would cause the waters to be impounded and flow down and make these valleys blossom as the rose.”⁶ In 1944 Elder Samuel O. Bennion spoke of his ancestors who came to Utah moved by their unmovable faith and testimony in Christ and were greeted with desolate and arid desert conditions: “The same soil that is here now was here then, but it was barren. But the Lord had said through His prophet, Isaiah, centuries before: ‘The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: . . . they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God’ (ISAIAH 35:1–2) . . . The Lord put those words into his mouth, and he delivered that scripture, and this has become now one of the greatest gardens of the earth.”⁷ ¶ President Ezra Taft Benson loved ISAIAH 35:1 and also applied it to Israel herself: “The greatest advancements of all were being made in agriculture. The deserts and hills were blossoming, becoming green and productive again. Hills on either side of Galilee, for generations denuded and eroded, were being covered with forest trees and citrus and olive groves.”⁸ ¶ Millennial fulfillment. Beside the fulfillment of these prophecies regarding the deserts of Utah, as well as those of Israel, the day will come when the whole earth shall be filled with its paradisiacal glory. Interestingly, our tour guide in Jordan (Edom in ancient times) told Linda & me, “This is good soil we have in Jordan, the only thing we need for it to be fertile is water.”

2 It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, [and] the excellency of our God.

⁵ Fyans, Elder J. Thomas. “The Lamanites Must Rise in Majesty and Power,” April 1976 General Conference.

⁶ Elder LeGrand Richards, 1960. Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press.

⁷ Elder Samuel O. Bennion, General Conference, October 1944, pp. 65–66.

⁸ Benson, Ezra Taft. *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1988.

⁴ *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2:357.

It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “They shall greatly rejoice and be glad, yea, with joy and gladness.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Let the deserts of Jordan also bloom and rejoice.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲥ) has, “It shall rejoice like a mountain goat.” The BPE (Ⲥ) has, “It shall jump for joy like a mountain goat.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “It shall bud forth and blossom, and shall rejoice with joy and praise.” In ISAIAH 55:12 we likewise read: “For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.” Rawlinson explains: “It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; rather, *with dancing and singing*. Dancing and singing were the ordinary manifestations of religions joy.” ¶ *The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto them; the splendour of Carmel and Sharon.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “To it hath been given the glory of Lebanon and the honour of Charnel.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “The glory of Libanus is given to it: the beauty of Carmel, and Saron.” Birks has, “In ISAIAH 33:9, the Assyrian ravages are described by the wasting of Lebanon, Sharon, Bashan, and Cannel. Here the picture is reversed. Lebanon, Carmel, Sharon, resume their excellency and glory; and it will be shared by the wilderness, the desert, and the solitary place.” Jennings says: “... now the very desert ‘laughs with abundance,’ for fertility and beauty of the earth are poetically its laughter of joy; and the greater its fertility the greater the joy of which it speaks. Every word that can express delight is called on for its contribution; and when these may be exhausted, Lebanon must add its majestic glory, Carmel its beauty, and the flowery plain of Sharon its loveliness. But these are but attendants on Jehovah, whose glory and beauty outshine all.” Ironside well says: “Every fruitful field or orchard, every lovely garden, presents a foretaste of what in Messiah’s day will be everywhere prevalent, when the parched deserts will give place to verdant meadows, and the thorns and thistles brought in by the curse will vanish, and trees and shrubs bearing fruits to appeal to the appetite and flowers to the eye, will spring up instead.” Some have wished to assign allegorical symbols to these beautiful places. Alexander says: “The figures here employed are so familiar, and in their obvious meanings so expressive, that we only weaken their effect by treating them as symbols or an allegory.” Gill says: “A redundancy of words, to express the very flourishing estate of the church, and the great joy there shall be on that occasion, as well as because of the destruction of their enemies, and deliverance from them.” ¶ *They shall see the glory of the LORD, [and] the excellency of our God.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The house of Israel to

whom these things are promised, they, they shall see the glory of the Lord, the beauty (or, ‘praise’) of our God.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And my people shall see the glory of the Lord, and the majesty of our God.” The Peshitta (Ⲥ) adds a clause to the end, after the *excellency of our God*, something like, “There shall be admonition and comfort for the weak, for a Saviour shall come to save them.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “They shall see the glory of the Lord, and the beauty of our God.” The Targum (Ⲯ) puts a special emphasis on *the house of Israel* and the modern Church is certainly of Israel, beginning with Ephraim, whose job it will be to search out the rest of the tribes. The various Jewish encyclopedias have some interesting comments on the subject. For instance, *The Jewish Encyclopedia* has: “As a large number of prophecies relate to the return of ‘Israel’ to the Holy Land, believers in the literal inspiration of the Scriptures have always labored under a difficulty in regard to the continued existence of the tribes of Israel, with the exception of those of Judah and Levi (or Benjamin), which returned with Ezra and Nehemiah. If the Ten Tribes have ... not disappeared, obviously they must exist under a different name. The numerous attempts at identification that have been made constitute some of the most remarkable curiosities of literature ... In the Apocrypha it is presumed that the Ten Tribes still exist as tribes. Thus Tobit is stated to be of the tribe of Naphtali, and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs assume their continuous existence. In the Fourth Book of Ezra (13:39–45) it is declared that the Ten Tribes were carried by Hosea, king in the time of Shalmaneser, to the Euphrates, at the narrow passages of the river, whence they went on for a journey of a year and a half to a place called Arzareth.”⁹ Israel, indeed, *shall see the glory of the Lord* in the latter-days, as was manifested in the Kirtland Temple and has and will be manifested in the Lord’s temples around the world and even outside of them. About this verse Victor Ludlow wrote: “Note how Isaiah transferred the glory and excellency of these areas [Lebanon, Carmel, Sharon] over to the Lord in the second half of the verse.” So also Wildberger who writes: “In the final analysis, the main point is not that the desert will be clothed in majesty, but that Yahweh’s, our God’s, כבוד (majesty) and הדר (splendor) will be seen.”

3 Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has the prophet saying these things. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Be strong ye hands which are feeble, and ye knees which are without strength.”

⁹ *The Jewish Encyclopedia* 12:249.

Instead of *confirm*, the Peshitta (ܣ) has *make firm* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (V) has *feeble* instead of its synonym, *weak*. According to Rashi (in Rosenberg): “All the prophets who brought tidings of salvation consoled Israel and strengthened their weak hands. The word is in the intensive conjugation, and its meaning is the causative, i.e., *strengthen others*.” This reminds us of the injunction: “when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren” (Luke 22:32b). According to Ibn Ezra, most of the Jewish exegetes believe this to be of the *Messianic period*. Throughout this chapter, Alexander well recommends that we avoid exclusive meanings. For instance, these words, says Alexander, can equally profit us as applied to self-strengthening as to strengthening others. Alexander suggests that the Targum (ܬ) addresses “spiritual weakness or inability to do God’s will.” None of my Targum or Chaldee translations offers such a translation.¹⁰ Delitzsch says: “Those who have become weak in faith, hopeless and despairing.” Elder Marvin J. Ashton taught: “Early on, I assumed ‘feeble knees’ meant weak or exhausted. However, the context of its use in Isaiah (see ISAIAH 35:3–4) suggests that it may have a somewhat richer meaning, something more like fearful. I actually favor this latter interpretation. Today we often hear such expressions as ‘weak in the knees’ or ‘knocking knees’ to denote fear. In D&C 81:5, the verse might be interpreted as the Lord’s urging Frederick G. Williams to provide strength to the weak (‘succor the weak’), to provide encouragement to those who are exhausted or discouraged (‘lift up the hands which hang down’), and to give courage and strength to those with feeble knees and fearful hearts. Today, almost 160 years later, there is no doubt in my mind that the admonition to strengthen feeble knees is more apropos than ever. Who among us has not experienced feeble knees or fear and uncertainty¹¹ over the responsibilities we encounter in this mortal existence? ... It would seem that no one escapes some uncertainty, insecurity, doubt, and even fear. This mortal existence is invariably challenging and unpredictable. Life is never easy, and we cannot escape our own case of feeble knees from time to time. It is thus essential that we love and support one another.”¹² Likewise, Elder Franklin D. Richards explained that this is a call to trust God and “[Speak] comforting words to

the Saints saying: ‘Dear brother, thy God reigneth, trust in him.’ Notwithstanding all that we see on the right hand and on the left, and all that we hear, the Lord God has not forgotten His people...”¹³ Elder Penrose also taught: “... every man called to hold this priesthood should be a minister of salvation in the midst of the earth. If he is not called to minister abroad in the world, he can be a minister of peace and righteousness at home; he can strengthen the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees, and drive away doubt from the skeptical mind; bear testimony to the truth which he has received and understands, and wherever he goes he can carry the Spirit and blessing of God that will build the people together, and thus help to build up the kingdom of God. And he will not spread contention or encourage any spirit which would prompt men to speak evil of each other; he will not encourage anything that savors of contention and strife and disunion, but, on the contrary, will encourage all that tends to unite the people together. And any man holding the priesthood has power to do that much in the sphere which he is called to occupy. And also of speaking a word in due season, and of standing in his calling and of being a representative of the Most High God.”¹⁴ President Gordon B. Hinckley tenderly taught: “*Be strong, my brethren, in the quality of mercy*. It is easy to be a bully in one’s home, in one’s business, in one’s speech and acts. This sick world so cries out for kindness and love and mercy. These virtues become an expression of strength rather than weakness on the part of any holder of the priesthood of God. Be strong with that strength of which Isaiah speaks when he said, ‘Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you.’”¹⁵ President Joseph F. Smith taught: “Leaders of the Church, then, should be men not easily discouraged, not without hope, and not given to forebodings of all sorts of evils to come. Above all things the leaders of the people should never disseminate a spirit of gloom in the hearts of the people ... It is a matter of the greatest importance that the people be educated to appreciate and cultivate the bright side of life rather than to permit its darkness and shadows to hover over them. In order to successfully overcome anxieties in reference to questions that require time for their solution, an absolute faith and confidence in God and in the triumph of his work are

¹⁰ Pauli’s (ܬ) translation has: “The prophet said: Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm ye the feeble knees.”

אָמַר נְבִיא תְּקִיפוּ יָדַי וְרַכְּבוּן דְּרַעְלָן חֲסִינִי

¹¹ Before my son David Marsing Billikopf died, I asked of him a son’s blessing. Even though he used different words this was basically the injunction with which the Lord blessed me, through my son’s mouth, in regards to my comforting the rest of the family after his departure.

¹² Ashton, Elder Marvin, J. “Strengthen the Feeble Knees” General Conference, October 1991.

¹³ JD, Vol.26, p.100, Franklin D. Richards, January 18th, 1885.

¹⁴ JD, Vol.21, p.49 – p.50, Charles W. Penrose, November 29th, 1879.

¹⁵ President Gordon B. Hinckley, Building Your Tabernacle, Ensign (CR), November 1992, p.50. Similarly, see President Gordon B. Hinckley, Let Love Be the Lodestar of Your Life, Ensign (CR), May 1989, p.65.

essential ... Clouds, threatening storms, frequently rise in the horizon of life and pass by as speedily as they came, so the problems and difficulties and dangers that beset us are not always met and solved, nor overcome by our individual effort nor by our efforts collectively ... In leaders undue impatience and a gloomy mind are almost unpardonable, and it sometimes takes almost as much courage to wait as to act. It is to be hoped, then, that the leaders of God's people, and the people themselves, will not feel that they must have at once a solution of every question that arises to disturb the even tenor of their way."¹⁶

4 Say to them [that are] of a fearful[✓] heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come [with] vengeance, [even] God [with] a recompence; he will come and save you.

✓ hasty

Say to them [that are] of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "Say ye to the fearful of heart that they may keep the law." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "Take comfort ye who are faint hearted; take courage, be not terrified." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, "Say to the fainthearted: Take courage, and fear not." As mentioned by Nägelsbach, "The words 'be strong, fear not' are evidently borrowed from Deuteronomy 31:6." There we have **חֲזָקוּ אֶל-תִּירָאוֹ**. Here we similarly have: **"חֲזָקוּ אֶל-תִּירָאוֹ"**. The reference to Deuteronomy is one of my favorite scriptures: "Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Deuteronomy 31:6). Also see Deuteronomy 31:8, "And the LORD, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not **[לֹא תִירָא]**, neither be dismayed." Whitehouse suggests: "For fearful heart a stronger rendering, 'panic-stricken (or agonized) in mind,' should be substituted." Indeed, for **לִנְמִתְרִי-לֵב** one could say someone of **hurried heart** or whose **heart** beats **quickly**. Gill says: "Or, 'hasty of heart'; are at once for flying from the enemy; 'hasty' in drawing black conclusions upon themselves and their state; 'inconsiderate' of the promises made unto them." Barnes says: "Of a timid, pusillanimous¹⁷ heart; those who tremble before their enemies." Wade says "the despondent and anxious." Likewise, Alexander, leaning

on Clericus, prefers to focus on *hasty* and thus "impatient of delay in the execution of God's promises." Birks says, "Fear and precipitance are near allied. True Christian courage arises from calm reflection on the promises of God, while a weak faith is soon discouraged by seasons of delay."¹⁸ ¶ *Behold, your God will come [with] vengeance, [even] God [with] a recompence; he will come and save you.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "Be ye strong, and fear ye not: behold, your God shall be revealed to take vengeance of judgment: the Lord of retributions, the Lord shall be revealed, and He shall save you." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "Behold our God retributeth judgment; he will indeed make retribution—he himself will come and save us." The Peshitta (Ⲫ) renders it something like, "Your God the avenger is coming, even God the Saviour will come and save you." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, "Behold your God will bring the revenge of recompense: God himself will come and will save you." ¶ Elder Orson Pratt taught: "But the people who are to be gathered together, and for whom the desert is to rejoice, are called upon not to fear—'Don't be faint-hearted, don't be discouraged.' Says the Prophet, 'Be strong, fear not, for behold your God will come with vengeance; he will come with a recompence and he will save you,' that is, you who are in the desert. Then there will be splendid miracles wrought again, as in ancient days. Then the eyes of the blind are to be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then 'shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing, for in the wilderness shall waters break out and streams in the desert.'"¹⁹ Also, Elder Orson Pratt, after quoting ISAIAH 35:3–4, said: "That has never been fulfilled; but preparatory to the time when God will come with vengeance to sweep away wickedness from the face of the earth, the house of Israel will be gathered back to their own lands, and the people of God will be permitted to dwell in the wilderness, and that wilderness will become a fruitful field. It is even said that the desert should rejoice because of those who are gathered, and should blossom as the rose."²⁰ ¶ Regarding *vengeance*, Barnes says: "God would take vengeance on all their enemies, and would bring them complete and final deliverance." ¶ *Behold your God (וְיִשַׁעְכֶּם) ... and save you (וְיִשַׁעְכֶּם)*. Alexander suggests that this expression may well be an exclamation and then goes on to say, "Calovius alleges that the name of *Jesus* is expressly mentioned, being included in the verb **יִשַׁע**."²¹ The words are really a

¹⁶ *Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 38, p. 339, 1903, in Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine: Selections from the Sermons and Writings of Joseph F. Smith*, compiled by John A. Widtsoe, p.155–156.

¹⁷ Webster: "Lacking courage and resolution."

¹⁸ See 1Samuel 13:8 ff.

¹⁹ JD, Vol.15, p.58, Orson Pratt, December 18, 1870.

²⁰ JD, Vol.18, p.142, Orson Pratt, August 30, 1875.

²¹ **יִשַׁעְכֶּם**

promise of deliverance of God's people, and include, as the most important part of their contents, the *unspeakable gift* of Christ and his salvation."

¶ *Recompense*. Gill says, "... both to the wicked a just recompence of reward or punishment for their sins, it being just with him to recompense tribulation to them that trouble his people; and to the saints, the time of his spiritual reign being the time, as to destroy them that destroy the earth, so to give a reward to his servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear his name, Revelation 11:18."

vv. 5–10. Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: "Messianic prophecies foretold that Jesus would work mighty miracles, heal the sick, raise the dead, cause the lame to walk, 'the blind to receive their sight,' and the deaf to hear, and that he would cure all manner of diseases (Mosiah 3:5). Isaiah, speaking more particularly of the great millennial coming, but also in part of our Lord's first advent, said: 'Your God will come ... Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing' (ISAIAH 35:4–6.)."²² In John 14:12a we read: "Verily, verily, I say unto you," the Savior taught. "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do." Ironside wrote: "To some extent these [healing] signs followed the preaching of His apostles who could say with authority to the lame and helpless, 'In the name of Jesus Christ rise up and walk,' and whose shadow at times had healing power. All of these wonders were but foretastes of what shall be everywhere prevalent in millennial days."

¶ President Kimball, after reading Mark 16:15–18, testified: "The Lord was promulgating an eternal principle that where his priesthood was and where faith was found, there would be the signs of power, not for show but for a blessing to the people. This eternal principle was understood by the disciples of the Lord in early days. James said: 'Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up ... The effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much' (James 5:14–16). When John the Baptist, languishing in prison, sent messengers to the Lord to inquire, 'Art thou he that should come or do we look for another?' (Matthew 11:3), the Lord's answer relayed back was, 'Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see; The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them' (Matthew 11:4–5) ... Let not

the skeptic disturb your faith in these miraculous healings. They are numerous. They are sacred. Many volumes would not hold them. They are simple and complex. They are gradual, and they are instantaneous. They are a reality."²³ ¶ **FROM D&C 133**: "Wherefore, prepare ye, prepare ye, O my people; sanctify yourselves; gather ye together, O ye people of my church, upon the land of Zion, all you that have not been commanded to tarry" (D&C 133:4). Also see again, D&C 133:23–27, 29–32.

5 ¶ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

The Targum (Ⲛ) has, "Then the eyes of Israel shall be opened, which were blind to the law, and their ears, which were as of the deaf, shall hear and receive the words of the prophets." The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, "Then shall be opened the eyes of the blind; and the ears of the deaf will hear." Beside the physical manifestations among the infirm, there is a vital spiritual side, too. In ISAIAH 32:3 we read: "And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken." Through the study of the Scriptures, including the Book of Mormon and the Bible would can have our own spiritual eyes and ears opened.

6 Then shall the lame [man] leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

Then shall the lame [man] leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: The Targum (Ⲛ) has, "Then when they shall see the captives of Israel gathered to go up to their own land as the swift harts, and not tarry, they shall sing with their tongue which has been tied." The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, "Then will the lame bound like a hart; and the stammering tongue will speak plain." Instead of *sing*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *be loosed* (Lamsa) / *talk* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, for the second half, "And the tongue of the dumb shall be free."

Regarding *hart* (ⲙⲁⲣⲓ), Barnes says: "The word used here denotes the stag, or male deer. In Arabic it denotes the wild, or mountain-goat. The word sometimes refers to any species of deer or antelope, and this is referred to here from its quick and sprightly nature." Regarding *lame* ⲙⲁⲣⲓⲙⲁⲣⲓ, Kay, in his usual brilliance, notes: "*the lame*]"—who had gone '*limping on two opinions*'

²² Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1:319.

²³ Kimball, President Spencer W. President Kimball Speaks Out on Administration to the Sick. *New Era*, 1981.

([פְּסָחִים עַל־שָׂתִי הַסְעָפִים] 1 Kings 18:21). He should now have his ‘way perfect,’ his ‘feet like hinds’ feet’ (Psalm 18:32–33).” ¶ Elder Jedediah M. Grant powerfully testified: “I want to bear my testimony, that mine eyes have seen the sick healed in the way the Gospel recommends; I have seen the ears of the deaf opened, and they have heard; I have seen the lame man walk, and leap like a hart; and I have seen others rise up suddenly from their sick bed, healed of a consuming fever. In Montrose, near Nauvoo, hundreds of families were sick nigh unto death, and some were given up to die. The Prophet Joseph Smith took some of the Elders with him, and went over there, and said to the sick, ‘I command you, in the name of the Lord God, to rise up and walk.’ And he went from house to house, and made every man, woman, and child to walk, and they followed him to the next sick family, and they are witnesses here to testify to it ...”²⁴ President Brigham Young also testified of many of these same things, and said: “I am here to testify in the name of the God of Israel that for many years past there have been men travelling through the length and breadth of the earth who possess the same power and authority as that with which Jesus endowed his Apostles when he told them to go into all the world and ‘preach the Gospel to every creature, and he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned, and these signs shall follow them that believe. In my name they shall cast out devils, heal the sick, speak with new tongues,’ &c. ... The eyes of the blind have been opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped; the lame have been made to leap, and foul spirits have been cast out. Has this been the case in every instance? Not by any means, neither was it in the days of the Savior. They who have faith receive these blessings if they live according to the spirit of the holy Gospel.”²⁵ I add my solemn witness that these things are true, for I have been a partaker thereof and know these blessings are just as much manifested among the Saints today, as they were when the Messiah walked upon the earth. Right before leaving for Uganda, my anxiety level was high and I had severe muscle spasms in my back (I injured it originally while I was working on a horse farm in Napa, California, and from time to time I have back problems). Through the power of the Melchizedek priesthood and in the name of Christ I was blessed. I got up to thank the priesthood holder and only a few minutes later did I realize that the healing had been instant—the possibility of which had never crossed my mind.²⁶ ¶ *For in the wilderness shall waters break out,*

and streams in the desert. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Because then the waters shall gush forth in the wilderness, and rivers in the plain.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Because water is burst forth in the desert, and torrents in a thirsty land.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲛ) has, “For waters are broken out in the desert, and streams in the wilderness.” Ibn Ezra suggests that this water plenty is in contrast to Lamentations 4:4, where “The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst.” ¶ Elder Orson Pratt explained: “But with regard to the wilderness that is here spoken of—‘Water shall break forth in the desert, springs of living water, streams also in the desert, and the parched ground shall become a pool and the thirsty land springs of water’—have you seen anything of the nature of this prediction fulfilled? Latter-day Saints, how was it with this wilderness twenty-eight years ago this summer when the pioneers entered this land, and when several thousands followed them in the autumn of that same year? What did you, who were appointed to explore the country, find? Many places parched up, looking as though there had been no water or rain from heaven for many years. You began to form your settlements on the streams that ran down from the melting snows in the mountains; and in a very short period of time you began to send forth your settlements, north and south and west. Occasionally you would find a little spring that would break out from under the threshold of the mountain, sufficient to water perhaps an acre of ground, and only one family could go there and settle. What do you find now? The same streams that would only water one acre of ground then—you know I am speaking to people who know for themselves, for they have seen it—the water in those very localities is now sufficient to water from one hundred to five hundred acres. What do you think of that? Have you realized that the hand of the Lord is with you?—that he has indeed fulfilled that which he spoke by the mouth of his ancient Prophet, when he said—‘For in the wilderness waters shall break forth and streams in the desert, etc.’?” He meant just

blessings. When a person requested a priesthood blessing, Brigham Young would ask, ‘Have you used any remedies?’ To those who said no because ‘we wish the Elders to lay hands upon us, and we have faith that we shall be healed,’ President Young replied: ‘That is very inconsistent according to my faith. If we are sick, and ask the Lord to heal us, and to do all for us that is necessary to be done, according to my understanding of the Gospel of salvation, I might as well ask the Lord to cause my wheat and corn to grow, without my plowing the ground and casting in the seed. It appears consistent to me to apply every remedy that comes within the range of my knowledge, and [then] to ask my Father in Heaven ... to sanctify that application to the healing of my body.’ Of course we don’t wait until all other methods are exhausted before we pray in faith or give priesthood blessings for healing. In emergencies, prayers and blessings come first. Most often we pursue all efforts simultaneously. This follows the scriptural teachings that we should ‘pray always’ (D&C 90:24) and that all things should be done in wisdom and order.” (Oaks, Elder Dallin H. Healing the Sick, General Conference, April 2010).

²⁴ JD, Vol.2, p.232–233, Jedediah M. Grant, December 17, 1854.

²⁵ JD, Vol.14, p.131–132, Brigham Young, May 21, 1871.

²⁶ Elder Dallin H. Oaks taught, “The use of medical science is not at odds with our prayers of faith and our reliance on priesthood

what he said, and you have come hither and proved his words to be true.”²⁷ At that time Bishop LeGrand Richards spoke in conference regarding the gathering of Israel, “Now, I want to bear my testimony to you that I know God has set his hand to gather scattered Israel, just as Moroni told the Prophet Joseph, as part of this work, before there was any organization of the Church, before there was any priesthood or power to officiate in the name of the Lord. The Angel Moroni told the Prophet Joseph that, quoting the words of Isaiah, the Lord should gather scattered Israel and bring in the dispersed of Judah and set up an ensign for the nations. Well, hasn’t he done it? Let us consider what has happened here in these valleys of the mountains as a part of the fulfillment of the promises the Lord has made through his prophets of old: how he should cause the waters to flow down from the high places where it has been reservoirized in these mountains, how the rivers should flow in the deserts (and if you go up through Idaho and see those great canals out of that Snake River, you will see that those canals are larger than the average rivers you see in the world), and how the waters should spring up in the dry places. When I was in Arizona recently, I saw pipes at least twenty inches in diameter running day and night, all the time, full of water, and as I saw them, I said to myself, this is what the prophets saw when the Lord declared through their mouths that he would turn the wilderness and make it to blossom as the rose. And we are living here in that day.”²⁸ Parley P. Pratt, speaking of the restoration of the earth to its primitive state had this to say: “Here, then, we have the curse taken off from the deserts, and they become a fruitful and well-watered country.”²⁹ Regarding the eventual paradisiacal glory of the earth. Govett says: “The blessings of the earth, renovated as the garden of Eden, are described in the fifth and sixth verses.” ¶ Barnes says: “Nothing will more strongly express the blessings of the gospel than the idea of cool, refreshing, abundant fountains and streams bursting forth in such pathless wastes.”

7 And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water:

²⁷ Pratt, Elder Orson. “Fulfillment of Prophecy,” 30 August 1875. (JD 18:144, OP), p. 146–7. Also see JD, 15:58–59; and JD 17:318–319.

²⁸ General Conference Reports 1880, 1897–1996. LDS Church News, Deseret News. Excerpts 1970–1996. Salt Lake City: Deseret News. April 1951, p. 41.

²⁹ Pratt, Parley P. *A Voice of Warning and Instruction to All People Or, an Introduction to the Faith and Doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, Elder Parley P. Pratt. New Edition. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1957. Included is the preface to the First American Edition (1837) and the Second European Edition (December 4, 1846), pp. 119. Also see ISAIAH 13.

in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, [shall be] grass with reeds[✓] and rushes.

✓ or, a court for reeds, &c

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Then the mirage shall become pools of water, and the thirsty place springs of water, *in* the place where the dragons dwell, reeds and rushes shall come up.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Therefore the glowing sand shall become pools, and for the thirsty soil there will be fountains of water. The reedy beds and the pools there will be the joy of birds.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “And that which was dry land, shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water. In the dens where dragons dwell before, shall rise up the verdure of the reed and the bulrush.” Birks says, “The word *sharib* [שָׂרִיב], ‘parched ground,’ A.V., more exactly ‘looming sand-waste,’ refers to the mirage, of which it is the Arabic name. The vain shadows of the world, which deceive and never satisfy, are to be replaced by the enduring joys of the kingdom of God.” Wordsworth has: “The mirage, Heb. *sharab* [שָׂרִיב], is the ‘fata morgana’ (called in Sanscrit ‘the antelope’s thirst’), a phenomenon known to travellers in the sandy deserts of the East, in which the horizon sometimes assumes the appearance of a waving and tremulous expanse of water, where mountains are mirrored, and which mocks their hopes of water by an illusory vision of it.” Henderson, of the שָׂרִיב says, “... the French have given the name of *mirage*, consisting in the presentation to the view of a lake or sea in the midst of a plain, where none in reality exists. It is produced by the refraction of the rays of light, during the exhalation of vapours, by the excessive heat of the sun; and frequently exhibits, along with the undulating appearance of water, the shadows of objects within or around the plain, both in a natural and inverted position. The deception is most complete; and to the weary traveller, who is attracted by it, in the highest degree mortifying; since, instead of reaching refreshing water, he finds himself in the midst of nothing but glowing sand. It is often used proverbially, or for the sake of comparison, by the Arabs, as in the Koran, Sur. 24:39: ‘But as for those who believe not, their works are like the Serab of the plain: the thirsty imagines it is water, but when he reaches it, he finds it is nothing.’³⁰ ... The meaning of Isaiah is, that the expectations of the Jews should not be disappointed.”³¹ ¶ *Habitation of dragons*. The idea about the dragons seems to be, according to most exegetes, that there were only creatures of

³⁰ Wordsworth wonders if Mohammad was inspired by Isaiah’s writings here.

³¹ JD, Vol.15, p.58 – p.59, Orson Pratt, December 18, 1870.

the desert who dwelt there, there would now be abundant water and flora related to it, such as grass with reeds that grow where there is plenty of water. Yet here, the reference seems to be to those who are clean and shall have an eternal increase, as we saw in ISAIAH 34:14 ff.

8 And an highway shall be there, and for a way shall be cast up, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over upon it; but it [shall be] cast up for those who are clean, and the wayfaring men, though they are accounted fools, shall not err [therein].

✓ or, for he shall be with them³²

And an highway shall be there, for a way shall be cast up, and it shall be called the way of holiness. The Targum (T) has, “And a trodden way shall be there, and a straight one; and it shall be called the way of holiness.” The LXX (G) reads, “There will be there a pure highway, which shall be called The Holy way.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “And a path and a way shall be there, and it shall be called the holy way.” The word *highway* is rendered as מַסְלֵל in Hebrew. Barnes explains: “... refers more particularly to a raised way (from סָלַל, to cast up).” So also Faussett (and others): “such a causeway (*raised way*, from a Hebrew root, ‘to cast up’).” The JST is shown to be correct by most exegetes. Wildberger has: “*The Holy Highway*: The transformation of the natural world supplies part of the description of what is said to be coming in the time of salvation, but it simply provides the backdrop for the real theme here, which is the deliverance of Israel.” ¶ Cheyne says, “Most think it is for the returning exiles. Rather it is a road for pilgrims to the house of Jehovah.” So also Kay, who says, that it might be “the way of the sanctuary,” as does Kaiser, “This highway will be called Holy Way, and will therefore lead to the sanctuary. But at first he does not mention where it leads, in order to prepare gradually the idea of the pilgrims returning home along this highway and travelling towards Zion.” ¶ Elder John Taylor taught: “Because [Moses] held the keys of the gathering dispensation: And he conferred upon Joseph Smith the

power to gather Israel from the four quarters of the earth, and also the ten tribes.³³ But the latter have not come yet; but people are hunting them up, and they will be found by and by; when the time comes, and the mountains will flow down at their presence, and a highway will be cast up, and they will come to knowledge of the people. But they could not come without the restoration of the keys I have referred to.”³⁴ Elder Woodruff spoke of the railroad as being one of the highways to be cast up: “The Lord requires much at our hands—more than he has ever required of any generation that has preceded us; for no generation that has ever lived on the earth was called upon to establish the kingdom of God on the earth, knowing that it should be thrown down no more for ever. (Daniel 2:44) Daniel saw this; the Prophet Isaiah had spoken of it; in fact three-fourths of all his predictions relate to the establishment of the kingdom of God in the latter days; to our persecutions, to our travels to these valleys of the mountains, to the lifting up of the standard to the people on the mountains of Israel; to the casting up of the great highway—this national railroad, which the ransomed of the Lord should walk over, and on which the Gentiles should come to the light of Zion, and kings to the brightness of her rising.”³⁵ A few years later, Elder Woodruff testified: “The principle of gathering has been preached for the past thirty-seven years. Before this principle was preached by the Elders, a great many of the people had received the spirit of it; and the consequence was, that no sooner had it been taught by the Presidency of the Church, than the people everywhere were ready to receive it. It had been revealed to them by the Holy Ghost, whose office it is to reveal that which is past, present, and that which is to come, and no surer, stronger testimony can be given to any one than it affords. We have gathered here for the express purpose of establishing Zion, which, according to the Scriptures, must be before the Gospel can be sent to the Jews. Passage after passage might be found in the Bible, referring to our coming here; the casting up of the highway on which the ransomed of the Lord might travel; the building of our city in a low place, which was to be Sought out, a city not forsaken; and how the Lord would cause springs of water to spring up, and the desert to blossom like the rose, etc., all of which have had their fulfillment.”³⁶ Jenour says: “What can exceed the beauty of the imagery employed? The *high way* is that system of religion taught by Christ; those doctrines, precepts, and promises which the gospel contains.”

³² Calvin translates following the margin ¶: “And he shall be to them one that walketh in the way.” Calvin goes on to explain: “But the demonstrative pronoun הָיָא, *he*, is more correctly, in my opinion, viewed as referring to God; as if he had said, that God will go before them to lead and direct the way.” So it is indeed, no man can walk in the Holy Way (and way of the holiness הַדֶּרֶךְ הַקֹּדֶשׁ) if not lead by the Lord.

³³ Elder McConkie taught: “The return of the Ten Tribes is, of course, a Millennial event.” A New Witness for the Articles of Faith, p.521.

³⁴ JD, Vol.21, p.253, John Taylor, March 21st, 1880.on

³⁵ JD, Vol.14, p.5 – p.6, Wilford Woodruff, January 1, 1871.

³⁶ JD, Vol.18, p.221, Wilford Woodruff, August 13, 1876.

¶ *The unclean shall not pass over upon it; but it [shall be] cast up for those who are clean.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “The unclean shall not pass over it.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And the unclean shall not come there; nor shall there be there an unclean way.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓢ) has, “The unclean shall not pass over it; and there shall be no road beside it.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “The unclean shall not pass over it, and this shall be unto you a straight way.” ¶ Keith says: “Instead of being a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers,³⁷ ‘the people shall be all righteous.’³⁸” Orelli has: “*The holy way, i.e. the way belonging to God, which, as is presently explained, the impure may not tread, but which is destined for them alone, i.e. for the members of God’s sanctified Church, marching homeward to the temple by this road.*” The *unclean* are all those who the Savior will be “ashamed to own to own before the Father” (D&C 29:27b). ¶ *And the wayfaring men, though they are accounted fools, shall not err [therein].* Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And the wayfaring men shall not cease; the ignorant (literally, ‘they that are not taught’) shall not err. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “But as for the dispersed, they shall travel it, and shall not be led astray.” The BPE (Ⓢ) has, “Not even the fool can get lost therein.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “So that fools shall not err therein.” ¶ I love what Luther says here about the *fools* (and this makes all the sense in the world with the JST correction, *accounted fools* rather than *fools*): “They who are regarded as simpletons and fools in the eyes of the world are properly called fools, just as the Word, too, is a word of foolishness. Therefore he says that those who are fools before the world but wise in faith walk on the way.” So also Wordsworth who says: “... although he be a fool in the opinion of the world, which fondly deems itself wise.” ¶ Contrast this with Romans 1:22, where the foolish consider themselves wise: “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (1 Corinthians 1:18–21). And furthermore: “Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to

confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty” (1 Corinthians 1:25–27). Furthermore, “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2:14, also see 1 Corinthians 3:18–19; 4:10). ¶ This expression—*though they are accounted fools*—has been used multiple times by the Brethren to express the simplicity of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “Hence the doctrine of a plurality of Gods is as prominent in the Bible as any other doctrine. It is all over the face of the Bible. It stands beyond the power of controversy. A wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein.”³⁹ Elder John Taylor explained: “There were certain principles laid down by Jesus and his disciples, and also by Moses, and by Nephi, Alma and others on this continent, in a very plain, clear and pointed manner, in fact, although a mystery to men of the world, to believers they are as the Scriptures say—so plain that a wayfaring man though a fool need not err therein; and they are strictly logical, and philosophical and easy of comprehension.”⁴⁰ Elder Joseph F. Smith taught: “How then can we know ‘the only true and living God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent?’ for to obtain this knowledge would be to obtain the secret or key to eternal life. It must be through the Holy Ghost, whose office is to reveal the things of the Father to man, and to bear witness in our hearts of Christ ... Thus the Spirit and power of God—the Comforter, may be in us as a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. He will bear record of the Father, testify of Jesus, and ‘take of the things of the Father and reveal them unto us,’ confirming our faith, establishing us in the truth, that we shall be no longer tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine; but shall ‘know of the doctrine’ whether it be of God or of man. This is the course—it is simple, reasonable, and consistent. Who is there with common abilities that can fail to see, or comprehend it? Indeed, in the language of the Scriptures, it is so plain, that ‘the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein.’ ... We should never cease to serve Him, nor thwart his mercy and goodness towards us; but ever live so that the Holy Spirit may be within us as a living spring, calculated to lead us to perfection in righteousness, virtue, and integrity before God, until we accomplish our earthly mission, performing every duty that may be required at our hands.”⁴¹ Elder George Albert Smith testified and

³⁷ ISAIAH 1:4a.

³⁸ ISAIAH 60:21a.

³⁹ TPJS, p. 370.

⁴⁰ Taylor, Elder John. The Knowledge of God and Mode of Worshipping Him. Discourse delivered in the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday Afternoon, 7 September 1873.

⁴¹ Smith, Elder Joseph F. Belief and Knowledge. Discourse delivered in the Tabernacle, at St. George, Sunday, April 2, 1877. p. 22.

warned: “This is the Church of Jesus Christ, our Lord. He has given rules to govern it and made them so plain that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err in following His teachings; yet there have been those in the Church who have failed, who have fallen by the wayside, who have come under the power of the adversary and, surrendered to, evil.”⁴²

9 No lion shall be there, nor [any] ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk [there]:

No lion shall be there, nor [any] ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “There shall not be there a king doing evil, and an oppressive governor shall not pass over it, yea, they shall not be found there.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “No lion shall be there; nor shall any ravenous beast come up thither, nor ever be found there.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “No lion shall be there, nor shall any mischievous beast go up by it, nor be found there.” ¶ Barnes has: “Lions abounded in all the countries adjacent to Palestine. They are, therefore, often referred to by the sacred writers, as objects of dread and alarm.” Jennings says: “Nor can any beast of prey invade it and terrify its travelers; absolute security characterizes it. Why is that? Because those passengers Zionward have all been bought at a great price, and are well-guarded by Him who has thus purchased them.” Wildberger says: “When God wanted to punish his people, he sent wild animals into the country (Leviticus 26:22 *Rain in Due Season*; Deuteronomy 32:24; Ezekiel 5:17; 14:15).” This was also true in Book of Mormon times (e.g., Alma 2:37). Jenour says: “The persons who walk this road shall be safe from their enemies, and especially from the attacks of him [i.e., Satan]⁴³ *who goeth about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour* (1 Peter 5:8). ¶ *But the redeemed shall walk [there]*. The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “But in it the redeemed will walk.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “But they shall walk there that shall be delivered.” Wade says regarding **נְאֻלִים**, “the **redeemed**, i.e. the Jews who shall be restored from exile (the term being the same as that used in ISAIAH 51:10; 62:12). And *the ransomed . . . return*. This clause [from the next verse] belongs [here] being parallel to *the redeemed shall walk there*.” But not just those of the tribe of Judah, and not of the Babylonian exile and

captivity, but rather eschatological, with the whole of the house of Israel brought back, redeemed and ransomed from the four quarters of the earth. Regarding the words *redeemed* and *ransomed* as used in this and the next verse, Kay says that they are also found in Hosea 13:4, “Of God’s final liberation of His people from Death and Hades.”

10 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And the redeemed of the Lord shall return, because they shall be gathered from the midst of their captivity; and they shall come to Zion with a song, and they shall have everlasting joy, which shall not cease, and a cloud of glory shall overshadow their heads: joy and gladness shall be found, and sorrow and sighing shall cease from them, namely, from the house of Israel.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And they who have been collected for the Lord. They indeed shall return and come to Sion with joy, and everlasting joy shall crown their head: for on their heads will be praise and rapture; and gladness shall have full possession of them. Pain and sorrow and sighing are fled.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “And the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and shall come into Sion with praise, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.” Once again we come across **שׁוּב**, here as **שׁוּבִי**, meaning to *return*, but also to *turn unto Christ* as we have repeatedly pointed out. Keith says: “And those who are now scattered among all nations, a shame and a reproach,⁴⁴ shall come to Zion, and obtain joy and gladness . . . This, with the preceding clause, (marginal || reading,) is rendered by Lowth, ‘He himself shall be with them walking in the way.’ The reference, according to this translation, is to the Messiah, who ‘will come to Zion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob.’” ¶ Regarding *sorrow and sighing*, Elder Neal A. Maxwell, then a member of the Seventy, taught: “As we build a holier Zion, with ‘the voice of melody’ we will sing those lyrics—‘All is well, all is well’ (‘Come, Come, Ye Saints,’ Hymns, no. 13)—but sometimes as a reassuring sob as well as a song, awaiting the promised day when ‘sorrow and sighing shall flee away.’ With Paul, we can say, ‘We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not

⁴² Smith, Elder George Albert (1942). *Upholding the Hands of Our Leaders*. Conference Report, pp. 13–17.

⁴³ “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

⁴⁴ The scattering is a reflection of sin against the Lord as seen in *Rain in Due Season*, and thus a *shame and a reproach*.

destroyed' (2 Corinthians 4:8–9)—perhaps adding, 'We are confronted, but not surprised; we are falsely accused, but pray for our accusers; we are reviled, but respond with Christian service.' Brothers and sisters, we can be walking witnesses and standing sermons to which objective onlookers can say a quiet amen."⁴⁵ ¶ The Talmud tradition (Seder Mo'ed, Shabbath 88a) implies that when the children of Israel say "'we will do' over 'we will hearken,'" these great blessings will come to pass (Talmud, Soncino). This goes along with the spiritual progression the Brethren speak about, from knowing, to doing, to becoming. ¶ *Upon their heads.* In ISAIAH 28 we read of a contrast between "The crown of pride [of] the drunkards of Ephraim" (ISAIAH 28:3a) and "In that day shall the LORD of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people" (ISAIAH 28:5). Christ will always be our Crown of Glory. In addition we read from our beloved Prophet Joseph Smith: "But from the few items previously quoted we can draw the conclusion that there is to be a day when all will be judged of their works, and rewarded according to the same; that those who have kept the faith will be crowned with a crown of righteousness; be clothed in white raiment; be admitted to the marriage feast; be free from every affliction, and reign with Christ on the earth, where, according to the ancient promise, they will partake of the fruit of the vine new in the glorious kingdom with Him."⁴⁶ Of the potential of man we read in Psalm 8:5: "For thou hast made him but little lower than God, And crownest him with glory and honor" (ASV); and "For you have made him only a little lower than the gods, crowning him with glory and honour" (BBE, also see ERV). Barnes says:

"The language here is all derived from the deliverance from Babylon, and the images employed by the prophet relate to that event. Still, there can be no doubt that he meant to describe the deliverance under the Messiah." ¶ *They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.* "There is no joy when one is in the thralldom of sin," says Young. No one makes that point better than Alma: "Do not suppose, because it has been spoken concerning restoration, that ye shall be restored from sin to happiness. Behold, I say unto you, wickedness never was happiness" (Alma 41:10). Barnes says: "This is a most beautiful close of the series or succession of prophecies which we have been thus far contemplating. The result of all is, that the redeemed of the Lord shall have joy and rejoicing; that all their enemies shall be subdued, and that they shall be rescued from all their foes. In the analysis of the prophecy contained in the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth chapters, it was stated that this prophecy seemed to be a summary of all that Isaiah had before uttered, and was designed to show that all the enemies of the people of God would be destroyed, and that they would be triumphantly delivered and saved. All these minor deliverances were preparatory to and emblematic of the greater deliverance under the Messiah."

26 November 2011

⁴⁵ Maxwell, Elder Neal A. *The Net Gathers of Every Kind*. Ensign, November 1980.

⁴⁶ Smith, Joseph. *History of the Church*. 1834.

ISAIAH 36–39 correspond also to 2 Kings 18 ff. (here represented by green) and 2 Chronicles 29 ff. (here represented by dark yellow). There are vast and very interesting details to be found on these historical chapters, but my object, for the present, is to present a very brief summary of only the most vital points.

Isaiah 36

After King Sennacherib conquered many of the cities of Israel, his forces came up against Jerusalem. Sennacherib sent an embassy to give a message to King Hezekiah. The message of these ambassadors included an offensive and blasphemous diatribe against the Lord. Also, a well-deserved ridicule of the Egyptian forces upon whom Judah liked to lean upon from time to time. Although, as we shall see in ISAIAH 38, Sennacherib was greatly defeated, it did not keep him back from his braggadocio against Judah.

Note: It is not as critical for us to make a careful comparison of where Kings and Chronicles coincide, instead, only where they may add something to our understanding of Isaiah. Therefore, we will note contributions by the one or by the other. Furthermore, I have generally passed over verses in both Kings and Chronicles where the text makes little difference to that which we find in Isaiah. For instance, in ISAIAH 36:3b we find “...Hilkiah’s son, which was over the house, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, Asaph’s son, the recorder.” The narrative in 2 Kings 18:18 changes the word order, yet says essentially the same: “...the son of Hilkiah, which [was] over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder.” On the other hand, if a change of word may be instructive, even if the word has an identical meaning in both texts, this may be indicated. The green we will use for Kings is not to be confused by the changes agreed upon by both the Book of Mormon and the JST, made in teal. The Book of Mormon does not include any portions of these four chapters. Where there are JST corrections (ISAIAH 36:5; 37:17, 26, 32, 36; 38:14–17; 39:2), we will focus on the clarifications made by the JST. Furthermore, I see little value in making detailed comparisons between the *Biblia Hebraica* and the other ancient texts as we have done in the rest of the book. There may be occasional exceptions.

Historical background (based on 2 Kings 18 and 2 Chronicles 29–31): Hezekiah is the son of Ahaz (king of Judah) and of Abijah (or Abi). Hezekiah began to reign during the third year of the reign of Hoshea, son of Elah, king of Israel (Northern Kingdom). The Israelite civil war after the death of King Solomon led to the division of Holy Land into the northern ten tribes and the southern two tribes. Hezekiah was 25 years old.

It was said of Hezekiah that he trusted in the Lord, cleaved unto him, and kept the commandments. He was counted as being righteous in the sight of the Lord. Hezekiah cut down the groves and removed the altars from the high places and had them thrown into Brook Kidron, and even broke the brazen serpent that Moses had made, for the people had begun to worship it. In the very first month of his reign, Hezekiah began a thorough cleansing and repair of the House of the Lord for it had been neglected and defiled. He charged the Levites and Priests with the job of sanctifying themselves to serve in the sacred edifice. Hezekiah reminded the priesthood how much Judah had suffered and been punished as a consequence of her disobedience and admonished the people to re-establish their covenant with the Lord. When the Temple was cleansed and purified, all manner of offerings were prepared, including burnt offerings, sin offerings, thanks offerings, peace offerings, even singing and the playing of instruments. Full of thanksgiving many worshipped the Lord. When preparations were finished, letters were sent over all of Judah and Ephraim. These letters were an invitation to all to participate in a Passover, as had not been prepared and celebrated since the time of King David. It was a call for people to return to the true God of the fathers. When the people of Ephraim heard the invitation they *laughed to scorn*. The people of Judah were moved to humility. Hezekiah did seek the Lord *with all his heart, and prospered*. He was successful in restoring the borders, fought against the Philistines, and rebelled against the king of Assyria. Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, besieged Samaria and after three years, took it. Ephraim was taken captive and carried away at that time.

vv. 1–10. Sennacherib sends an embassy to Hezekiah, the purpose of which was to intimidate the Judean King

into submission. They came to the same conduit by the upper pool we were made familiar with when Isaiah met King Ahaz (ISAIAH 7:3). First, the embassy rightfully mocks Judah's sometime dependence on Egypt. They then go on to offend the Living God. This is not unlike Satan's darts, where he inserts some truths among falsehoods. The embassy falls into priestcraft when they dare speak in the name of the Lord without the authority to do so.

1 ¶ NOW it came to pass in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, [that] Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the defenced* cities of Judah,** and took them.

* 2 Kings 18:13, Fenced.

** 2 Chronicles 32:1, Sennacherib king of Assyria came, and entered into Judah, and encamped against the fenced cities, and thought to win them for himself.

NOW it came to pass in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah. There is some debate about the year involved. I like what Delitzsch says: "But the task of pronouncing an infallible sentence upon them all we shall leave to those who know everything . . . advice which is good not only about dates but about what species of animals are meant in many instances."

¶ [That] Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the defenced cities of Judah, and took them.

Sennacherib was the son of King Shalmaneser of Assyria (Barnes, Gill). The *defenced* cities of Judah were those that were fortified. King Sennacherib seems to have been successful in conquering many of these fortified cities, except for Jerusalem. See notes on ISAIAH 8:8, "And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel." Compare also, with 2 Chronicles 32:1.

2 Kings 18:14–16

14 And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended; return from me: that which thou puttest on me will I bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold.

15 And Hezekiah gave [him] all the silver that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house.

16 At that time did Hezekiah cut off [the gold from] the doors of the temple of the LORD, and [from] the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.

We know from ISAIAH 36:2 (below), that Sennacherib, king of Assyria, was in Lachish. It is clear from portions of the 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles narratives, that while the king of Assyria laid siege in Lachish, he sent messengers to Jerusalem to demand that Hezekiah give in. In the verses, above, in 2 Kings 18:14–16, it seems that Hezekiah sent tribute (which tribute came from raiding the temple of the Lord) to Sennacherib and asked the Assyrian king for forgiveness for having rebelled against him. The expression, "return from me," or שׁוּב מֵעָלַי, literally means *turn away from me*. That is, do not attack but go away from me, I will comply with those things you expect of me. We may safely suppose that these things happened before King Hezekiah made his full conversion to the Lord. "Poor Hezekiah! How weak was he to give up his Lord's honor in the vain hope of peace!" says Jennings and then adds: "But how easy it is for us all to discern others' weakness!" When King Hezekiah heard that Sennacherib was coming against Jerusalem—and was not turning away—despite the tribute he had sent, he did not waste any time to prepare, as seen in 2 Chronicles 32:2–8.

2 Chronicles 32:2–8

2 And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem,
3 He took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains which [were] without the city: and they did help him.

4 So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land, saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water?
5 Also he strengthened himself, and built up all the wall that was broken, and raised [it] up to the towers, and another wall without, and repaired Millo [in] the city of David, and made darts and shields in abundance.

6 And he set captains of war over the people, and gathered them together to him in the street of the gate of the city, and spake comfortably to them, saying,
7 Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that [is] with him: for [there be] more with us than with him:
8 With him [is] an arm of flesh; but with us [is] the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested¹ themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

This waterway (2 Chronicles 32:3), also known as *Hezekiah's tunnel*, was used to protect the water supply. See notes under ISAIAH 22:9. I was not able to find the certain meaning for *zedah* [זֶדָה]² although the word *echo* has been suggested,³ as well as *overlap* and *fissure*.⁴

2 And the king of Assyria* sent Rabshakeh from Lachish** to Jerusalem unto king Hezekiah with a great army.** And he stood*** by the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field.

* 2 Chronicles 32:9, Sennacherib king of Assyria.

** 2 Chronicles 32:9 [Speaking of Sennacherib], (but he [himself laid siege] against Lachish, and all his power with him,). 2 Kings 18:17, [The king of Assyria] sent Tartan and Rabсарis and Rabshakeh from Lachish.

*** 2 Kings 18:17, great host.

**** 2 Kings 18:17, And they went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they came and stood.

And the king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem unto king Hezekiah with a great army. Some have suggested that אֶת־רַב־שָׁקָה *Rabshakeh* is a title, rather than the name of an individual. Faussett has: “*Rab* is a title of authority, ‘chief-cup-bearer.’”

¹ Took comfort in.

² See the inscription in Hebrew in *The Jewish Encyclopedia* 1901–1906, 11:340.

³ Haupt, Paul. *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*, 32:144. October 1915 – July 1916.

⁴ See W. F. Albright, “The Siloam Inscription,” in James B. Pritchard (editor), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton, 1950), p. 321; and King, Philip J. and Lawrence E. Stager (2001), *Life in Biblical Israel*, p. 220.

¶ And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field (see also ISAIAH 7:3, where Isaiah met Ahaz). Gill, leaning on Ben Melech has “The pool is a ditch, built with stone and lime, where rainwater was collected, or where they drew water from the fountain, and the waters were gathered into this pool; and there was in this pool a hole, which they stopped, until the time they pleased to fetch water, out of the pool: and the conduit was a ditch near to the pool, and they brought water out of the pool into the conduit, when they chose to drink, or wash garments: the highway was a way paved with stones, so that they could walk upon it in rainy days; and here they stood and washed their garments in the waters of the conduit, and in the field they spread them to the sun. This pool lay outside the city, yet just by the walls of it, which showed the daring insolence of Rabshakeh to come so very nigh, for he was in the hearing of the men upon the walls.” Delitzsch explains: “The fuller's field (שֵׂדֶה כֹּבֵס) was situated, as we may assume with Robinson, Schultz, and Thenius, against Williams, Krafft, etc., on the western side of the city, where there is still an ‘upper pool’ of great antiquity (2 Chronicles 32:30). Near to this pool the fullers, i.e., the cleaners and thickeners of woollen fabrics, carried on their occupation (כֹּבֵס, from *Câbas*, related to *Câbash*, *subigere*, which bears the same relation to *râchatz* as πλύνειν to λούειν). Robinson and his companions saw some people washing clothes at the upper pool when they were there; and, for a considerable distance round, the surface of this favourite washing and bleaching place was covered with things spread out to bleach or dry. The road (מַסְלָה), which ran past this fuller's field, was the one which leads from the western gate to Joppa.” Faussett has, regarding the conduit: “An aqueduct from the pool or reservoir for the supply of the city. At the foot of Zion was Fount Siloah (ISAIAH 8:6; Nehemiah 3:15; John 9:7), called also Gihon, on the west of Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 32:30). Two pools were supplied from it, the *Upper*, or *Old* (ISAIAH 22:11), or *King's* (Nehemiah 2:14), and the *Lower* (ISAIAH 22:9), which received the superfluous waters of the upper. The upper pool is still to be seen, about seven hundred yards from the Jaffa gate. The highway leading to the fullers' field, which was in a position near water for the purposes of washing, previous to drying and bleaching, the cloth, was probably alongside the aqueduct.”

3 Then came forth unto him Eliakim,* Hilkiah's son, which was over the house, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, Asaph's son, the recorder.

* 2 Kings 18:18, And when they had called to the king, there came out to them Eliakim.

✓ or, secretary

These three individuals came out, according to 2 Kings 18:18, because they were responding to Rabshakeh request to speak to King Hezekiah. There is some speculation as to whether Eliakim and Shebna are the same as mentioned in ISAIAH 22:15–25, although they have different job responsibilities here. The third man, Joah, seems to have been the historian or *historiographer* (Barnes, Gill).

4 And Rabshakeh said unto them, Say ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence [is] this wherein thou trustest?*

* 2 Chronicles 32:10, Whereon do ye trust, that ye abide in the siege in Jerusalem?

Rabshakeh must have been the main spokesman for the King of Assyria. In ISAIAH 10:8 we introduced the idea of the Assyrian and Babylonian boastings. King Sennacherib, as well as many of the kings who attacked Israel in the olden days, only told the part of the story—the part they wanted to tell. They often bragged about their exploits. Below is a sample of this type of braggadocio. Even in modern times, nations that attack Israel claim they are doing marvelously even when they have sustained heavy casualties—and are indeed losing the war (see 1967, **מלחמת ששת הימים** (Six Day War) / The Setback, النكسة). Sennacherib (704–681 BC, pp. 199–201, in Pritchard)⁵ boasted of the siege that he brought to pass upon Jerusalem at the time of Hezekiah. The saying, “He who laughs last laughs best” fits in well into this historical even, as we shall see. “As to Hezekiah the Jew,” boasted Sennacherib, “he did not submit to my yoke, I laid siege to 46 of his strong cities, walled forts and to the countless small villages in their vicinity, and conquered (them) by means of well-stamped (earth-) ramps, and battering-rams brought (thus) near (to the walls) (combined with) the attack by foot soldiers, (using) mines, breeches as well as sapper work. I drove out (of them) 200,150 people, young and old, male and female, horses, mules, donkeys, camels, big and small cattle beyond counting, and considered (them) booty. Himself I made a prisoner in Jerusalem, his royal residence, like a bird in a cage. I surrounded him with earthwork in order to molest those who were leaving his city’s gate. His towns which I had

plundered, I took away from his country and gave them (over) to Mitinti, king of Ashdod, Padi, king of Ekron, and Sillibel, king of Gaza. Thus I reduced his country, but I still increased the tribute and the *katru*—presents (due) to me (as his) overlord which I imposed (later) upon him beyond the former tribute, to be delivered annually. Hezekiah himself, whom the terror-inspiring splendor of my lordship had overwhelmed and whose irregular and elite troops which he had brought into Jerusalem, his royal residence, in order to strengthen (it), had deserted him, did send me, later, to Nineveh, my lordly city, together with 39 talents of gold, 800 talents of silver, precious stones, antimony [This refers probably to stibnite, which might have been used as an eye paint (beside the cheaper and efficient substitute, burnt shells of almonds and soot). Stibium is easily reduced and the metal is sporadically attested in Mesopotamia since the Neo-Sumerian period], large cuts of red stone, couches (inlaid) with ivory, *nimedu* – chairs (inlaid) with ivory, elephant-hides, ebony-wood, boxwood (and) all kinds of valuable treasures, his (own) daughters, concubines, male and female musicians. In order to deliver the tribute and to do obeisance as a slave he sent his (personal) messenger ... Sennacherib, king of the world, king of Assyria, sat upon a *nimedu* - throne and passed in review the booty (taken) from Lachish (*La-ki-su*).” Apparently King Hezekiah was not the only one to bring tribute: “[All the kings brought me] sumptuous gifts and ... kissed my feet ... [but] the king of Ashkelon, who did not bow to my yoke, I deported and sent to Assyria, his family-gods, himself, his wife, his children, his brothers, all the male descendants of his family ... [and the king of Ashkelon now] pulls the straps (of my yoke)!”

5 I say, [~~sayest thou~~], (~~but [they are but] vain words~~) ✓ **thy words are but vain when thou sayest, [I have] counsel and strength for war.** ✓ ✓ **Now, on whom dost thou trust that thou rebellest against me?**

✓ a word of lips

✓ ✓ or, but counsel and strength are for the war

I say, thy words are but vain when thou sayest, I have counsel and strength for war. These are the offensive words of Rabshakeh, or the chief cup-bearer speaking in vanity, but accusing King Hezekiah of acting in vanity. It is interesting that we often accuse others by attaching to them an extension of our own motives. Rabshakeh, then, is calling into question the possibility that Hezekiah could defend Jerusalem against the attacks of Assyria. ¶ *Now, on whom dost thou trust that thou rebellest against me?* This is a question of the most vital importance. Who do we trust? Rabshakeh begins to ask

⁵ Pritchard, James B. (editor), *The Ancient Near East, Volume 1: Anthology of Texts and Pictures*. Princeton University Press, 6th Paperback printing, 1973, pp. 199–201.

the question in the most mocking of tones, as we see in the next two verses. He insults Hezekiah for trusting on the arm of Egypt as well as for trusting God.

6 Lo, thou trustest in the staff of this broken* reed, on Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so [is] Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him.

* 2 Kings 18:21, bruised.

Rabshakeh goes on to compare Egypt (or the flesh of man) to a broken reed. Anyone who leans on Egypt might as well lean on a broken reed so that it will go through the hand and pierce the flesh.

7 But if thou say to me, We trust in the LORD our God: [is it] not he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and said to Judah and to Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar?*

* 2 Kings 18:22, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem?

Here is where Rabshakeh crosses the line. He could have insulted the strength of man, but now he offends the Holy One of Israel and mocks Him. Gill well explains regarding the altars of the high places: “The high places and altars which Hezekiah took away were the high places and altars of Heathen gods, of false deities, and not of the true God of Israel ... but Rabshakeh would make a crime of it, and, ignorantly supposing that these were the altars and high places of the God of Israel, would insinuate that the taking of these away must be displeasing to him, and consequently Hezekiah and his people could not hope for any protection from him, whom he had so highly affronted; but all this talk was the fruit of ignorance, as well as of malice.” ¶ *And said to Judah and to Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar?* With the passing of time, and especially after the construction of Solomon’s Temple in Jerusalem, the *high places* (בָּמֹת) seem to no longer have been sanctioned for worship. The ISBE article on *High Place* as well as the LDS Bible Dictionary on *High Places* are quite instructive. While there are a number of ways that these passages can be understood, it is clear that the term *High Place* (בָּמֹת) over time increasingly took on the meaning of a place of idolatrous worship. Such idolatrous shrines were constructed not only in the hills and mountains but also in the cities (2 Kings 17:9) and in the streets

(Ezekiel 16:24). Micah spoke of Jerusalem and by implication the temple there, as a High Place: “What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria? and what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem?” (Micah 1:5b). Even when the Temple in Jerusalem was still standing, the Savior chose to transform a mountain top (Mount of Transfiguration) into sacred ground: “And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them” (Mark 9:2). We also know that righteous Lehi offered sacrifices outside of the Jerusalem Temple when he traveled in the wilderness: “And it came to pass that when he had traveled three days in the wilderness, he pitched his tent in a valley by the side of a river of water. And it came to pass that *he built an altar of stones, and made an offering unto the Lord, and gave thanks unto the Lord our God*” (1 Nephi 2:6–7, emphasis added). And again we read: “And it came to pass that they did rejoice exceedingly, and did offer sacrifice and burnt offerings unto the Lord; and they gave thanks unto the God of Israel” (1 Nephi 5:9, also 1 Nephi 7:22; Mosiah 2:3). We do not have a clear enough understanding of what was or not sanctioned from our Bible as we have it today. It seems that what Rabshakeh meant, in his insolent taunt, was that King Hezekiah was only offering sacrifice *before Jehovah*, and *not* before any of the other idol gods. Therefore, Rabshakeh insinuated, King Hezekiah could never be successful.

8 Now therefore give pledges, ¶ I pray thee, to my master* the king of Assyria, and I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.

* 2 Kings 18:23, lord.

¶ or, hostages

Now therefore give pledges, I pray thee, to my master the king of Assyria. YLT translates הִתְעַרְב as *negotiate*: “And now, negotiate, I pray thee, with my lord the king of Asshur.” So also Alexander, NASB & GNB (bargain), HCSB (deal), ERV (make agreement), ABP {LXX (⚡)} (mix), and LITV (exchange pledges). ¶ *And I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.* The whole idea is a taunt, in which the Rabshakeh implies that Assyria could give Judah two thousand horses—but it would do Judah little good as they would not find enough horsemen who could ride them. Gill says: “Thus scoffing at him, as if he had not so many soldiers to bring out against him; or so many men in his kingdom as had skill enough to ride a horse; in his bravado he

signifies, that if he would come out and fight him, he would lend him so many horses, if he could put men upon them, to assist him; this he said as boasting of his master's strength and power, and in scorn and derision at Hezekiah's weakness."

9 How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen?

How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants. According to Barnes, Rabshakeh seems to be saying something like: "The most unimportant captain in the army of Assyria commands more horsemen than this, and how can you expect to oppose even him, much more how can you be able to resist all the mighty army of the Assyrians?"

The word used for Captain פָּהָד, means *governor*

(HAL). Barnes explains that a פָּהָד: "denotes a prefect or governor of a province less than a satrap, an officer who was under the satrap, and subject to him." ¶ *And put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen?* Once again, Hezekiah is being ridiculed for leaning on Egypt. Rawlinson explains: "Consciousness of the weakness, with which Rabshakeh had just reproached them, had led to their application to Egypt for a chariot and a cavalry force. Egypt was well able to furnish both, and had sent a large force of both to the help of Ekron a short time previously ('Eponym Canon,' p. 133, 11. 48–56). That force had, however, suffered defeat at the hands of Sennacherib."

10 And am I now come up without the LORD against this land* to destroy it? the LORD said unto me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.

* 2 Kings 18:25, place.

Rabshakeh once again crosses the line of a normal taunt by now claiming that he is coming against Jerusalem and against Hezekiah under command from the Lord. This is a form of priestcraft. Faussett has: "A boastful inference from the past successes of Assyria, designed to influence the Jews to surrender; their *own* principles bound them to yield to Jehovah's will. He may have heard from partisans in Judah what Isaiah had foretold (ISAIAH 10:5–6)."

vv. 11–22. Hezekiah's servants ask the servants of Sennacherib to be more discreet and speak in the Aramaic language rather than in Hebrew—so all the

onlookers would not have to hear what was being said. The servants of Sennacherib use this occasion to further mock Hezekiah, instead, and try and scare the people. In fact, they encourage a rebellion against Hezekiah by making promises to the people. Assyria seems to be asking for submission both in terms of tribute money as well as personal humiliation. The great provocation against the Lord included comparing Him to the idols of the heathen nations. The servants of Hezekiah say nothing more and repeat all that has been said in the ears of King Hezekiah.

11 ¶ Then said Eliakim* and Shebna and Joah unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, unto thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand [it]: and speak not to us in the Jews' language, in the ears of the people that [are] on the wall.

* 2 Kings 18:26, Eliakim the son of Hilkiah.

Eliakim, Shebna and Joah, who seem to have been listening attentively now cut into Rabshakeh's diatribe to make a request that he stop speaking in the tongue of the Jews (יְהוּדִית), i.e., *Yehudit*, or Hebrew—a language that the men on the wall could fully understand—and instead would speak in *Aramit*, or Aramaic⁶ (אַרְמִיט). One gets the impression that especially the last comments made by the Rabshakeh were those that these leaders feared could negatively affect the men on the wall. Gill suggests, regarding who spoke to the Rabshakeh: "That is, one of them addressed him in the name of the rest; for the verb is singular; and what follows confirms it; perhaps Eliakim was the speaker." Gill suggests: "And as this speech of Eliakim's showed great submissiveness in praying and entreating Rabshakeh to speak to them in another language, and a mean⁷ abject spirit, in saying they were his servants, so a great degree of timorousness in them, and diffidence of the people, lest they should be terrified, and be for giving up the city at once into the hands of the enemy."

12 But Rabshakeh said, Hath my master sent me to thy master and to thee to speak these words? [hath he] not [sent me] to the men that sit upon the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piss with you?

⁶ Aramaic was the common language spoken at the time of Christ.

⁷ I.e., lowly.

These words of the Rabshakeh, are once again, very aggressive and offensive, something to the effect of “What, and you thought I was speaking on behalf of the King of Asshur just for the benefit of King Hezekiah? No, I am here to warn the men on the wall as well. Because we will encompass this city in such a tight siege that they—along with you—will have nothing more to drink than their own urine and nothing more to eat than their own dung.” I had the opportunity to speak to a former member of the Chilean cavalry, who had been under such difficult circumstances around the 1930s where indeed the only liquid available was their own urine, which most of the soldiers drank in a futile attempt to quench their thirst. As we follow the history of other sieges we hear of people who have boiled and eaten their own children for hunger (see for instance, the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD, as told by Josephus; as well as 2 Kings 6:28–29, all of which was predicted in *Rain in Due Season*—see Leviticus 26:29; Deuteronomy 28:56–57). In the Hebrew Scriptures in ISAIAH 36:12, a scribe tried to change the present words so they would not be so objectionable, such that instead of *urine* we have the *water between their legs*, **מימי רגליהם**. Barnes explains: “That the Masoretes in the Hebrew text have so pointed the words used, that in reading it the offensiveness would be considerably avoided. It is common in the Hebrew Scriptures, when a word is used in the text that is indelicate, to place another word in the margin||, and the vowel-points that belong to the word in the margin|| are applied to the word in the text, and the word in the margin|| is thus commonly read. In accordance with this custom among the Jews, it is evident that more delicacy might have been observed by our translators in this, and in some other places of the Scriptures.” A similar complaint is voiced by Gill, who explains that such a translation “would have been more decent.” Certainly, the horrors of war are felt upon reading these words. Rawlinson says, “But the pride and arrogance of the Assyrians rendered them as careless of diplomatic etiquette as, at a later date, were the Romans (see Polybius, 29:11, Liv., 45:12).

13 Then Rabshakeh stood, and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language,* and said, Hear ye the words of the great king, the king of Assyria.

* 2 Chronicles 32:18, Then they cried with a loud voice in the Jews' speech unto the people of Jerusalem that [were] on the wall, to affright them, and to trouble them; that they might take the city.

Then Rabshakeh stood, and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language. So instead, **בְּקוֹל-גָּדוֹל**, in a *great voice*, that is, loudly, Rabshakeh now speaks even louder to be heard by all, and in Hebrew. Gill has: “In which he spoke before; but now he raised up himself, and elevated his voice, and strained himself to the utmost, that all the people might hear, and that he might strike a terror into them, and stir them up to mutiny and rebellion, and oblige their governors to give up the city into the hands of the Assyrians; this use he made of the request of Hezekiah’s ministers, perceiving hereby their fears, and the disposition of the people.” Barnes says that in the word *stood* we have: “Indicating the posture of a man who intends to speak to them at a distance.” ¶ *And said, Hear ye the words of the great king, the king of Assyria.* Rabshakeh then goes on to give the message on behalf of King Sennacherib, King of Asshur, to Judah.

14 Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you.*

* 2 Kings 18:29, deliver you out of his hand.

Rabshakeh attempts to instill fear in the hearts of Judah by assuring them that King Hezekiah could never stand up to Assyria and would never be able to defend the people.

15 Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us: this* city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.

* 2 Kings 18:30, and this.

* 2 Chronicles 32:11–15, Doth not Hezekiah persuade you to give over yourselves to die by famine and by thirst, saying, The LORD our God shall deliver us out of the hand of the king of Assyria? Hath not the same Hezekiah taken away his high places and his altars, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall worship before one altar, and burn incense upon it? Know ye not what I and my fathers have done unto all the people of [other] lands? were the gods of the nations of those lands any ways able to deliver their lands out of mine hand? Who [was there] among all the gods of those nations that my fathers utterly destroyed, that could deliver his people out of mine hand, that your God should be able to deliver you out of mine hand? Now therefore let not Hezekiah deceive you, nor persuade you on this manner, neither yet believe him: for no god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people out of mine hand, and out of the hand of my fathers: how much less shall your God deliver you out of mine hand?

Does not Satan, and his emissaries, also attempt to speak this way to us, telling us that the Lord God will *not* be able to *deliver us*? *Not* be able to *save us*? Does he not prey on our weakest points, our deepest fears in

these matters? Satan not only knows us from our life history upon this earth, but also from the pre-existence. Let us bravely, valiantly trust in that God who gave us life. Nephi admonished us to hold on to the *iron rod*: “And I said unto them that it was the word of God; and whoso would hearken unto the word of God, and would hold fast unto it, they would never perish; neither could the temptations and the fiery darts of the adversary overpower them unto blindness, to lead them away to destruction. Wherefore, I, Nephi, did exhort them to give heed unto the word of the Lord; yea, I did exhort them with all the energies of my soul, and with all the faculty which I possessed, that they would give heed to the word of God and remember to keep his commandments always in all things” (1Nephi 15:24–25). ¶ One of Elder Gene R. Cook’s favorite scriptures on the power of prayer—which fits perfectly with our topic—is Alma 48:10–12: “*Therefore we did pour out our souls in prayer to God, that he would strengthen us and deliver us out of the hands of our enemies, yea, and also give us strength that we might retain our cities, and our lands, and our possessions, for the support of our people. Yea, and it came to pass that the Lord our God did visit us with assurances that he would deliver us; yea, insomuch that he did speak peace to our souls, and did grant unto us great faith, and did cause us that we should hope for our deliverance in him. And we did take courage with our small force which we had received, and were fixed with a determination to conquer our enemies, and to maintain our lands, and our possessions, and our wives, and our children, and the cause of our liberty*” (emphasis added). I see an admonition to prayer and scripture study mentioned often as a protection from personal apostasy. And other admonitions would include such things as following the Brethren, fighting pride, serving others, honoring our temple covenants, attending Church regularly and keeping the commandments, walking in all things as moved by the Spirit.

16 Harken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, Make [an agreement] with me [by] a present,[✓] and come out to me: and eat ye every one of his vine,* and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his own cistern;

* 2 Kings 18:31, eat ye every man of his own vine.

✓ or, Seek my favour by a present

Harken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, Make [an agreement] with me [by] a present. The Targum (ܬܪܓܡ) renders it: “And hearken not unto Hezekiah; for thus saith the king of Assyria, Make peace (שלמא) with me, and come out to me”

(Stenning, so also Pauli and Chilton). Barnes suggests: “The Hebrew is literally, ‘Make with me a blessing’ (ברכה). The idea of its being done ‘by a present,’ is not in the Hebrew text. The word ‘blessing’ here probably means the same as peace. ‘Make peace with me,’ perhaps because peace was regarded as a blessing; and perhaps the word is used with a reference to one of the significations of: בִּרְךָ, which is to kneel down, and this word may refer to their kneeling down; that is, to their offering allegiance to the king of Assyria.” ¶ The word בִּרְכָה does appear as a gift or present in several scriptures, however, as pointed out by the third acceptance in Gesenius: “A gift, present, by which one signifies favour and good will, such as one offers with good wishes (Genesis 33:11; 1Samuel 25:27; 30:26; 2 Kings 5:15),” although Gesenius himself prefers to translate it as *peace* in ISAIAH 36:16. Barnes also suggests that בִּרְךָ kneeling, seems to be an invitation by King Sennacherib to have Judah come and kneel before him. Certainly it is in line with the other aggressive comments made by the Rabshakeh. If Rabshakeh meant *peace*, perhaps this was said in a sarcastic tone. ¶ *And come out to me: and eat ye every one of his vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his own cistern.* The expression, *come out to me* is one in which the Assyrian Rabshakeh is demanding the surrender of Jerusalem. Gill cleverly suggests the meaning of the Rabshakeh’s offer: “Forsake your king, throw off your allegiance to him, surrender yourselves and city to me.” Faussett explains: “Rab-shakeh tries to soften, in the eyes of the Jews, the well-known Assyrian policy of weakening the vanquished by deporting them to other lands (Genesis 47:21; 2 Kings 17:6).” ¶ The eating of the fruit and the drinking from their own cisterns represented the peace of being able to cultivate crops and partake of the same—as well as the absence of drought. It is put as a contraposition to “that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piss” (ISAIAH 36:12b). Both the food and the plentiful water are in contrast to the abject desolation that would be brought about by a siege.

17 Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards.*

* 2 Kings 18:32, and vineyards, a land of oil olive and of honey, that ye may live, and not die.

Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land. As has been mentioned, Assyria had a general policy of moving the people they conquered around. This was a measure they used to place people into submission. With the use of the words “until I come”

there is an implication here that this deportation would not happen right away. In essence, this is what happened to the Ten Tribes of Israel; they were deported by Assyria and moved to other lands where, with time, most would find it difficult to retain a national identity. Rawlinson says: “It was so much the usual policy of Assyria to remove to a new locality a conquered people, which had given them trouble, that Rabshakeh felt safe in assuming that the fate in store for the Jews, if they submitted themselves, was a transplantation ... Rabshakeh tries to soften down the hardship of the lot before them by promises of a removal to a land equal in all respects to Palestine.” ¶ *A land of corn⁸ and wine, a land of bread and vineyards.* In *Rain in Due Season*, specific mention is made not only of vines, but also of oil: “Thou shalt have olive trees throughout all thy coasts, but thou shalt not anoint thyself with the oil; for thine olive shall cast his fruit” (Deuteronomy 28:40). Also, on the positive side, if Israel was obedient, the promise in *Rain in Due Season* was: “And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely” (Leviticus 26:5).

18 [Beware] lest Hezekiah persuade you, saying, The LORD will deliver us. Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?

[Beware] lest Hezekiah persuade you, saying, The LORD will deliver us. Rabshakeh, like a high-pressure salesperson, tells them that they should not even think of the possibility that Hezekiah’s God, even the Lord Jehovah (יהוה) could deliver Judah out of this bind.

¶ *Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?* Rabshakeh gives as proof of Jehovah’s impotence, the fact that so far none of the nations’ idolatrous gods had been able to withstand the king of Assyria. Rabshakeh puts the Holy One of Israel at the same level as the worthless *idols* or **לֹא אֱלֹהִים**, *no-gods* of the nations.

19 Where [are] the gods of Hamath and Arphad? where [are] the gods of Sepharvaim?* and have they delivered Samaria out of my hand?

* 2 Kings 18:34, Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?

⁸ Not maize, but rather *grains* (see ISAIAH 17:5).

The **לֹא אֱלֹהִים** of Syria or Mesopotamia and their impotence are mentioned here, in an effort to impress on the Judeans the strength of the king of Assyria. Delitzsch says: “Rabshakeh’s words in ISAIAH 36:18–20 are the same as those in ISAIAH 10:8–11.”

20 Who [are they] among all the gods of these lands,* that have delivered their land* out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?

* 2 Kings 18:35, countries / country.

If the **לֹא אֱלֹהִים** of these lands were impotent in stopping the king of Assyria, would not the God of Israel also be impotent to deliver Jerusalem—the thought is repeated for emphasis. Gill says: “Thus blasphemously setting the Lord God of Israel upon a level with the fictitious gods of the Gentiles; though these could not [deliver or save—GB], the Lord could, being the Lord God Almighty.”

21 But they* held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king’s commandment was, saying, Answer him not.

* 2 Kings 18:36, the people.

It seems that these three Judean leaders had been instructed beforehand not to answer the emissaries of the king of Assyria, and they were obedient in this thing. The command was a wise one from Hezekiah, and his servants showed humility in obedience. Barnes says: “Hezekiah had commanded them not to answer. They were simply to hear what Rabshakeh had to propose, and to report to him, that he might decide on what course to pursue. It was a case also in which it was every way proper that they should be silent. There was so much insolence, self-confidence, blasphemy, the proposals were so degrading, and the claims were so arrogant, that it was not proper that they should enter into conference, or listen a moment to the terms proposed. Their minds also were so horror-stricken with the language of insolence and blasphemy, and their hearts so pained by the circumstances of the city, that they would not feel like replying to him. There are circumstances when it is proper to maintain a profound silence in the presence of revilers and blasphemers, and when we *should withdraw from them, and go and spread the case before the Lord*. This was done here ISAIAH 37:1, and the result showed that this was the course of wisdom” (emphasis added). This reminds me of General Conference in Salt Lake City. The Brethren

have asked those who attend General Conference not to engage the hecklers who stand outside—and who either profane those things that are most sacred to us, or dress as return missionaries, or in otherwise try and offend.

22 Then came Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, that [was] over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, the son of Asaph, the recorder, to Hezekiah with [their] clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

After this disagreeable moment the three Jewish leaders return to King Hezekiah and rehearsed the blasphemous words they had heard from the Rabshakeh. They rent or tore their clothes in a sign of deep mourning and

sadness. Barnes says: “The causes of their griefs were the insolence and arrogance of Rabshakeh; the proposal to surrender the city; the threatening of the siege on the one hand, and of the removal on the other, and the blasphemy of the name of their God, and the reproach of the king. All these things filled their hearts with grief, and they hastened to make report to Hezekiah.” Many mothers say, “If someone hurts me I will forgive it, but if they even as much as touch my children!” Tears run down my cheeks as I read these verses and write these thoughts. Insult the Lord, His Church, the Brethren, or desecrate those things which we hold most holy and I have feelings of great pain come over me.

9 September 2013

Isaiah 37

After receiving the report from his servants, Hezekiah dresses in sackcloth. He is reassured by Isaiah. Hezekiah receives a letter from King Sennacherib re-doubling the blasphemous offenses. The king of Judah spreads the letter before the Lord in the temple. Isaiah, speaking on behalf of the Lord, promises safety to Jerusalem and punishment to the insolent Sennacherib and the Assyrian forces.

vv. 1–7. When Hezekiah hears the report from his servants, he reacts by dressing in sackcloth and going to the temple. Hezekiah sends Eliakim and Shebna to give a report to Isaiah. They express their feelings of great concern over the precarious situation that Judah found itself in and express their hope that the Lord will protect His people. Isaiah reassures them on behalf of the Lord and explains that King Sennacherib will not go unpunished. Rather, that he will speedily return to his own nation where he would fall by the sword.

1 ¶ AND it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard [it], that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD.

As soon as King Hezekiah heard the contents of the distressing message recited by his representatives, the king tore his clothing in token of mourning and dressed himself in sackcloth. But that is not all. He right away turned to the Lord! He went into the House of the Lord—Holiness to the Lord—or the Holy Temple to pour out his heart unto God.

2 And he sent Eliakim, who [was] over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz.

And not only does King Hezekiah go to the Holy Temple, but he also sends his ministers to the Prophet Isaiah to have them share the recent events with him. Gill says: “*And the elders of the priests*” – as the chief of those that were concerned in civil affairs, so the chief of those that were employed in sacred things, were sent: this was a very honourable embassy; and it was showing great respect to the prophet, to send such personages to him: *Covered with sackcloth*] – as the king himself was, following his example; and this is to

be understood not of the elders of the priests only, but of Eliakim and Shebna also. These, so clad, were sent by the king. *Unto Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz*] – to give him an account of the present situation of affairs, of the distress he was in, and to desire his prayers: a very proper person to apply to, a prophet, one highly dear to God, and honoured by him, had near access unto him, and knew much of his mind.” ¶ But how blessed we are today that we ought to bring our own matters before God—for our own lives—unless the Prophet has already instructed us on the matter as a Church. Our beloved Prophet Joseph Smith lovingly instructed: “It is a great thing to inquire at the hands of God, or to come into His presence; and we feel fearful to approach Him on subjects that are of little or no consequence, to satisfy the queries of individuals, especially about things the knowledge of which men ought to obtain in all sincerity, before God, for themselves, in humility by the prayer of faith; and more especially a Teacher or a High Priest in the Church.”¹

3 And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day [is] a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy: ~ for the children are come to the birth, and [there is] not strength to bring forth.

✓ or, provocation

These (ISAIAH 37:3–4) seem to be the words of King Hezekiah’s messengers that they shared with Isaiah. The utterance about no strength at the time of birth is a proverbial expression of impotence—in reaction to the provocation of King Sennacherib. Barnes explains: *This is a day of rebuke*] – This may refer either to the reproaches of Rabshakeh, or more probably to the fact that Hezekiah regarded the Lord as rebuking his people for their sins. The word which is used here (תוכחה), means more properly chastisement or punishment Psalm 149:7; Hosea 5:9. *And of blasphemy*] – Margin ||,

¹ Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 1:338–339.

‘Provocation.’ The word used here (נִאֲצָה)², means properly **reproach** or contumely; and the sense is, that God and his cause had been vilified by Rabshakeh, and it was proper to appeal to him to vindicate the honor of his own name (ISAIAH 37:4).” Once again, *no strength for the birth* is an expression of impotence.

4 It may be the LORD thy God will hear the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God, and will reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up [thy] prayer for the remnant that is left. ✓

✓ found

It may be the LORD thy God will hear the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God. The expression “the LORD thy God” יהוה אלהיך, is a typical one of the times (in contrast to the יהוה אלהינו, Lord our God). In the story of the men who went to speak to Jeremiah about going into Egypt (Jeremiah 42, see discussion in notes on ISAIAH 30), we also saw the expression יהוה אלהיך used by the people talking to the Prophet Jeremiah (Jeremiah 42:3) as well as when the Prophet spoke back to the people (Jeremiah 42:4) אל-יהוה אלהיכם and יהוה אלהיך (Jeremiah 42:5). Only *after* each had politely attributed the Lord to each other, did the people switch to *our* (Jeremiah 42:6), יהוה אלהינו, “the LORD our God.”³ The hope of the messengers is that the Lord will deal with this provocation—knowing that the Lord does not always intercede in such cases. The Lord will only honor His own name if we have also honored it. Barnes says: “The reproach of the ‘living God’ consisted in comparing him to idols ... The phrase ‘the living God’ is often applied to Yahweh in contradistinction from idols, which were mere blocks of wood or stone.” ¶ *And will reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up [thy] prayer for the remnant that is left.* By the *remnant that is left*, in this context, meant the remaining tribes after Ephraim and her companions

² Also, humiliation (HALOT).

³ These sort of subtle details are also seen in the conversation between King Ahab and King Ben-Hadad of Syria in 1Kings 20:31–33, see the use of “my brother,” (אחי) and “thy brother” (אחיך) in these verses. Likewise, in the Book of Mormon we read, “... and also my father began to murmur against the Lord *his* God” (*emphasis added*, 1 Nephi 16:20). This is an example of a Hebraisms preserved in the text of the Book of Mormon.

had been taken captive by Assyria. Hezekiah’s messengers ask Isaiah to intercede in prayer on behalf of Jerusalem. The messengers are aware that the Lord has already heard the blasphemous words, but ask the Prophet to pray on behalf of Jerusalem.

5 So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

The words in ISAIAH 37:3–4 seem to be those rehearsed to them by Hezekiah before leaving to see Isaiah.

6 And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say unto your master, Thus saith the LORD, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.

It is interesting that just like Hezekiah does not go in person to talk to Isaiah, the latter sends a message back, and does not go in person to speak with Hezekiah. The expression *your master* is literally, *your lord* or *your adonai* אדניכם. The translators probably used the word *master* not to confuse Hezekiah with Jehovah (for instance, although correct, the Bishops’ Bible is more confusing as it has: “Say thus vnto your lorde, Thus saith the Lord”; LBLA likewise has: “Así diréis a vuestro señor: ‘Así dice el SEÑOR’”; while RV1960 has: “Diréis así a vuestro señor: Así ha dicho Jehová”). The words of the LORD to Hezekiah, spoken through Isaiah, are of great comfort: אל-תִּירָא, “Be **not afraid**.” Ezekiel is likewise reassured thrice in one sentence, *not to be afraid* (אל-תִּירָא), “And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house” (Ezekiel 2:6). When the Lord tells us not to be afraid, what comfort this brings to us. It is not merely *comfort* that He gives, however, but it is a *commandment* not to be unfaithful. This is such an important commandment—for us to learn to place our complete trust in God—that the Lord says: “Therefore, be not afraid of your enemies, for I have decreed in my heart, saith the Lord, that I will prove you in all things, whether you will abide in my covenant, even unto death, that you may be found worthy (D&C 98:14). Now the Prophet Isaiah goes on to make it clear that indeed He has heard the blasphemies of King Sennacherib’s servants, and by extension, of the king of Asshur. Numerous commentators speak of the disparaging connotation of the word נִעֲרִי (from the

root **נָעַר** here translated as *his servants* when it would more correctly be translated as *his lads*. The ESV renders it: “Do not be afraid because of the words that you have heard, with which the young men of the king of Assyria have reviled me.” Leeser offers: “Be not afraid because of the words which thou hast heard, with which the boys of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.”

7 Behold, I will send a blast upon him, ✓ and he shall hear a rumour, and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

✓ or, put a spirit into him

Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and return to his own land. Rawlinson explains it: “*I will put a spirit within him; i.e. I will take away from him the spirit of pride and arrogance by which he has been hitherto actuated, and I will infuse into his heart, instead, a spirit of hesitation and fear.*” Barnes writes: “Margin ||, ‘Put a **spirit** into him.’ The word rendered ‘blast’ (**רוּחַ**) is commonly rendered ‘spirit.’ It may denote **breath, air, soul, or spirit**. There is no reason to think that the word is used here in the sense of blast of wind, as our translators seem to have supposed. The sense is probably, ‘I will infuse into him a spirit of fear, by which he shall be alarmed by the rumour which he shall hear, and return to his own land.’ The rumour or report here referred to, was doubtless that respecting Tirhakah king of Ethiopia (ISAIAH 37:9). It was this which would alarm him, and drive him in haste from the cities which he was now besieging, and be the means of expelling him from the land.” ¶ *And I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.* See ISAIAH 37:38, wherein we learn that King Sennacherib was killed by the hand of his own sons.

vv. 8–20. Rabshakeh leaves Jerusalem. Sennacherib sends a written message to Hezekiah along the same blasphemous lines as what we saw in the address of his servants to the servants of Hezekiah in the previous chapter. Hezekiah, upon receiving the letter, spreads it before the Lord in the temple and offers a faith-filled prayer. In it, Hezekiah shares the anguish felt at the reproaching and threatening letter received from Sennacherib. The King of Judah admits that Assyria has been strong in the past, but that her attacks have been against nations who lean on idols. Hezekiah asks the Lord to “**save us**” (**הוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ**) so that He may be glorified.

8 ¶ So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish.

So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: Alexander writes: “Both these towns were in the plain or lowlands of Judea, southwest of Jerusalem (Joshua 15:39, 42), originally seats of Canaanitish kings or chiefs, conquered by Joshua (Joshua 12:11, 15). Lachish was one of the fifteen places fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chronicles 11:9), and one of the last towns taken by Nebuchadnezzar (Jeremiah 34:7). It was still in existence after the exile. (Nehemiah 11:30). Libnah was a city of the Levites and of refuge (Joshua 21:13), and appears to have been nearer to Jerusalem.” ¶ *For he had heard that he was departed from Lachish.* AMP renders it: “So the Rabshakeh returned and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah [*a fortified city of Judah*]; for he had heard that the king had departed from Lachish.” Rawlinson says: “Sennacherib’s object in moving upon Libnah is doubtful; but it would seem, from his monuments, that he had captured Lachish (Layard, *Nineveh and Babylon*, pp. 149–152), and had gone on to Libnah, as the next stronghold on the way to Egypt.” Regarding **נָסַע**, *departed*, Alexander writes: “The last verb in this verse properly denotes the removal of a tent or an encampment, an idea happily expressed in Lowth’s translation by the military term *decamped*”⁴ (*emphasis added*). Indeed **נָסַע**, means “to pull out tent pegs > to break camp > to move off... to depart (an army)” (HALOT, see also Gesenius). I particularly like this as I am studying the word **נָסַע** in my Modern Hebrew tapes at this time (July 2013). A similar American pop-culture expression is “Let’s blow this popsicle stand” which has simply come to mean *to leave quickly*.

9 And he heard say concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, He is come forth to make war with thee. And when he heard [it], he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying,

It seems that Sennacherib, upon hearing that King Tirhakah (**תִּרְחָקָה**) of Ethiopia was sending troops to attack (probably the advancing Assyrian forces), had

⁴ Lowth has: “But Rabshakeh returned: and found the king of Assyria besieging Libnah; for he had heard, that he had decamped from Lachish.”

moved on to meet Tirhakah. But feeling that the Rabshakeh had left unfinished business in Jerusalem, Sennacherib sent a new set of messengers for Hezekiah, and a letter to boot (ISAIAH 37:14). Alexander explains: “Tirhakah was one of the most famous conquerors of ancient times ... He was at this time either in close alliance with [Egypt], or more probably in actual possession of Thebais or Upper Egypt. The fact that an Ethiopian dynasty did reign there is attested by the ancient writers, and confirmed by still existing monuments. The Greek forms of the name (Ταρράκος, Τάρκος, Τέρκων) vary but little from the Hebrew.” What follows is what the messengers said to Hezekiah.

10 Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God, in whom thou trustest, deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be given* into the hand of the king of Assyria.

* 2 Kings 19:10, delivered.

These words, delivered by the Assyrian messengers, were full of blasphemy, implying that the God of Israel was not capable of delivering Jerusalem from the hand of the king of Asshur. Gill notices: “[Sennacherib] gives Hezekiah the title of king, and owns him to be king of Judah; which was more than Rabshakeh his servant would do ... [however] nothing could be more devilish and satanical, to represent the God of truth, that cannot lie, as a liar and deceiver: in this the king of Assyria outdid Rabshakeh himself; he had represented Hezekiah as an impostor and a deceiver of the people, and warns them against him as such; and here Sennacherib represents God himself as a deceiver, and cautions Hezekiah against trusting in him: nothing is more opposite to Satan and his instruments, than faith in God, and therefore they labour with all their might and main to weaken it..”

11 Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by destroying them utterly; and shalt thou be delivered?

Alexander writes: “The interjection *behold* appeals to these events as something perfectly notorious; as if he had said, ‘See what has happened to others, and then judge whether thou art likely to escape’ ... This clause is, in most versions, rendered as an interrogation, but is properly on exclamation of contemptuous incredulity. *All the lands* may either be an elliptical expression for *all the lands subdued by them*, or, which is more in

keeping with the character of the discourse, a hyperbolical expression of the speaker’s arrogance.”

12 Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed, [as] Gozan, and Haran, and Rezep, and the children of Eden which [were] in Telassar?*

* 2 Kings 19:11, or Thelasar.

Rawlinson writes: “*My fathers*” – The Assyrian monarchs call all those who have preceded them upon the throne their ‘fathers,’ without intending to claim any blood-relationship. Sargon, Sennacherib’s father, though a usurper and the first king of a new dynasty, frequently speaks of ‘the kings his fathers’ (*Records of the Past*, Ch. 7. pp. 39, 51, etc.). *Gozan ... Haran ... Rezep ... Telassar*] – ‘Gozan’ is, beyond all doubt, the region known to the Greeks as Gauzanitis, which was the eastern portion of Upper Mesopotamia, or the country about the sources of the Khabour river. The Assyrian conquest of this tract is indicated by the settlement of the Israelites in the region (2 Kings 17:6; 18:11; 1 Chronicles 5:26). ‘Harsh’ is the well-known ‘city of Nahor,’ (Genesis 24:10) called in Acts 7:2 ‘*Charran*,’ and by the Greeks and Romans, ‘*Carrhae*.’ It has now recovered its old designation, and is known as *Hurrah*. ‘Rezep’ was in the neighborhood of Haran, and is mentioned as belonging to Assyria as early as B.C. 775 (*Eponym Canon*, p. 82). It had probably revolted and been reduced at a later date. ‘Telassar,’ ‘the Hill of *Asshur*,’ is not mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions, but was probably the Assyrian name of a town on or near the Euphrates, in the country of the Bent-Eden, which was not far from Carche-mish (see *Records of the Past*, Ch. 3. pp. 90–92). *The children of Eden*] The Assyrian inscriptions mention a ‘*Bit-Adini*’ (comp. Amos 1:5), and a chief who is called ‘the son of Adini;’ both belonging to the Middle Euphrates region. The ‘children of Eden’ (Beni-Eden) were probably the people of the tract about Bit-Adini.” The vital point here, for these messengers who did not know the Lord, is that all of these people had fallen before Asshur and how dare Jerusalem think that she could withstand?

13 Where [is] the king of Hamath, and the king of Arphad,* and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?

* 2 Kings 19:13, or Arpad.

Alexander has: “The question implies that they were nowhere, or had ceased to be. The first three names occur in the same order in Rabshakeh’s speech (ISAIAH.

36:19), and the remaining two also in the parallel passage (2 Kings 18:34).”

14 And Hezekiah received the letter* from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up unto the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD.

* 2 Chronicles 32:16–17. And his servants spake yet [more] against the LORD God, and against his servant Hezekiah. He wrote also letters to rail on the LORD God of Israel, and to speak against him, saying, As the gods of the nations of [other] lands have not delivered their people out of mine hand, so shall not the God of Hezekiah deliver his people out of mine hand.

Alexander has: “[The spreading of the letter before the Lord seems] to have been no studied, calculated movement, but a natural expression of anxiety and trust in God, as a protector and a confidential friend; a state of mind which to an infidel must needs appear ridiculous. As any man would carry an open letter, which troubled or perplexed him, to a friend for sympathy and counsel, so the pious king spreads this blasphemous epistle before God, as the occasion and subject of his prayers.”

15 And Hezekiah prayed* unto the LORD, saying,

* 2 Chronicles 32:20, And for this [cause] Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven.

The book of Kings has both Hezekiah and Isaiah praying to the Lord while here we have Hezekiah praying. Most likely, both statements were true. Individual prayer never precludes a group prayer. At any case, there is much power in prayer. I know how lonely I was before I met the Lord through the reading of the Book of Mormon in December 1973 and my subsequent baptism and confirmation (9 March 1974) through which I have felt the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost. I have never felt alone or lonely since then. I love these words from Amulek: “Therefore may God grant unto you, my brethren, that ye may begin to exercise your faith unto repentance, that ye begin to call upon his holy name, that he would have mercy upon you; Yea, cry unto him for mercy; for he is mighty to save. Yea, humble yourselves, and continue in prayer unto him. Cry unto him when ye are in your fields, yea, over all your flocks. Cry unto him in your houses, yea, over all your household, both morning, mid-day, and evening. Yea, cry unto him against the power of your enemies. Yea, cry unto him against the devil, who is an enemy to all righteousness. Cry unto him over the crops of your fields, that ye may prosper in them. Cry over the flocks of your fields, that they may

increase. But this is not all; ye must pour out your souls in your closets, and your secret places, and in your wilderness. Yea, and when you do not cry unto the Lord, let your hearts be full, drawn out in prayer unto him continually for your welfare, and also for the welfare of those who are around you” (Alma 34:17–27).

16 O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest [between] the cherubims, thou [art] the God, [even] thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth.

Gill has: “*O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the cherubim*” – Or, ‘the inhabitant of the cherubim’ which were over the mercy seat, the residence of the Shechinah, or Majesty of God, the symbol of the divine Presence in the holy of holies; a title which the God of Israel, the Lord of armies in heaven, and earth bears, and distinguishes him from all other gods, and which several titles carry in them arguments to strengthen faith in prayer; being ‘the Lord of hosts.’ He was able to do whatsoever was desired, and more abundantly; being ‘the God of Israel,’ their covenant God, it might be hoped and expected he would protect and defend them; and sitting ‘between the cherubim,’ on the mercy seat, great encouragement might be had that he would be gracious and merciful, and hear and help: *Thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth*] – this is opposed to the conceit of Sennacherib, that he was only the God of the Jews, and had no concern with other kingdoms and nations; whereas all belong to him, and him only; they are all under his jurisdiction and dominion, and at his will and control: *Thou hast made heaven and earth*] – and so has an indisputable right to the government of the whole world, and to the disposal of all things in it.”

17 Incline* thine ear, O LORD, and hear; open thine eyes, O LORD, and see: and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to reproach the living God.

* 2 Kings 19:16, bow down.

Hezekiah continues with an immense amount of faith and love for God, and pleads with the Lord that He may pay special heed to his prayer and notice to *all the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God*—not the gods of wood. Some reject the expression about the *ear* and *eyes* as anthropomorphism. Yet the Bible tells us that we are made after the image of God: “So God created man in

his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Genesis 1:27).

18 Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations, ✓ and their countries,*

* 2 Kings 19:17, have destroyed the nations and their lands.

✓ lands

This, then, is the prayer which Hezekiah uttered to Jehovah. Hezekiah begins by pointing out Assyrian success against אֶת-כָּל-הָאֲרָצוֹת, all the land. Barnes has: “Of a truth] – It is as he has said, that all the nations had been subjected to the arms of the Assyrian. He now intends to add Jerusalem to the number of vanquished cities and kingdoms, and to boast; that he has subdued the nation under the protection of Yahweh, as he had done the nations under the protection of idol-gods. *Have laid waste all, the nations*] – Hebrew, as Margin||, ‘All the lands.’ But this is evidently an elliptical form of expression, meaning all the inhabitants or people of the lands.”

19 And have cast ✓ their gods into the fire: for they [were] no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them.

✓ given

Hezekiah admits that the Assyrian feat against other gods, however, is hardly of note as these are all no-gods (לֹא אֱלֹהִים), the work of men's hands, made out of wood and stone. Regarding their being cast into the fire, Barnes explains: “This appears to have been the usual policy of the Assyrians and Babylonians ... They began usually by removing the people themselves whom they had subdued, to another land. They thus intended to alienate their minds as much as possible from their own country. They laid everything waste by fire and sword, and thus destroyed their homes, and all the objects of their attachment. They destroyed their temples, their groves, and their household gods. They well knew that the civil policy of the nation was founded in religion, and that, to subdue them effectually, it was necessary to abolish their religion.”

20 Now therefore, O LORD our God,* save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou [art] the LORD, [even] thou only.

* 2 Kings 19:19, our God, I beseech thee, save

Hezekiah requests that his prayer be honored so all the kingdoms of the earth (כָּל-מַמְלָכוֹת הָאָרֶץ) will magnify the Lord as the one and only God. I have likewise prayed, when my children were younger, that God would listen to their prayers not for my sake, but so that my children might learn to have faith in God, and know the power of prayer. One time at Pinecrest Lake my children had been trying to fish from a little rental boat and had not caught anything for a very long time. I suggested prayer. One of my children offered the prayer and asked for a huge catch (perhaps as many as 100 fish!). I suggested that the prayer be repeated and that only one fish be part of the request. Within a few minutes that fish was caught. We caught no other fish that day. Gill says: “By [the Lord] doing that which other gods could not do (they could not save the nations that worshipped them from the hand of the Assyrians); if therefore the God of Israel saved his people from them, this would be a proof to all the world that he is God and there is none besides him.”

vv. 21–38. Isaiah, speaking on behalf of the Lord, promises Judah protection. Sennacherib has mocked Jerusalem but Jerusalem shall have the last laugh. In reproaching Judah and Hezekiah, Sennacherib had also reproached the living God. Sennacherib's arrogance is going to be shamed as the Lord will show His power. The Lord knows all things, even the rage felt by King Sennacherib. The Lord would protect Jerusalem and also send Sennacherib packing. The Assyrians camped against Jerusalem would suffer death at the hand of the angel of the Lord. These things were fulfilled as the Assyrians were defeated and Sennacherib returned home only to find death waiting for him.

21 ¶ Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria:*

* 2 Kings 19:20, [That] which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard.

This is a very interesting pattern we see here. Hezekiah prays to the Lord and receives an answer through the prophet Isaiah. We pray to God the Eternal Father in the name of Jesus Christ and receive an answer through the Holy Ghost; or through Christ through the instrumentality of the Spirit. Or we may receive an answer through our Prophet, Stake President, Bishop or Branch President, or an inspired friend or speaker. In 2 Kings the Lord, through Isaiah, makes it clear that He has heard Hezekiah's prayer. How often can we be

instruments in the hands of God to help bring an answer to others' prayers? Gill says: "Isaiah, by a spirit of prophecy, was made acquainted by the Lord both with the prayer of Hezekiah, and the Lord's answer to it; and therefore immediately sent to the king, who was either at the temple praying, or was returned to the palace, to let him know, the mind of the Lord in this matter." Barnes has: "*Whereas thou hast prayed*" – Because thou hast come to me instead of relying on thy own resources and strength."

22 This [is] the word which the LORD hath spoken concerning him; The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, [and] laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.

The Lord paints Jerusalem in a state of mocking Sennacherib, despising him, laughing at him and shaking her head at him. *The virgin, the daughter of Zion* is given as representing Jerusalem. Gill has, "The fort of Zion, [is] called a 'virgin,' because it had never been forced, or taken and to show that it was a vain thing in Sennacherib to attempt it, as well as it would have been an injurious one, could he have accomplished it; ... [for] he who was her husband to whom she was espoused as a chaste virgin, would defend and protect her [from such a rape]; and the whole is designed to show the impotent malice of the king of Assyria; otherwise, at the time when these words were spoken, the daughter of Zion was in a fearful and trembling condition, and not in a laughing frame; but this declares what she might do now, and would do hereafter, for anything that he could do against her."

23 Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted [thy] voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? [even] against the Holy One of Israel.

Indeed, Sennacherib had directly, and through his servants, blasphemed the Holy One of Israel. Alexander writes: "To raise the voice may simply mean to speak, or more emphatically to speak boldly, perhaps with an allusion to the literal loudness of Rabshakeh's address to the people on the wall (ISAIAH 36:13)." Barnes has: "To lift up the eyes is an indication of haughtiness and pride. He had evinced arrogance in his manner, and he was yet to learn that it was against the living and true God."

24 By thy servants* hast thou reproached the Lord, and hast said, By the multitude of my chariots am I come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon; and I will cut down the tall cedars thereof, [and] the choice fir trees thereof:† † and I will enter into the height** of his border, [and]*** the forest of his Carmel.† † †

* 2 Kings 19:23, messengers.

** 2 Kings 19:23, lodgings.

*** 2 Kings 19:23, [and into].

✓ By the hand of thy servants

✓ ✓ the tallness of the cedars thereof, and the choice of the fir trees thereof

✓ ✓ ✓ or, the forest and his fruitful field

Henderson explains: "Here the insolent monarch is called to account for his blasphemous arrogance; and a specimen is given of the vaunting language which he had dared to employ. No obstacle had hitherto impeded him in his progress. The most inaccessible regions of Lebanon had been explored by his troops; and, in the wanton pride of his heart, he had made havoc of its most stately trees."

25 I have digged, and drunk water;* and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the besieged† places.

* 2 Kings 19:24, drunk strange waters.

✓ or, fenced and closed

I have digged, and drunk water. Gill explains: "In places where he came, and found no water for his army, he set his soldiers to work, to dig cisterns, as the Targum, or wells, so that they had water sufficient to drink; in 2 Kings 19:24, it is 'strange waters,' which were never known before." Probably strange was put for foreign. ¶ *And with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the besieged places.* Gill explains: "Or, as the Targum, 'with the soles of the feet of the people that are with me'; the Syriac version, 'with the hoofs of my horses': with which he trampled down banks of rivers, and pools, and cisterns of water; signifying the vast numbers of his soldiers, who could drink up a river, or carry it away with them, or could turn the streams of rivers that ran by the sides, or round about, cities besieged, and so hindered the carrying on of a siege, and the taking of the place; but he had ways and means very easily to drain them, and ford them; or to cut off all communication of the water from the besieged. Some render it, 'I have dried up all the rivers

of Egypt' (כל יאורי מצור, *omnes rivos Aegypti*, Vitringa), as Kimhi, on 2 Kings 19:24, observes, and to be understood hyperbolically; see ISAIAH 19:6, so Ben Melech observes." Henderson writes: "Nor had he experienced any want of water in the desert for the supply of his immense army; the mere introduction of which into Egypt would dry up the Nile, and all its branches! The language is mainly figurative; since the marching of troops over the ridges of Lebanon would have been as preposterous as the conveyance of chariots over those elevated, precipitous, and snow-clad regions impossible. As he had conquered every difficulty so now he would carry all before him." Barnes has: "The boast of drying up streams with the sole of the foot, is intended to convey the idea that he had not only supplied water for his own empire by digging wells, but that he had cut off the supplies of water from the others against whom he had made war. The idea perhaps is, that if such an army as his was, should pass through the streams of a country that they should invade, and should only take away the water that would adhere to the sole or the hollow of the foot on their march, it would dry up all the streams. It is strong hyperbolical language, and is designed to indicate the number of the forces which were under his command."

26 Hast thou not heard long ago, [how] I have done it; [and] of ancient times, that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste defenced* cities [into] ruinous heaps. ✓

* 2 Kings 19:25, Fenced.

✓ or, Hast thou not heard how I have made it long ago, and formed it of ancient times? should I now bring it to be laid waste, and defenced cities to be ruinous heaps?

The Lord stops quoting Sennacherib and now responds to the king's insolence. The expression "Hast thou not heard" הֲלֹא שָׁמַעְתָּ is also found in an extended form in ISAIAH 40:28, הֲלֹא יָדַעְתָּ אִם-לֹא שָׁמַעְתָּ, *Hast thou not known, or hast thou not heard.*" Gill writes: "Hast thou not heard long ago?" – By report, by reading the history of ancient times, or by means of the prophets; these are the words of the Lord to Sennacherib. The Targum adds, 'what I did to Pharaoh king of Egypt.'" Barnes has: "Hast thou not heard" – This is evidently the language of God addressed to Sennacherib. It is designed to state to him that he was under his control; that this was the reason (ISAIAH 37:27) why the inhabitants of the nations had been unable to resist him; that he was entirely in his hands (ISAIAH 37:28); and that he would control him as he pleased (ISAIAH 37:29). *Long ago how I have done it* –

You boast that all this is by your own counsel and power. Yet I have done it; that is, I have purposed, planned, arranged it long ago. *That thou shouldest be to lay waste* – I have raised you up for this purpose, and you have been entirely under my control." In other words, the Lord made it possible or allowed the king of Asshur to conquer the nations and this is why Sennacherib had so much success, and no other reason.

27 Therefore their inhabitants [were] of small power, ✓ they were dismayed and confounded: they were [as] the grass of the field, and [as] the green herb, [as] the grass on the housetops, and [as corn] blasted before it be grown up.

✓ short of hand

Therefore their inhabitants [were] of small power, they were dismayed and confounded: It was not hard, explains the Lord, to conquer these nations. Sennacherib should not flatter himself of any great thing, as these nations were of little strength or power to withstand. It was their weakness, rather than Asshur's strength, that permitted Sennacherib's success. Man often makes comparisons to make himself look greater. ¶ *They were [as] the grass of the field, and [as] the green herb.* This theme is expanded upon in ISAIAH 40:6–8, wherein the frailty and transitory beauty of man is compared to the grass that withers. ¶ *[As] the grass on the housetops, and [as corn⁵] blasted before it be grown up.* Alexander explains: "In this last expression there is reference at once to the flat surface, the earthy material, and the various uses of the oriental house-top, in consequence of which seeds would frequently spring up there, but without depth of root, and therefore short-lived." Regarding the blasted corn, Delitzsch explains: "This idea is expressed still more strikingly in Kings, 'like corn blighted (שָׂדֶפֶה, compare שָׂדֶפֶן, corn-blight) before the shooting up of the stalk;' the Assyrian being regarded as a parching east wind, which destroys the seed before the stalk is formed." HALOT explains שָׂדֶפֶה as: "scorching, heat (grain dried up by an early east wind)."

28 But I know thy abode, ✓ and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me.

✓ or, sitting

⁵ Not maize, but rather *grains* (see ISAIAH 17:5).

The Hebrew word for *abode* שֶׁבַח also means *sitting*. Where one sits is one's abode, so to speak. The Lord here is saying that He knows *everything* about Sennacherib: where he dwells, his comings and goings, and the anger that the king felt toward Jehovah.

29 Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.

Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears. Elsewhere we have said that God is not limited to a conversation with one person at a time, but rather, He able to simultaneously hear and respond to prayers from an unlimited number of persons. And not just prayers, but He is able to hear all of our thoughts and words—and in the case of King Sennacherib, his thoughts and words against the Holy One of Israel. Sennacherib might have thought he was speaking privately to someone or that his thoughts were private. In the New Covenant we read often how the Savior read the thoughts and intents of men: “And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?” (Matthew 9:4; also see Mark 2:7–8). ¶ *Therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.* As a result of this insolence on the part of Sennacherib, the Lord would guide him back home with the ease—and with a total lack of resistance—that an oxen or a horse is guided. Rings are put on bulls or cattle's noses in order to obtain their obedience; horses are guided through bridles. Faussett mentions that: “In a bas-relief of Khorsabad, captives are led before the king by a cord attached to a hook, or ring, passing through the under lip or the upper lip, and nose.”

30 And this [shall be] a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat [this] year such as groweth of itself;* and the second year that which springeth of the same: and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof.

* 2 Kings 19:11, such things as grow of themselves.

Rawlinson explains: “*This shall be a sign unto thee*”—rather, *the sign*.⁶ The prophet now turns to Hezekiah,

⁶ The sign, הַאֵימָה.

and makes an address to him. ‘This,’ he says, ‘shall be the sign unto thee of Sennacherib’s being effectually ‘bridled,’ and the danger from Assyria over. In the third year from the present the land shall have returned to its normal condition, and you shall enjoy its fruits as formerly. Meanwhile you shall obtain sufficient nourishment from the grain which has sown itself.’ The ‘third year,’ according to Hebrew reckoning, might be little more than one year from the date of the delivery of the prophecy. The entire withdrawal of all the Assyrian garrisons from the country, which no doubt followed on Sennacherib’s retreat, might well have occupied the greater part of a year. Till they were withdrawn, the Jews could not venture to till their territory. *Plant vineyards*] – The Assyrians had, no doubt, cut down the vines (see *Records of the Past*, vol. 3. pp. 40, 62, 79; vol. 7. p. 43, etc.; Layard, ‘Monuments of Nineveh,’ second series, pl. 40).”

31 And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah √ shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward:

✓ the escaping of the house of Judah that remaineth

Faussett has: “Judah *remained* after the ten tribes were carried away; also those of Judah who should survive Sennacherib’s invasion are meant.” But also looking forward to the last days, the remnant that would return unto Christ from each of the tribes of Israel. Barnes explains: “*Shall again take root downward*] – Like a tree that had been prevented by any cause from growing or bearing fruit. A tree, to bear well, must be in a soil where it can strike its roots deep. The sense is, that all obstructions to their growth and prosperity would be removed.”

32 For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape √ out of mount Zion: the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this.

✓ the escaping

Out of those who would be preserved in Jerusalem and more particularly mount Zion, out of this remnant, there would be a buildup of population. Gill writes about the Zeal of the Lord: “[The Lord’s] concern for his own honour and glory, and his great love to his people, shall engage him to perform all that is here promised and foretold.” Also, the whole of the Lamanite nation are included here, as they left out of Jerusalem for the American continent.

33 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it.

After comforting the Jerusalemites about the restoration of peace in the land, growth of food and of Judean population, the Lord further solaces the people with the most urgent matter at hand, Sennacherib. As Rawlinson explains, the typical Assyrian attacks are here summarized [but “God promises that Jerusalem shall experience none of these things at Sennacherib’s hands.”]: “The first assailants were the archers. They boldly approached in large bodies, and strove to clear the battlements of the defenders. Then shields were brought into play. Under their cover the archers drew nearer; the scaling parties brought up their ladders; the miners attacked the foundations of the walls; and the torch-bearers endeavoured to fire the gates. Finally, if these tactics did not avail, banks were raised against the walls, which were then assailed with battering-rams till they were breached and the assailants could enter.”

34 By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD.

Instead of an Assyrian attack led by Sennacherib, the king would return to his homeland the very way that he came. The elliptical comment is that in so doing, the king would be like a dog who after much barking and bravado is so scared that he runs away with his tail between the legs.

35 For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

The Lord will defend His own honor in this whole matter and will do it in part to fulfill promises made to King David (about preserving a remnant from David’s loins—who would be the Christ). See ISAIAH 37:29, where the Lord states that He shall lead a submissive Sennacherib back to his own place, like a bull pulled by his nose ring. This seems to have been the end of the revelation. We next hear of the Lord’s fighting on the side of Jerusalem.

36 Then the angel* of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a

hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they [were] all dead corpses.

* 2 Kings 19:35, And it came to pass that night, that the angel.

* 2 Chronicles 32:21a. And the LORD sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria.

Or, as explained by the Amplified Version, “And the Angel of the Lord went forth, and slew 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians; and when [the living] arose early in the morning, behold, all these were dead bodies. [II Kings 19:35.]” In other words, the armies that arrived to besiege and harm Jerusalem perished in the night by the hand of the angel of the Lord. Those who arose early in the morning were the Jerusalemites.

Regarding this angel (מַלְאָךְ), Barnes explains: “The word ‘angel’ (מַלְאָךְ) from מֵלֵאךְ to send) means properly one sent, a messenger, from a private person Job 1:14; from a king (1 Samuel 16:19; 19:11, 14, 20). Then it means a messenger of God, and is applied: (1) to an angel (Exodus 23:20; 2 Samuel 14:16; et al.); (2) to a prophet (Haggai 1:13; Malachi 3:1; (3) to a priest (Ecclesiastes 5:5; Malachi 2:7) ... The general sense of the word is that of ambassador, messenger, one sent to bear a message, to execute a commission, or to perform any work or service. It is known that the Jews were in the habit of tracing all events to the agency of invisible beings sent forth by God to accomplish his purposes in this world ... And there is no more improbability in the supposition that God employs invisible and heavenly messengers to accomplish his purposes, than there is that he employs man. Whatever, therefore, were the means used in the destruction of the Assyrian army, there is no improbability in the opinion that they were under the direction of a celestial agent sent forth to accomplish the purpose.” ¶ It is also possible that the מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה, angel of the LORD, is a representation of the Lord Himself in His pre-mortal state.

37 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.

It is unclear how Sennacherib found out about the decimation of his troops, but it seems that this is what precipitated his retreat back home.

38 And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his

sons* smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Armenia:~ and Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.

* 2 Chronicles 32:21b, So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he was come into the house of his god, they that came forth of his own bowels slew him there with the sword.

✓ Ararat

Barnes writes: “*As he was worshipping*] – Perhaps this time was selected because he might be then attended with fewer guards, or because they were able to surprise him without the possibility of his summoning his attendants to his rescue. *In the house*] – In the temple. *Of Nisroch his god*] – The god whom he particularly adored ... *That Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword*] – ... These two sons subsequently became, in Armenia, the heads of two celebrated families there, the Arzerunii, and the Genunii (see *Jos. Ant.* x. 1, 5, note). *And they escaped*] – This would lead us to suppose that it was some private matter which led them to commit the parricide, and that they did not do it with the expectation of succeeding to the crown. *Into the land of Armenia*] – Hebrew, as Margin||, ‘Ararat.’ The Chaldee renders this, ‘The land of ܐܪܪܬ, that is, *Kardi-anum*, or, the mountains of the Kurds. The modern Kurdistan includes a considerable part of the ancient Assyria and Media, together with a large portion of Armenia. This expression is generally substituted for Ararat by the Syriac, Chaldee, and Arabic translators, when they do not retain the original word Ararat. It is a region among the mountains of Ararat or Armenia. The Syriac renders it in the same way – ‘Of *Kurdoya*’ (the Kurds) ... Ararat was a region or province in Armenia ... The name ‘Ararat’ belongs properly to the region or country, and not to any particular mountain.” Gill says: “*And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god*] – Josephus says, in his temple, called Arasce; but Nisroch was the name of his deity he worshipped; though who he was is not certain. Jarchi says, in one of their expositions it is said to be ܢܨܪ, ‘*neser*,’ a plank of the ark of Noah; in Tobit 1:24 it is called his idol Dagon; according to Hillerus, the word signifies a prince; and with Vitringa, a king lifted up, or glorious, and whom he takes to be the Assyrian Belus, worshipped in the form and habit of Mars: *That Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword*] – the former of these had his name from an idol so called, 2 Kings 17:31, which signifies a glorious king; and the

other may signify a prince of treasure. Josephus says they were his eldest sons ... Jarchi says that he prayed to his god, and vowed, if he would deliver him, that he might not be slain, he would offer up his two sons to him, who standing by, and hearing him, therefore slew him; the reason given for it in the Apocrypha: ‘And here passed not five and fifty days, before two of his sons killed him, and they fled into the mountains of Ararath; and Sarchedonus his son reigned in his stead; who appointed over his father’s accounts, and over all his affairs, Achiacharus my brother Anael’s son.’ (Tobit 1:21). According to Munster’s edition, is, that Sennacherib asked his counsellors and senators why the holy blessed God was so zealous for Israel and Jerusalem, that an angel destroyed the host of Pharaoh, and all the firstborn of Egypt, but the young men the Lord gave them, salvation was continually by their hands; and his wise men and counsellors answered him, that Abraham the father of Israel led forth his son to slay him, that the Lord his God might be propitious to him, and hence it is he is so zealous for his children, and has executed vengeance on thy servants; then, said the king, I will slay my sons; by this means, perhaps, he may be propitious to me, and help me; which word, when it came to Adrammelech and Sharezer, they laid in wait for him, and killed him with the sword at the time he went to pray before Dagon his god: *and they escaped into the land of Armenia*]; or ‘Ararat;’ on the mountains of which the ark rested, Genesis 8:4. Both the Septuagint version and Josephus say it was Armenia into which he escaped; and Jerom observes, that Ararat is a champaign country in Armenia, through which the river Araxes flows, at the foot of Mount Taurus, whither it is extended. The Targum calls it the land of Kardu; and the Syriac version the land of the Keredians, which also belonged to Armenia; in these mountainous places they might think themselves most safe: *and Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead*]; whom Josephus calls Assarachoddas; and in Ptolemy’s Caron he is named Assaradinus; the same, as some think, whom the Greeks call Sardanapalus; in the Apocrypha: ‘And Achiacharus intreating for me, I returned to Nineve. Now Achiacharus was cupbearer, and keeper of the signet, and steward, and overseer of the accounts: and Sarchedonus appointed him next unto him: and he was my brother’s son’ (Tobit 1:22).”

9 September 2013

Isaiah 38

When Hezekiah heard that he was sick unto death he turned unto the Lord in mighty prayer. His life was extended fifteen years. Isaiah instructs Hezekiah to apply a fig poultice. Hezekiah composes a hymn of praise and gratitude to the Lord.

vv. 1–8. Hezekiah was sick unto death and advised by the Lord through Isaiah to get his house in order. Hezekiah turns to God in might prayer. Isaiah tells Hezekiah that the Lord has heard his prayer and has extended his life and furthermore, that Jerusalem would be delivered from Assyria. Isaiah asks Hezekiah to choose from one of two possible signs that this would come to pass.

1 ¶ IN those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order: [✓]for thou shalt die, and not live.

✓ Give charge concerning thy house

IN those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. Exegetes are not agreed as to whether these words of Isaiah were given before or after the Assyrian menace. In the Talmud tradition, Hezekiah, having foresight as to the wickedness of his progeny, preferred not to have children. Tradition has it that he asked the Prophet Isaiah for his daughter in marriage but that the latter told him it was too late to avert punishment (Seder Zeraï'm, Berachoth 10a). A footnote in Berachoth 10b suggests that eventually Isaiah conceded and out of this marriage wicked King Manasseh was born. If this were the case, and we follow Jewish tradition, then Isaiah was murdered by his own grandson. ¶ To us as LDS, this is a very interesting point: the idea of *sickness unto death*. It reminds us of someone *appointed unto death* (D&C 42:48, *see also* header to 2 Kings 20, in our LDS edition, about this very matter of King Hezekiah's appointment unto death). Elder Orson Pratt wrote: "When a man or a woman is appointed unto death you, nor I, nor Peter, nor James, nor Paul, nor John, nor any other man of God can heal them in the name of Jesus. Why? Because God has otherwise determined. But that did not do away the gift of healing in ancient times; that gift was abundantly made manifest, notwithstanding there were many who were sick who were not healed."¹ Elder George Q. Cannon wrote: "There is room for an

increase of exertion and an exhibition of greater faith, as a people, than we have ever yet exhibited. The Lord is ready, according to our own testimonies, to pour out upon us every blessing that we need. Are we sick? Are any of our households sick? What is the privilege of the Latter-day Saints according to our doctrines, according to the teachings of these books (the Bible and the Book of Mormon), and according to our own belief? It is our privilege to exercise faith in the name of Jesus Christ, to have the sick, *where not appointed unto death*, restored to life. This is the privilege of the Latter-day Saints, the privilege of every faithful man and woman in the Church of Christ upon all the face of the earth."² Elder Franklin D. Richards taught: "We ought first to go to the Lord and exercise our faith as far as we can make use of it in that direction, and we will make fewer blunders than we do in placing implicit confidence in the medical and surgical professions. When we do this we are certainly sure of one thing—we secure the help of God and the help of angels; and if *we are appointed unto death*, we want to go. We ought to want to go. Our prayers and supplications should be always conditional—that is, if not *appointed unto death* that he or she should be raised up. And if the heavens want a man to labor there in any sphere, there is where he should be ... Now, when the Presidency want a man to go on a mission, he ought to go. It is best for that man that he should go. It is best for all concerned that he should go to the place he is sent and labor with all his heart. Just so with us. Here we are on a mission in the world. The matter of death is a very small matter. It is a matter of life or death to be sure; but if the Lord does not want us here, and we are taken away, His will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."³ ¶ As Priesthood holders we ought to always seek out the will of the Lord rather than our own will. I have assisted in the administration to the dying sick—when I was not voice—where the Spirit manifested to me that this individual was not going to live despite the words pronounced by the Priesthood holder. A few days later the man who was the recipient of the administration died. We ought to always prefer the blessing that the

¹ JD, Vol.18, p.143, Orson Pratt, August 30, 1875.

² JD, Vol.19, p.108 – p.109 – p.110, George Q. Cannon, September 23, 1877. Emphasis added.

³ JD, Vol.24, p.287 – p.288, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883 and JD, Vol.24, p.340, Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883. Emphasis added.

Lord wishes to pour upon our heads than the blessing of a man. Part of the challenge here, is that we can—and I know I also have—confuse an outpouring of the Spirit for a yes answer. Sometimes it means, “*Do not fear, this matter is in My hands. I wish you to be comforted.*” ¶ *And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live.* It is no small matter for a Prophet of God to receive revelation and be told that a person is appointed to death and go and tell an individual to put his house in order. I have long since learned, however, that when someone has been warned about an impending danger (in a prophetic dream or in some other way), that through prayer these things can be averted when it is the will of the Lord. In fact, this is why these things are often revealed ahead of time. ¶ Gill says: “*And said unto him, thus saith the Lord, set thine house in order*” – or, ‘give orders to thine house’: to the men of thine house, as the Targum; his domestics, his counsellors and courtiers, what they should do after his death; how his personal estate should be disposed of; how the throne should be filled up; who should succeed him, since he had no son: the family and secular affairs of men should be put in order, and direction given for the management of them, and their substance and estates should be disposed of by will before their death; and much more a concern should be shown for the setting in order their spiritual affairs, or that they may be habitually ready for death and eternity.”

2 Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the LORD,

Hezekiah descended in full humility of faith and prayer unto the Lord. Gill continues: “Literally, either to the wall of his bedchamber where he lay sick, that his tears might not be seen, and his prayers interrupted, and that he might deliver them with more privacy, freedom, and fervency; or else to the wall of the temple, as the Targum, towards which good men used to look when they prayed, 1Kings 8:38, which was a type of Christ, to whom we should have respect in all our petitions, as being the only Mediator between God and man.”

3 And said, Remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done [that which is] good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. ✓

✓ with great weeping [i.e., And Hezekiah wept with great weeping]

And said, Remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect

heart, and have done [that which is] good in thy sight. When I was Branch President of the Modesto 12th Spanish Branch, in California, one of our dear sisters had a prophetic dream that her family would get into a car accident on the way home from a Branch activity in the mountains. She did not mention this to me at the time and had the accident precisely in the spot she had seen in her dreams. When the Lord shows us through the Spirit—in any of the many possible manifestations—that something will go wrong, it is done for a purpose. All things being equal, it means, this thing will come to pass. But, if we pray to God and ask if it is possible for this bad thing we have been warned off, that it may not come to pass, and the Spirit reassures us that our prayer has been heard, it means this thing will *not* come to pass. This is my testimony which I have seen come true countless times. But the answer will not always be affirmative. At times we have to make different plans. For instance, one of the General Authorities had a bad feeling about his son going on a Church Boy Scout trip. At the end he was impressed by the Spirit—as was his son—that the trip ought to be avoided. This probably saved his life. Nevertheless, we have to ask. We have to pray. We have to inquire of God. This is what Hezekiah did, being filled with faith and hope. And that is not all, King Hezekiah was also filled with a confidence that he had walked uprightly before the Lord. This is why he reminds God that he had *walked* before God *in truth and with a perfect heart* (see ISAIAH 58:6–14). ¶ My daughter-in-law, Terry, once went into a temple recommend meeting with a counselor in her Stake Presidency. When asked the last question about whether she was worthy of that temple recommend, this counselor asked her not to answer that question for herself but to permit the Spirit to do so. Terry was filled with the Spirit, which testified to her that she was able to answer in the affirmative. This wise Church leader did much good as this knowledge served as a comfort at a turbulent time in her life. Indeed, she knew she had walked before God in truth and with a perfect heart. ¶ *And Hezekiah wept sore.* There are many types so weeping. One of them is because of sadness; another is because we are filled by the Spirit of God. In Hezekiah’s case, no doubt both of these sentiments were mixed and hard to separate. What is absolutely clear, is that he prayed with fervor and with faith and as moved by the Spirit, and as a result, the Lord God heard his prayer.

4 Then came the word* of the LORD to Isaiah, saying,

* 2 Kings 20:4, such things as grow of themselves.

The answer to King Hezekiah’s petition was received by Isaiah, as recorded in 2 Kings 20:4, “And it came to

pass, *afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court*, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying.” Upon hearing Hezekiah’s petition, then, the Lord speaks to the Prophet Isaiah who is to transmit his answer to Hezekiah. This was a common way in the past to receive answers to prayer, through a mediator. The prophet often acted as a mediator to deliver the prayer as well as to receive the answer. We often see this pattern in the D&C, where early Church members approached the Prophet Joseph Smith to inquire something of God. The answer from the Lord was delivered to the Prophet (see, for instance, D&C 12, 23, 51). Sometimes, when we attend a conference or other Church meeting or class, some of our questions may be answered by an inspired teacher or class participant. This happened to me numerous Sundays as a relatively new member of the Church, when I attended the Orinda Ward Gospel Doctrine class taught by a very inspired teacher. Answers can come through Patriarchal Blessings, other blessings, through the mouths of children, and multiple other ways. And of course, answers can come directly as a result of prayer, in the very act of praying. A final point here about prayer, it is not at all unusual for someone to pray to God and immediately have his or her prayers answered by a servant of the Lord who is sent there for that very purpose. The Prophet was there to help deliver an answer to a prayer he most probably did not even know was taking place. That, in itself, would probably help Hezekiah strengthen his testimony that his prayer was heard. ¶ We, too, can be the answer to the prayers and needs of others. One of my favorite stories from President Thomas S. Monson includes one such circumstance: “Late one afternoon I was swimming at the Deseret Gym, gazing at the ceiling while backstroking width after width,” President Monson shared. “Silently, but ever so clearly, there came to my mind the thought: ‘Here you swim almost effortlessly, while your friend Stan languishes in his hospital bed, unable to move.’ I felt the prompting: ‘Get to the hospital and give him a blessing.’ I ceased my swimming, dressed, and hurried to Stan’s room at the hospital. His bed was empty. A nurse said he was in his wheelchair at the swimming pool, preparing for therapy. I hurried to the area, and there was Stan, all alone, at the edge of the deeper portion of the pool. We greeted one another and returned to his room, where a priesthood blessing was provided. Slowly but surely, strength and movement returned to Stan’s legs. First he could stand on faltering feet. Then he learned once again to walk—step by step. Today one would not know that Stan had lain so close to death and with no hope of recovery. Frequently Stan speaks in Church meetings and tells of the goodness of the Lord to him. To some he reveals the dark thoughts of depression which engulfed him that afternoon as he sat in his wheelchair at the edge of the

pool, sentenced, it seemed, to a life of despair. He tells how he pondered the alternative. It would be so easy to propel the hated wheelchair into the silent water of the deep pool. Life would then be over. But at that precise moment he saw me, his friend. That day Stan learned literally that we do not walk alone. I, too, learned a lesson that day: Never, never, never postpone following a prompting.” ¶ In my life Sergio R. Vargas Barria, President of the Puerto Montt Stake, has been such a voice of comfort from the Lord. These last couple of years have been challenging to Linda & me with the death—and all that lead to it—of our oldest son David. After each of the trying news along the way, Presidente Sergio Vargas inquired after us *before* he knew why he was calling. The Lord inspired him to do so. It was the Lord’s way of telling us—“*You are not alone, I am with you!*”⁴

5 Go, and say to Hezekiah,* Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold,** I will add unto thy days fifteen years.

* 2 Kings 20:5, Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people.

** 2 Kings 20:5, behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD.

Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: As the margin ¶ has, “turn again,” שׁוּב, or simply *return*. The prophet had left Hezekiah’s presence and was now told to return to him. The words the Prophet speaks are those of the Lord. The Lord, *the God of David thy father* אֱלֹהֵי דָוִד (also means ancestor). The message is that God has both heard Hezekiah’s prayer and seen the sincerity of the tears.

¶ *David, דָּוִד*. I cannot think about the righteous David as a youth and not be filled with the most immense pain. Beside David’s well-known transgression regarding Bathsheba and Uriah, the Holy Scriptures do not hide from us many of his other faults, including a self-centered, vengeful personality that he developed after his fall. As I dig deep into my soul I realize that it is precisely because I loved young David so much and because he was such a great example of righteous living and inspiration, that his fall seems so particularly excruciating. Because also, as the quote goes, I can say, “There but for the grace of God, go I.” We know that

⁴ This note was added 15 July 2017, as I was revising this manuscript before compiling it into a single volume—instead of the individual chapters which I began to post in 2000.

David “sought [forgiveness] carefully with tears” (Hebrews 12:17). We further read: “[David] *hath fallen from his exaltation*, and received his portion; and he shall not inherit them out of the world, for I gave them unto another, saith the Lord” (D&C 132:39, *emphasis added*). The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “Even David must wait for those times of refreshing, before he can come forth and his sins be blotted out. For Peter, speaking of him says, ‘David hath not yet ascended into heaven, for his sepulchre is with us to this day.’ His remains were then in the tomb.”⁵ One of our Church manuals has: “Even though David forfeited his exaltation because he arranged the death of Uriah, we can learn from his repentant attitude as he sought forgiveness for the sin of adultery. His words in Psalm 51 teach many aspects of true repentance.”⁶ When I think about all of these things, I think of the scripture in the Book of Mormon: “Condemn me not because of mine imperfection, neither my father, because of his imperfection, neither them who have written before him; but rather give thanks unto God that he hath made manifest unto you our imperfections, that ye may learn to be more wise than we have been” (Mormon 9:31). Now, returning to David, he was not only a great king, but he was also a prophet—one to whom great things were entrusted to. It was through David that the Lord chose to give numerous Messianic prophecies of infinite worth. ¶ *Behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years.* Rawlinson has: “This was doubling, or rather more than doubling, the length of Hezekiah’s reign, and allowing him a length of life exceeding that of the great majority of the kings of Judah, who seldom attained the age of fifty. Hezekiah lived to be fifty-four.”

6 And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria: and I will defend this city.*

* 2 Kings 20:6, I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David’s sake.

NOTE: the narrative in Isaiah is in a different order than in 2 Kings. See ISAIAH 38:21–22, below, with the corresponding scriptures from 2 Kings, where it is a little easier to catch the chronology of the events. The exegetes suggest that this verse is either an assurance to Hezekiah that Assyria would not, in the future, capture Jerusalem, or that his sickness took place early enough where we had not yet seen the annihilation of the Assyrian army. ¶ *And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria:* It is the Lord who can deliver us out of any predicament, and will prove us

to see if we have put our trust in Him. ¶ Satan does not spend his time tempting us in areas that we are rock solid, but in those areas where we hesitate. For instance, if we have made the decision to go to Church every Sabbath day, and we have made that decision once and for all, we are less likely to be tempted in that area. When we have shown the Lord that we are committed to a principle, Satan soon tires of wasting his time on us in that area. We are, in the Lord’s side of the line. I know of families who have had trouble paying tithing. They keep hoping for a better day, for the sun to shine on them. And the promise of that day continues to shine, always in the distance, as when one travels toward a rainbow, or follows the moon in the night sky. Satan manages to cause havoc in their lives, wherein the money needs to be spent for this or that. When a person decides to pay tithing *no matter what*, once again, Satan generally loses interest in tempting that individual in this area. A person cannot get *prideful*, however, in the observance of any commandment, for Satan is not far. So it is with me, in the areas where I am weak, where I seem to make the decisions as I go; those are the areas where Satan often gets the best of me. President Kimball, when milking cows, came to the decision, “As I was out alone, milking the cows, or putting up the hay, I had time to think. I mulled it over in my mind and made this decision: ‘I, Spencer Kimball, will never touch tobacco. I will never drink coffee, nor will I ever touch tea—not because I can explain why I shouldn’t, except that the Lord said not to’” (Elder L. Tom Perry, *Ensign*, November 1979, p. 34.). No matter what, however, we need never lose faith in God’s ability to deliver us from the adversary. ¶ *And I will defend this city.* The Lord would hereby defend the city of Jerusalem. So it is that after we have been proved, then comes the blessing. The Lord is constantly telling us, “...prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it” (Malachi 3:10). This is a promise that goes not only for keeping the law of tithing, but for all things that the Lord commands.

7 And this [shall be] a sign unto thee from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing that he hath spoken;

While it is clear that we ought not to ask for signs from the Lord, the Lord sometimes does give us signs (ISAIAH 7:14). And He sometimes expects us to put Him to the test as mentioned in Malachi 3:10 just quoted. Some exegetes suggest that Hezekiah had asked for this sign. But I believe this offering of a sign is a pattern in God’s revelations to man. The Lord reveals a truth and then, while we are meditating on that truth,

⁵ TPJS, p. 188.

⁶ LDS *Old Testament Class Member Study Guide* (“Create in Me a Clean Heart”).

adds another truth or an instruction that turns out to be a sign. These are free gifts from God. These are part of His *tender mercies* (Psalm 25:6; 1Nephi 1:20).

8 Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun dial^v of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down.*

✓ degrees by, or, with the sun

* 2 Kings 20:9–11: And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees? 10 And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees. Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people. And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the LORD: and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz.

Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. Tanakh renders, “I am going to make the shadow on the steps, which has descended on the dial of Ahaz because of the sun, recede ten steps,” with a footnote by the word *dial*, indicating that “A model of a dial with steps has been discovered in Egypt.” It seems that Hezekiah was asked to choose, as we can see in 2 Kings, which direction the shadow should go, in the manifestation of this miracle. ¶ *So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down.* In other words, the shade returned back ten steps. Barnes explains: “The shadow, or shade which is made by the interception of the rays of the sun by the gnomon on the dial. The phrase ‘bring again’ (Hebrew, **בְּשִׁיב**) means to cause to return (Hiphil, from **שׁוּב**, to *return*); that is, I will cause it retrograde, or bring back. Septuagint, Στρέψω – ‘I will turn back.’” Rawlinson has: “Sun-dials are of several kinds. The one here spoken of seems to have consisted of a set of steps, with a perpendicular gnomon or pole at the top, the shadow of which receded up the steps as the sun rose in the heavens, and descended down them as the sun declined.”

vv. 9–22. Hezekiah composes a heartfelt hymn of gratitude and praise unto the Lord. Isaiah instructed Hezekiah to put on a poultice made out of figs upon the boil, as part of the healing process.

9 ¶ The writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness:

As we see from time to time in Holy Writ, such as in the Song of Moses and the Song of Miriam (Exodus 15), people who have been blessed by the Lord burst out in songs of gratitude. So it was now with Hezekiah. He was grateful because he had recovered from his sickness. It says this was *written* [**כָּתוּב** (Gesenius, HALOT)]. Delitzsch says: “The song which follows might be headed *Mikhtam* [from the Hebrew **מִכְתָּם**, meaning *inscription* (Gesenius, HALOT)], since it has the characteristics of this description of psalm (see at Psalm 16:1).” Cheyne calls it “a sweet and plaintive specimen of Hebrew psalmody.” One can sense the deep gratitude of Hezekiah.

10 I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years.

The *cutting off of my days* means the end of his days. The word cutting is often a reference of the cutting off of a woven article from a loom (see ISAIAH 38:12). Hezekiah was already resigned and felt he was at the very gates of death and the grave—and was sad that he had not lived a normal length of life before he would have to face death. That his days were going to be cut short. AMP renders it: “I said, In the noontide and tranquility of my days I must depart; I am to pass through the gates of Sheol (the place of the dead), deprived of the remainder of my years.”

11 I said, I shall not see the LORD, [even] the LORD, in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world.

Hezekiah says something so tender, which the English translation misses altogether, **לֹא־אֶרְאֶה יְהוָה**,” using the more tender abbreviated Tetragrammaton, **Yah** for Yahweh, and repeats it twice. I shall *not see Yahyah*. It makes me think of a tender *papi*, or *dada*. YLT renders it: “I said, I do not see Jah—Jah! In the land of the living.” Note that Hezekiah does not say he would *not see the Lord* anymore, but that he would not see Him *in the land of the living*. He had truly walked with the Lord in the land of the living, that is, in his lifetime. After expressing regret for not being able to see the Lord, he next expresses sadness for not being able to see his fellow mortals.

12 Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent: I have cut off like a weaver my life: he will cut me off

with pining sickness: ✓ from day [even] to night wilt thou make an end of me.

✓ or, from the thrum⁷

Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent: Just like a shepherd's tent is quickly removed from the very temporary spot it holds, so did Hezekiah feel his life was being cut short. Barnes well says: "As suddenly as the tent of a shepherd is taken down, folded up, and transferred to another place. There is doubtless the idea here that he would continue to exist, but in another place, as the shepherd would pitch his tent or dwell in another place. He was to be cut off from the earth, but he expected to dwell among the dead. The whole passage conveys the idea that he expected to dwell in another state—as the shepherd dwells in another place when he strikes his tent, and it is removed." ¶ *I have cut off like a weaver my life: he will cut me off with pining sickness:* When a knit work is moved from a loom, it is cut. Barnes explains: "This is another image designed to express substantially the same idea. The sense is, as a weaver takes his web from the loom by cutting the warp, or the threads which bind it to the beam, and thus loosens it and takes it away, so his life was to be cut off." Rawlinson well says: "*With pining sickness* rather, as in the margin ||, from the thrum. The 'thrum' is the portion of the warp which adjoins the upper bar of the loom." In other words, removed quickly from the loom or from life. ASV renders this: "My dwelling is removed, and is carried away from me as a shepherd's tent: I have rolled up, like a weaver, my life; he will cut me off from the loom." ¶ *From day [even] to night wilt thou make an end of me.* This means all of a sudden, quickly. Several exegetes suggest that Hezekiah felt that his life would be taken within a single day. Night is symbolic for death and day for life. In the Book of Mormon we have: "And now, as I said unto you before, as ye have had so many witnesses, therefore, I beseech of you that ye do not procrastinate the day of your repentance until the end; for after this day of life, which is given us to prepare for eternity, behold, if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be no labor performed" (Alma 34:33).

13 I reckoned till morning, [that], as a lion, so will he break all my bones: from day [even] to night wilt thou make an end of me.

⁷ "And cut from the thrum" (Tanakh). A thrum, as explained by Merriam-Webster, is "a fringe of warp threads left on the loom after the cloth has been removed."

The idea is here repeated as to the quickness with which Hezekiah felt his life was departing, and this pulling off the loom in the previous verse seemed to have been thought of as a very quick violent movement. This same thought is repeated by the lion who *break[s] all of my bones*.

14 Like a crane [or] a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail [with looking] upward: O LORD, I am oppressed; undertake for me. ✓

✓ or, ease me

It seems that Hezekiah was delirious with a fever and looking up solicitously to God for mercy. ¶ *O LORD, I am oppressed; undertake for me.* Or as in the margin ||, bring relief to my suffering pain.

15 What shall I say? he hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done [it]: I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul.

Barnes says, "*What shall I say?*" – This language seems to denote surprise and gratitude at unexpected deliverance. It is the language of a heart that is overflowing, and that wants words to express its deep emotions. In the previous verse he had described his pain, anguish, and despair. In this he records the sudden and surprising deliverance which God had granted; which was so great that no words could express his sense of it. Nothing could be more natural than this language; nothing would more appropriately express the feelings of a man who had been suddenly restored to health from dangerous sickness, and brought from the borders of the grave. *He hath both spoken unto me* – That is, he has promised. So the word is often used (Deuteronomy 26:17; Jeremiah 3:19). He had made the promise by the instrumentality of Isaiah (ISAIAH 38:5–6). The promise related to his recovery, to the length of his days, and to his entire deliverance from the hands of the Assyrians. *And himself hath done it* – He himself has restored me according to his promise, when no one else could have done it. *I shall go softly* – The word used here (אָדָּמָה)⁸ occurs in but one other place in the Bible (Psalm 42:4): 'I went with them to the house of God;' that is, I went with them in a sacred procession to the house of God; I went with a solemn, calm, slow pace. The idea here is, 'I will go humbly, submissively, all my life; I will walk in a serious manner, remembering that I am traveling to the grave; I will

⁸ אָדָּמָה

avoid pride, pomp, and display; I will suffer the remembrance of my sickness, and of God's mercy to produce a calm, serious, thoughtful demeanour all my life.' This is the proper effect of sickness on a pious mind, and it is its usual effect. And probably, one design of God was to keep Hezekiah from the ostentatious parade usually attendant on his lofty station; from being elated with his deliverance from the Assyrian; from improper celebrations of that deliverance by revelry and pomp; and to keep him in remembrance, that though he was a monarch, yet he was a mortal man, and that he held his life at the disposal of God. *In the bitterness of my soul*] – I will remember the deep distress, the bitter sorrows of my sickness, and my surprising recovery; and will allow the remembrance of that to diffuse seriousness and gratitude over all my life."

16 O Lord, by these [things men] live, and in all these [things is] the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live.

Gill writes: "*O Lord, by these things men live*] – Not by bread only, but by the word of God: by the promise of God, and by his power performing it; and by his favour and goodness continually bestowed; it is in him, and by his power and providence, that they live and move, and have their being, and the continuance of it; and it is his lovingkindness manifested to them that makes them live comfortably and go on cheerfully: *And in all these things is the life of my spirit*] – what kept his soul in life were the same things, the promise, power, and providence of God; what revived his spirit, and made him comfortable and cheerful, was the wonderful love and great goodness of God unto him, in appearing to him, and for him, and delivering him out of his sore troubles ... The Targum interprets it of the resurrection of the dead, 'O Lord, concerning all the dead, thou hast said, that thou wilt quicken them; and before them all thou hast quickened my spirit: *So wilt thou recover me, and make me to live*] – or rather, 'and' or 'for thou hast recovered (so Gataker) me, and made me to live'; for the Lord had not only promised it, but he had done it, ISAIAH 38:15, and so the Targum, 'and hast quickened me, and sustained me.'"

17 Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: ✓ but thou hast in love to my soul [delivered it] from the pit ✓ of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.

✓ or, on my peace came great bitterness

✓ ✓ thou hast loved my soul from the pit

Elder Carlos E. Asay, using the *How beautiful are the feet principle* said: "Of those members and missionaries who act as agents of the Lord and assist others in escaping the pit, it will be said: 'He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings' (Psalm 40:2). 'Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back' (ISAIAH 38:17)."⁹ Rawlinson explains: "*For thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back*] Where they could be no more seen, and therefore would be no more remembered." It is in essence, the idea found in Doctrine and Covenants: "Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more" (D&C 58:42).

18 For the grave cannot praise thee, death can [not] celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.

President Joseph Fielding Smith defended the truth of the resurrection, after receiving the following question: "Critics of the resurrection and the existence of the spirit frequently quote from Ecclesiastes 9:4–10, particularly stressing verses 5 and 10—'For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.' 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, no device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.' And from ISAIAH 38:18: 'For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for the truth.' Other references are quoted from Ezekiel 18:4 and 20: 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die.' What explanation can be offered for these verses?" In response, President Smith wrote: "The evidence of the resurrection is so abundant in the New Testament, that it is easy to meet the question so far as the resurrection is concerned. There are many promises in the Old Testament that there shall come a resurrection of the dead, and we are informed that at the resurrection of our Savior, the graves were opened and the dead came forth. There is no problem here. In relation to the thought that is given by some that there is no spirit in our bodies, and that when we die the body goes back to the dust there to remain forever, or perchance in the case of some, to receive a resurrection, there is ample biblical evidence

⁹ Asay, Carlos E. *The Seven M's of Missionary Service*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1996, p. 96.

that contradicts this thought. The writer of Ecclesiastes was speaking of this life only when he wrote these verses. The sixth verse of Ecclesiastes makes this clear: ‘Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.’ The dead are soon forgotten. It is not long after a man is gone, no matter how renowned he may have been, he is forgotten; and things done ‘under the sun’ they who are dead are not any longer interested in, nor do they have any portion in them. A man cannot take with him any portion of this world’s goods, but as Job declared in substance: Naked came he into the world, and naked he goes out of it. This, however, does not prove, and evidently the writer in the Old Testament did not intend to prove, that there was no existence after death of the eternal spirit. The dead are forgotten by whom? By the living. In the consideration of this discourse by the Preacher, Solomon, it should be kept in mind that the entire discourse is in relation to vanity—the vanities of this life, and is not one considering the blessings and nature of eternity. He points out the blessings to be obtained by a righteous life, and the evils of a life of vanity. The thought behind his expression: ‘Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest,’ is an admonition to us all, to apply our time and our talents to doing good and to bringing to pass righteousness while we sojourn in this mortal life, for it will be impossible for us to mend our ways and seek to do the things that have been neglected, in the grave. The words of Solomon have by some been willfully or ignorantly distorted. The closing words of this discourse are: For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. The words of Amulek to the Nephites are worthy of our consideration at this point: ‘For behold, this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God; yea, behold the day of this life is the day for men to perform their labors.’ [And also quotes Alma 34:33, which I quoted above.] When it is understood properly, this discourse by Solomon is wonderful, faith-promoting, and should be considered in its true light by all. Unfortunately Solomon himself failed to heed its instruction.”¹⁰ So also Alexander who says: “It does not follow from these words either that Hezekiah had no expectation of a future state, or that the soul remains unconscious till the resurrection.”

19 The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I [do] this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth.

¹⁰ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Answers to Gospel Questions*. vols. 1–4. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1957–1966. Vol. III, pp. 128–130.

Alexander says: “Only the living could praise God in that way to which the writer was accustomed, and on which his eye is here fixed, with special reference, no doubt, to the external service of the temple.” Gill says, “*The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day*] – Every one of the living, or such who are both corporeally and spiritually alive; and therefore the word is repeated; none but such who are alive in a corporeal sense can praise the Lord in this world.” Barnes explains: “*The father to the children*] – One generation of the living to another. The father shall have so deep a sense of the goodness of God that he shall desire to make it known to his children, and to perpetuate the memory of it in the earth.”

20 The LORD [was ready] to save me: therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the LORD.

Rawlinson has: “*The Lord was ready to save me*] – rather, *came to my rescue; came and saved me. Therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments*] – rather, *therefore will we play my stringed instruments*. Hezekiah calls the stringed instruments his, because he had recalled their use, and re-established them as a part of the temple service after the suspension of that service by Ahaz (2 Chronicles 29:30). His intention now is to take continual part with the Levites in (the choral praises of God, which were a part of the daily worship of the temple. This is to him the natural mode of expressing his thankfulness to God for the mercy vouchsafed him.”

21 For Isaiah had said, Let them take a lump of figs, and lay [it] for a plaister upon the boil, and he shall recover.

* 2 Kings 20:7, And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid [it] on the boil, and he recovered.

The Prophet Isaiah had given instructions on what was to be done for Hezekiah to be cured. This is not uncommon. For instance, in relation to the Haun’s Mills Massacre, Amanda Smith was a witness to the most violent mob violence against the Saints. Her husband and one of her sons were killed. She tells us the story of how her son Alma was healed. We pick up in the middle of the narrative: “I seized my two little girls and I ran down the bank and crossed the mill pond on a plank ... Another sister fled with me. Yet though we were women, with tender children, in flight for our lives, the demons poured volley after volley to kill us. A

number of bullets entered my clothes, but I was not wounded. The sister, however, who was with me, cried out that she was hit. We had just reached the trunk of a fallen tree, over which I urged her, bidding her to shelter there where the bullets could not reach her, while I continued my flight to some bottom land. When the firing had ceased I went back to the scene of the massacre, for there were my husband and three sons, of whose fate I as yet knew nothing ... Passing on I came to a scene more terrible still to the mother and wife. Emerging from the blacksmith shop was my eldest son, bearing on his shoulders his little brother Alma. 'Oh ! My Alma is dead!' I cried, in anguish. 'No, mother; I think Alma is not dead. But father and brother Sardius are killed!' ... But I could not weep then. The fountain of tears was dry; the heart overburdened with its calamity, and all the mother's sense absorbed in its anxiety for the precious boy which God alone could save by his miraculous aid. The entire hip joint of my wounded boy had been shot away. Flesh, hip bone, joint and all had been ploughed out from the muzzle of the gun which the ruffian placed to the child's hip through the logs of the shop and deliberately fired. We laid little Alma on a bed in our tent and I examined the wound. It was a ghastly sight. I knew not what to do. [She then speaks of the tremendous carnage that had taken place.] Yet was I there, all that long, dreadful night, with my dead and my wounded, and none but God as our physician and help. 'Oh my Heavenly Father,' I cried, 'what shall I do? Thou seest my poor wounded boy and knowest my inexperience. Oh Heavenly Father direct me what to do!' And then I was directed as by a voice speaking to me. The ashes of our fire was still smouldering. We had been burning the bark of the shag-bark hickory. I was directed to take those ashes and make a lye and put a cloth saturated with it right into the wound. It hurt, but little Alma was too near dead to heed it much. Again and again I saturated the cloth and put it into the hole from which the hip-joint had been ploughed, and each time mashed flesh and splinters of bone came away with the cloth; and the wound became as white as chicken's flesh. Having done as directed I again prayed to the Lord and was again instructed as distinctly as though a physician had been standing by speaking to me. Nearby was a slippery-elm tree. From this I was told to make a slippery-elm poultice and fill the wound with it. My eldest boy was sent to get the slippery-elm from the roots, the poultice was made, and the wound, which took fully a quarter of a yard of linen to cover, so large was it, was properly dressed. [Only after having performed these things did Amanda Smith permit herself to weep. When the morning came the living did what they could for the many wounded—to 'soothe the sufferers' wants.' They could not bury the dead because the mob was expected to reappear any time.] But to return to Alma, and how the Lord helped

me to save his life. I removed the wounded boy to a house, some distance off, the next day, and dressed his hip; the Lord directing me as before. I was reminded that in my husband's trunk there was a bottle of balsam. This I poured into the wound, greatly soothing Alma's pain. 'Alma, my child,' I said, 'you believe that the Lord made your hip?' 'Yes, mother.' 'Well, the Lord can make something there in the place of your hip; don't you believe he can, Alma?' 'Do you think that the Lord can, mother?' inquired the child, in his simplicity. 'Yes, my son,' I replied, 'he has shown it all to me in a vision.' Then I laid him comfortably on his face, and said: 'Now you lay like that, and don't move, and the Lord will make you another hip.' So Alma laid on his face for five weeks, until he was entirely recovered—a flexible gristle having grown in place of the missing joint and socket, which remains to this day a marvel to physicians. On the day that he walked again I was out of the house fetching a bucket of water, when I heard screams from the children. Running back, in affright, I entered, and there was Alma on the floor, dancing around, and the children screaming in astonishment and joy. It is now nearly forty years ago, but Alma has never been the least crippled during his life, and he has traveled quite a long period of the time as a missionary of the gospel and a living miracle of the power of God. I cannot leave the tragic story without relating some incidents of those five weeks when I was a prisoner with my wounded boy in Missouri, near the scene of the massacre, unable to obey the order of extermination [That is, to leave Missouri]. All the Mormons in the neighborhood had fled out of the State, excepting a few families of the bereaved women and children who had gathered at the house of Brother David Evans, two miles from the scene of the massacre. To this house Alma had been carried after that fatal night. In our utter desolation, what could we women do but pray? Prayer was our only source of comfort; our Heavenly Father our only helper. None but he could save and deliver us. One day a mobber came from the mill with the captain's fiat: 'The captain says if you women don't stop your d—d praying he will send down a posse and kill every d—d one of you!' And he might as well have done it, as to stop us poor women praying in that hour of our great calamity. Our prayers were hushed in terror. We dared not let our voices be heard in the house in supplication. I could pray in my bed or in silence, but I could not live thus long. This godless silence was more intolerable than had been that night of the massacre. I could bear it no longer. I pined to hear once more my own voice in petition to my Heavenly Father. I stole down into a corn-field, and crawled into a stout of corn. It was as the temple of the Lord to me at that moment. I prayed aloud and most fervently. When I emerged from the corn a voice spoke to me. It was a voice as plain as I ever heard one. It was no silent,

strong impression of the spirit, but a voice, repeating a verse of the saint's hymn: 'That soul who on Jesus hath leaned for repose, I cannot, I will not desert to its foes; That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake, I'll never, no never, no never forsake!' From that moment I had no more fear."¹¹ ¹² ¶ In Chile compresses are sometimes made with eucalyptus. Here in Isaiah, with figs. Barnes says: "*Let them take a lump of figs*] – The word used here (רבלל) denotes 'a round cake' of dried figs pressed together in a mass 1Samuel 25:18. Figs were thus pressed together for preservation, and for convenience of conveyance. *And lay it for a plaster*] – The word used here (מרר) denotes properly to rub, bruise, crush by rubbing; then to rub, in, to anoint, to soften. Here it means they were to take dried figs and lay them softened on the ulcer. *Upon the boil*] – (משחי). This word means a burning sore or an inflamed ulcer (Exodus 9:9, 11; Leviticus 13:18–20). The verb in Arabic means to be hot, inflamed; to ulcerate ... Here it probably denotes a pestilential boil; an eruption, or inflamed ulceration produced by the plague, that threatened immediate death."

22 Hezekiah also had said, What [is] the sign that I shall go up to the house of the LORD?

* 2 Kings 20:8, And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What [shall be] the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the LORD the third day?

As in the time of the Book of Mormon, with no word processors, it was difficult enough to engrave or write, that an afterthought that belonged earlier would simply have to stay as an afterthought. When written in Kings and Chronicles, they had the luxury of being able to go back and put it in the correct order. Rawlinson said: "*Hezekiah also had said*]; literally, *and Hezekiah said*. Our translators, both in this verse and at the commencement of ISAIAH 38:21 have endeavoured to conceal the awkwardness of the *nexus*, or rather want of *nexus*, with what precedes, by a modification of the rendering. The true sense is brought out by the proceeding, which is, however, a little arbitrary." Indeed, as noted by Rawlinson, we have a simple expression: **וַיֹּאמֶר הֶזְקִיָּהוּ**. The literal expression is *and-'he'-said-Hizkiyahu*, where the 'yod acts as a 'he'-marker alerts the reader to look for the name of a person to substitute for it, here Hezekiah.

9 September 2013

¹¹ Tullidge, Edward W. (1877) *The Women of Mormondom*, Chapter 15, New York. I urge the reading of the whole narrative.

¹² Baugh, Alexander. (2011). Made some slight corrections to the above narrative from Alexander Baugh's paper: Chapter Twenty-Six. "'I'll Never Forsake': Amanda Barnes Smith (1809–1886)," in *Women of Faith in the Latter Days*: Volume 1, 1775–1820, ed. Richard E. Turley Jr. and Brittany A. Chapman. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2011, 327–42.

Isaiah 39

Ambassadors from Babylon are sent to visit King Hezekiah when they heard that he was sick unto death but recovered. Hezekiah is *magnified in the sight of all the nations* and gets carried away in showing the Babylonian visitors that which he ought not to have shown them. Now, Hezekiah's descendants would be *carried away* captive into Babylon. This would not happen right away, but at the time of Jehoiakim. (When the Lord blesses our lives, it is easy to forget the fountain of these blessings and forget to give all honor and glory to Him from whom these blessings flow.)

2 Chronicles 32

22 Thus the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all [other], and guided them on every side.

23 And many brought gifts unto the LORD to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah king of Judah: so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth.

vv. 1–4. Babylonian embassy visits Hezekiah after he recovers from his illness. Hezekiah shows them everything, holding nothing back.

1 ¶ AT that time Merodachbaladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah: for he had heard that he* had been sick, and was recovered.

* 2 Kings 20:12, Hezekiah.

AT that time Merodachbaladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon. Faussett explains: “*Merodach-baladan*” – For a hundred fifty years before the overthrow of Nineveh by Cyaxares the Mede, a succession of rulers, mostly viceroys of Assyria, ruled Babylon, from the time of Nabonassar, 747 BC. That date is called ‘the Era of Nabonassar.’ Pul or Phallukha was then expelled, and a new dynasty set up at Nineveh, under Tiglath-pileser. Semiramis, Pul’s wife, then retired to Babylon, with Nabonassar, her son, whose advent to the throne of Babylon, after the overthrow of the old line at Nineveh, marked a new era. Sometimes the viceroys of Babylon made themselves, for a time, independent of Assyria; thus Merodach-baladan at this time did so, encouraged by the Assyrian disaster in the Jewish campaign. He had done so before, and was defeated in the first year of Sennacherib’s reign, as is recorded in cuneiform characters in that monarchs

palace of Koyunjik. Nabopolassar was the first who established, *permanently*, his independence; his son, Nebuchadnezzar, raised Babylon to the position which Nineveh once occupied; but from the want of stone near the Lower Euphrates, the buildings of Babylon, formed of sun-dried brick, have not stood the wear of ages as Nineveh has.” Barnes tells us how Babylonian kings’ names often incorporated the name of one of their favorite idols: “Merodach was an idol of the Babylonians (Jeremiah 50:2): ‘Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is confounded.’ This idol, according to Gesenius, was probably the planet Mars, or Mars the god of war. To this god, as well as to Saturn, the ancient Semitic nations offered human sacrifices (see Gesenius’ Lexicon and Corem. *in loc.*) The word ‘Balddan’ is also a compound word, and means ‘Bel is his lord.’ The name of this idol, Merodach, was often incorporated into the proper names of kings, and of others. Thus we have the names Evil-Merodach, Messi-Mordachus, Sisimor-dachus, Mardocentes, etc.” Barnes also explains that Merodachbaladan was a usurper (see Barnes for the more complete narrative): “Thus we have it certainly explained how there was a king, or rather a usurper in Babylon at the time when it was really a provincial city of the Assyrian empire. Nothing was more probable than that Merodach-baladan, having seized the throne, should endeavor to unite himself in league and amity with the enemies of his master, against whom he had revolted. Hezekiah, who, no less than himself, had thrown off the Assyrian yoke, and was in powerful alliance with the king of Egypt, would be his first resource. No embassy, on the other hand, could be more welcome to the Jewish monarch who had the common enemy in his neighborhood, and who would be glad to see a division made in his favor by a rebellion in the very heart of that enemy’s kingdom. Hence arose that excessive attention which he paid to the envoys of the usurper, and which so offended Isaiah, or rather God, who, as a consequence, threatened the Babylonian captivity (see Dr. Wiseman’s Lectures on Science and Revealed Religion, pp. 369–371 Ed. And. 1837). ¶ *Sent letters and a present to Hezekiah: for he had heard that he had been sick, and was recovered.* Alexander suggests: “It is not improbable that

Merodach Baladan was meditating a revolt, and sent this embassy to gain Hezekiah's co-operation. The congratulation on his recovery may have been a secondary object, or perhaps a mere pretext. In 2 Chronicles 32:31, a further design is mentioned, namely, to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land, whether this be understood to mean the destruction of Sennacherib's army, or the miraculous recession of the shadow. There is no incompatibility between these different designs."

2 And Hezekiah was glad of them, and shewed them the house of his precious things, [✓] the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, [✓] [✓] and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not.

✓ or, spicery

✓ ✓ or, jewels

* 2 Chronicles 32:25–31, But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit [done] unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem. Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, [both] he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah. And Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honour: and he made himself treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels; Storehouses also for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil; and stalls for all manner of beasts, and cotes for flocks. Moreover he provided him cities, and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance: for God had given him substance very much. This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works. Howbeit in [the business of] the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was [done] in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all [that was] in his heart.

And Hezekiah was glad of them, and shewed them the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: The Talmud tradition (Seder Nezikin, Sanhedrin 104a) has this interesting exchange: "And Hezekiah was glad of them, and shewed them the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment etc. Rab said: What is meant by 'the house of his precious things'? — His wife, who mixed the drinks for them. Samuel said: He shewed them his treasury. R. Johanan said: He shewed them weapons which could destroy other weapons" (Talmud, Soncino). This is a particularly sad story. As

we wish to rejoice in the righteousness of Hezekiah, we find that he was lifted up in pride. But that ought to be a lesson for us. We ought not look but to God the Eternal Father and His son, Jesus Christ, for an example of true and enduring righteousness. We also ought to be ever vigilant of the sin of pride. Barnes says: "*And Hezekiah was glad of them*] — Possibly he regarded himself as flattered by an embassy from so great a distance, and so celebrated a place as Babylon. It is certain that he erred in some way in regard to the manner in which he received them, and especially in the ostentatious display which he made of his treasures. *And showed them the house of his precious things*] — The Septuagint renders this, Νεχωθα — 'The house of Nechotha,' retaining the Hebrew word. The Margin ||, 'Spicery.' The Hebrew word (נִכְתָּה) properly means, according to Gesenius, a contusion, a breaking to pieces; hence, aromatic powder, or spices reduced to powder, and then any kind of aromatics. Hence, the word here may mean 'the house of his spices,' as Aquila, Symmachus, and the Vulgate translate it; or 'a treasury,' 'a storehouse,' as the Chaldee and the Syriac here render it. It was undoubtedly a treasure or store house; but it may have taken its name from the fact, that it was mainly employed as a place in which to keep spices, unguents, and the various kinds of aromatics which were used either in public worship, or for the purposes of luxury. *The silver and the gold*] — Possibly Hezekiah may have obtained no small quantity of silver and gold from what was left in the camp of the Assyrians. It is certain that after he was delivered from danger he was signally prospered, and became one of the most wealthy and magnificent monarchs of the east; (2 Chronicles 32:27–28): 'And Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honor; and he made himself treasuries for silver and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels; storehouses also for the increase of grain, and wine, and oil; and stalls for all manner of beasts, and cotes for flocks.' A considerable part of this wealth arose from presents which were made to him, and from gifts which were made for the service of the temple (2 Chronicles 32:23). *And the precious ointment*] — Used for anointing kings and priests. Or more probably the ointment here referred to was that which was in more common use, to anoint the body after bathing, or when they were to appear in public. *And all the house of his armor*] — Margin ||, 'Vessels,' or 'instruments,' or 'jewels.' The word כֵּל denotes any article of furniture, utensil, or vessel; any trapping, instrument, or tool; and any implement of war, weapon, or arms. Probably it here refers to the latter, and denotes shields, swords, spears, such as were used in war, and such as Hezekiah had prepared for defense. The phrase is equivalent to our word arsenal (compare 2 Chronicles 32:27). Solomon

had an extensive arsenal of this description (1 Kings 10:16–17), and it is probable that these were regarded as a part of the necessary defense of the kingdom.”

¶ *There was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not.* The Brethren have counseled us to hold our sacred experiences and not share them unless we have been moved by the Spirit to do so. We are to keep these things in our hearts as very sacred. To share that which we have not been permitted to share is to trample on these sacred things. It is also a prideful behavior. Likewise, it was with Hezekiah, the Lord had given him many wonderful things, many which he could share, but there were others that he ought not to have shared. These things were of a *sacred* nature. This sacredness has two parts. Do we hold sacred and heed and value the things of God that we have received? Do we only share them as moved by the Spirit, and then only for the glory of God?

3 Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country unto me, [even] from Babylon.

Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? Isaiah reprimanded Hezekiah as moved by the Spirit of God. He begins with a question, trying to find out the intent of the visitors. It would not be surprising that the Spirit had already revealed to Isaiah the unrighteous acts of Hezekiah. Gill suggests: “Quickly after the ambassadors had been with the king, and he had shown them all his treasures; the prophet did not come of himself, but was sent by the Lord, though he was not sent for by the king; in the time of his distress and illness he could send for him, but now being well, and in prosperity, he forgot the prophet, to send for him, and have his advice, how he should behave towards these men, as not to offend the Lord.”

¶ *And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country unto me, [even] from Babylon.* Gill well says: “*And said unto him, what said these men?*” – what was their errand to thee, and their business to thee? what did they communicate to thee, or request of thee? *And from whence came they unto thee?* – from what country? these questions the prophet put to the king, not as ignorant of the men, and their business, and country, but in order to have everything from the king himself, and to lead on to further conversation with him on these things: *And Hezekiah said, they are come from a far country unto me, even from Babylon*] – he makes no

answer to the first question, but at once replies to the second, as being what his heart was lifted up with; that ambassadors should come to him from a very distant country, and from so famous and renowned a place as Babylon; which showed that his name was great in foreign parts, and was in high esteem in distant countries, and even so great a prince as the king of Babylon courted his friendship.”

4 Then said he, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All that [is] in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them.

Hezekiah tells all when Isaiah asks this pointed question. Barnes says: “Here was the confessions of a frank, an honest, and a pious man. There was no concealment; no disguise. Hezekiah knew that he was dealing with a man of God—a man too to whom he had been under great obligations. He knew that Isaiah had come commissioned by God, and that it would be in vain to attempt to conceal anything. Nor does he seem to have wished to make any concealment. If he was conscious that what he had done had been improper, he was willing to confess it; and at any rate he was willing that the exact truth should be known. Had Hezekiah been like Ahaz, he might have spurned Isaiah from his presence as presenting improper inquiries. But Hezekiah was accustomed to regard with respect the messengers of God, and he was therefore willing to submit his whole conduct to the divine adjudication and reproof. Piety makes a man willing that all that he has done should be known. It saves him from double-dealing and subterfuges, and a disposition to make vain excuses; and it inclines him to fear God, to respect his ambassadors, and to listen to the voice of eternal truth.”

vv. 5–8. The Lord, through the Prophet Isaiah, lets Hezekiah know that his unwise actions—of showing the Babylonian embassy everything—would have a negative future consequence. Hezekiah calls this “good” as a well-deserved punishment.

5 ¶ Then said Isaiah to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD of hosts:

Sometimes the prophets received their answers after a time, and sometimes in an instant as we have here. It is even possible, that these words were received by Isaiah before he came to speak to Hezekiah. Alexander says: “This form of expression gives to what follows the solemnity and authority of a divine decree. The parallel

passage (2 Kings 20:16) omits צבאות,¹ which Vitringa regards as emphatic here, implying a signal exercise of divine providence and power.”

6 Behold, the days come, that all that [is] in thine house, and [that] which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD.

Just as Hezekiah had shared *everything* with Babylonians, the Prophet Isaiah explained, speaking for the Lord, that *nothing* would be left that would not be taken away by Babylon. Gill says: “*Behold, the days come*” – Or, ‘are coming’ and which quickly came; after a few reigns more, even in Jehoiakim’s time: *That all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon*” – as it was, when Jehoiakim king of Judah, his mother, servants, princes, and officers, were taken by the king of Babylon, and carried captive, and along with them the treasures of the king’s house, and also all the treasures of the house of the Lord, 2 Kings 24:12. *Nothing shall be left, saith the Lord*]; this was, as Jarchi says, measure for measure; as there was nothing that was not shown to the ambassadors, so nothing should be left untaken away by the Babylonians.” Gil has: “*Behold, the days come*” – The captivity of the Jews in Babylon commenced about one hundred and twenty years after this prediction (compare Jeremiah 20:5). *That all that is in thine house*” – That is, all the treasures that are in the treasure-house (ISAIAH 39:2). *And that which thy fathers have laid up in store*” – In 2 Kings 18:15–16, we are told that Hezekiah, in order to meet the demands of the king of Assyria, had cut off even the ornaments of the temple, and taken all the treasures which were in ‘the king’s house.’ . . . *Nothing shall be left*] – This was literally fulfilled (see 2 Chronicles 36:18). It is remarkable, says Vitringa, that this is the first intimation that the Jews would be carried to Babylon – the first designation of the place where they would be so long punished and oppressed. Micah (Micah 4:10), a contemporary of Isaiah, declares the same thing, but probably this was not before the declaration here made by Isaiah. Moses had declared repeatedly, that, if they were a rebellious people, they should be removed from their own to a foreign land [in *Rain in Due Season*—GB]; but he had not designated the country (Leviticus 26:33–34; Deuteronomy 28:64–67; 30:3). Ahijah, in the time of Jeroboam (1 Kings 14:15), had predicted that they should be carried

¹ Hosts. As in Lord of Sabaoth (D&C 87:7; 88:2). That is, Lord of Hosts.

‘beyond the river,’ that is, the Euphrates; and Amos (Amos 5:27) had said that God would carry them ‘into captivity beyond Damascus.’ But all these predictions were now concentrated on Babylon; and it was for the first time distinctly announced by Isaiah that that was to be the land where they were to suffer so long and so painful a captivity.”

7 And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

Alexander says: “The fulfilment of this prophecy is recorded in 2 Kings 24:12–16 and Daniel 1:1–7.”

Alexander also explains: “סריסים is strictly understood by the Septuagint (σπάδοντες), and the Vulgate (*eunuchi*), but explained by the Targum to mean nobles . . . , i.e. courtiers or household-officers, an extension of the meaning which agrees well with the usages of oriental courts.” Barnes writes: “*That shall issue from thee*” – Of the royal family. The captivity at Babylon occurred more than a hundred years after this, and of course those who were carried there were somewhat remote descendants of Hezekiah. *And they shall be eunuchs*] – The word used here (סריסים) denotes properly and strictly eunuchs, or such persons as were accustomed to attend on the harems of Oriental monarchs (Esther 2:3, 14–15). These persons were also employed often in various offices of the court (Esther 1:10, 12, 15), and hence, the word often means a minister of court, a court-officer, though not literally an eunuch (Genesis 37:6; 39:1). It is not easy, however, to tell when the word is to be understood literally, and when not. The Targum understands it of those who should be nurtured, or become great in the kingdom of Babylon. That the Jews were advanced to some offices of trust and power in Babylon, is evident from the case of Daniel (Daniel 1:2–7). It is by no means improbable, also, that the king of Babylon would have a pride in having among the attendants at his court, or even over the harem, the descendants of the once magnificent monarchs of the Jews.” Rawlinson explains: “Hezekiah had at the time, probably, no son, since Manasseh, who succeeded him upon the throne, was not born till two years later. Besides Manasseh, he appears to have had a son, Amariah, who was an ancestor of the Prophet Zephaniah (Zephaniah 1:1). He may, of course, have also had others. His descendants, rather than his actual sons, seem to be here intended; and the fulfilment of the prophecy is to be found in Daniel 1:3, where certain ‘of the king’s seed’ are mentioned among the Israelites who served as eunuchs in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar.”

8 Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, Good [is] the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. He said moreover, For there shall be peace and truth in my days.*

* 2 Kings 20:18, And he said, [Is it] not [good], if peace and truth be in my days?

Alexander writes: “The word *good* [טוֹב] is here used, neither in the sense of *gracious* nor in that of *just* exclusively, but in that of *right*, as comprehending both. While the king acquiesces in the threatening prophecy as righteous and deserved, he gratefully acknowledges the mercy with which it is tempered. That he looked upon the woes denounced against his children as a personal misfortune of his own, is clear from his regarding the postponement of the execution as a mitigation of the sentence on himself. The expression of thankfulness at this exemption shews how true the narrative is to nature and experience. Umbreit has the good sense and feeling to describe it as a natural and child-like acknowledgment.” Gill likewise has: “*Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken*” – Hezekiah was at once convinced of his sin, acknowledged it and repented of it, and owned that the sentence pronounced was but just and right; and that there was a mixture of mercy and goodness in it, in that time was given, and it was not immediately executed. *He said moreover, for there shall be peace and truth in my days*] – or a confirmed

peace, lasting prosperity ...” One final point worth making here is that Hezekiah could have wept before the Lord with the same passion as when his life was to be cut short, but did not. The Lord made it clear over and over that the Babylonian captivity was not predetermined, or some form of predestination. Instead, going back to *Rain in Due Season*, all blessings and all punishments were—like our Patriarchal blessings and other blessings obtained in the House of the Lord—dependent on our comportment.

2 Chronicles 32

32 Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his goodness, behold, they [are] written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, [and] in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.

33 And Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honour at his death. And Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.

9 September 2013

Isaiah 40

יִבֶּשׁ הָעֵצִיר נִבֵּל צִיץ וְדָבָר-אֱלֹהֵינוּ יָקוּם לְעוֹלָם

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the Word of our God shall stand for ever.

This sublime prophecy deals most especially with the Second Coming of the Lord, a time that the Jews call *the days of the Messiah*, **לִימֹת הַמָּשִׁיחַ** (Kimhi, in Rosenberg, 2:313). A few inspired Gentile exegetes also see in ISAIAH 40 the Second Advent. Govett writes: “Whence we conclude that this chapter, as in many, indeed in *most* prophecies of the Saviour’s appearance, his first and second advents are closely bound up together. But the prediction here bears principal reference to the second ... For then Jerusalem shall be comforted, and her ‘humiliation pardoned,’ when she acknowledges Jesus of Nazareth as her Messiah ... as John the Baptist heralded the *first* coming of Christ ‘in the spirit and power of Elias,’ shall Elijah himself herald the second coming in conjunction with Enoch.” ¶ We say to Govett, and the world, that not only would John the Baptist herald the First Advent, but also the Second. Indeed, John the Baptist, Elijah, Raphael and many other messengers appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith and ordained him, blessed him, gave him the proper authority and keys in preparation for this, the dispensation of the fullness of times, preparatory to the day when the King of kings and Lord of lords shall come in glory. ¶ Keith wrote: “If the subject-matter of John’s cry be attended to, it will be seen, that while he announced the first appearance of Christ on earth, he intimated also another; that while he was the voice that cried that Christ came to ascend the altar of justice, to become the sacrifice, he also cried that he would come again to sit on the throne of righteousness, the period to which the context in Isaiah limits the full application of the passage. The party from Jerusalem to whose inquiry, ‘Who art thou?’ John replied, ‘I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness,’ put another question, ‘Why baptizest thou then?’ to which he answered, ‘I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worth to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Whose fan is in his hand, and he shall thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire’ (compare Matthew 3:3 and John 1:19–28). This second announcement did not apply to the appearance of Christ on earth then—it refers to his coming again to reign over a renewed world. The conclusion at least of the passage in Isaiah can be understood only of yet future times. In what sense was every valley exalted in the days of our Lord? The glory of the Lord is not yet revealed on Zion; all flesh have not yet seen it.” ¶ This Isaianic chapter also contains one of the most sublime verses of scripture: “The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the Word of our God shall stand for ever.” We will carefully examine the meaning of the verse, as well as those that build up to it, in the text of the commentary. In addition, this chapter contains one of the most tender expressions of the Lord’s love for His sheep (“He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry [them] in his bosom, [and] shall gently lead those that are with young”) as well as glorious promises to those who will abide in the covenant (“But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew [their] strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; [and] they shall walk, and not faint”). ¶ Above all, this chapter reveals the Son, Emmanuel, in majestic tones. Elder David B. Haight declared, “We testify to all the world, as did the Apostles of old, that this same Jesus taken up into heaven as men watched, will return—will return in power and great glory, attended by the hosts of heaven. At that day ‘the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.’ But prior to that day, as foretold by the prophets, there must be a restoration of all things in the last days, the fulness of the gospel with all its saving powers to be returned to earth (see Acts 3:20–21). We proclaim with knowledge and power as witnesses of heavenly events that the final great restoration has taken place, that angelic ministers have been sent from heaven, that God’s voice has been heard declaring its truth, that the gift of the Holy Ghost and the priesthood powers with blessings and promises have again been given to man” (“He Is Not Here. He Is Risen,” *Ensign* (CR), May 1980, p.9). ¶ Wordsworth explains how ISAIAH 40 through 48 are tied together: “The addresses in this portion of Isaiah are connected by *catchwords*; that is to say, some leading word at the end of one address is taken up at the beginning of the following address, which is thus linked on to the foregoing one. This is the same principle of connexion as that which characterizes the Book of Psalms. It shows the accurate exactitude with which these prophecies are joined together. Thus, for example, in this portion of Isaiah: — (1) In ISAIAH 40:31 the phrase ‘renew their strength’ [נִתְּלִיפוּ כֹחַ] at the end of this first address is repeated at the beginning of the second address (ISAIAH 41:1); and thus these two addresses are riveted together. (2) Again, the word *breath* [רֵיחַ], at the end of the second address, is taken up and repeated at the beginning of the third address, and forms thereby a striking connexion and contrast (ISAIAH 42:1). (3) Again, the words, *Israel and Jacob* [or rather, *Jacob and Israel* יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיַעֲקֹב], ‘it set him

on fire,' [וְהִלָּהֵטוּ] and 'it burned him,' [וְהִתְבַּעַר-בּוֹ] at the end of the third address (ISAIAH 42:25), are taken up and repeated at the beginning of the fourth address (ISAIAH 43:1–2): 'O Jacob ... Israel ... when thou walkest through the fire [בְּמוֹ-אֵשׁ], thou shalt not be burned [וְהִתְבַּעַר-בְּךָ].' (4) Again, the words at the end of the fourth address, 'I have given Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches,' are followed by the Consolation, at the beginning of the fifth address: 'Yet now hear, O Jacob, My servant, and Israel, whom I have chosen.' (5) Again, the words at the end of the fifth address, 'That saith of Cyrus [Coresh, לְכוּרֶשׁ], He is my Shepherd,' are taken up at the beginning of the sixth address: 'Thus saith the Lord to His Anointed, to Cyrus [לְכוּרֶשׁ].' (6) Again, the divine declaration, 'I have sworn [נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי] by Myself, unto Me every knee shall bow [תִּכְרַע], every tongue shall swear [תִּשָּׁבַע],' at the close of the sixth address, is followed by the striking exemplification of its truth at the beginning of the seventh address: 'Bel boweth down [כָּרַע]. . . Nebo stoopeth [קָרַס]. They stoop, they bow down together.' (7) This divine declaration is further confirmed by the beginning of the eighth address: 'Come down [רִדִּי], and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon [בְּבִלְיָ], sit on the ground.' (8) Also the words, 'Every tongue shall swear [כָּל-לִשׁוֹן תִּשָּׁבַע]. Surely, shall one say. In the Lord have I righteousness and strength,' which is the second clause of that divine declaration, 'I have sworn by Myself, the word is gone out of My mouth in righteousness [צִדְקָה],' are taken up at the beginning of the ninth address: 'Hear ye this, which swear by the Name of the Lord, but not in righteousness [בְּצִדְקָה].' Thus all these nine addresses are connected together."

vv. 1–2. The Lord speaks words of comfort to Israel and Judah. Elder Orson Pratt taught that these verses have mostly to do with the Second Coming and that the Lord has not forgotten His people Israel: "The Jews will then come in remembrance before the Lord. That is, the set time for their deliverance and restoration will have come, the period predicted by the mouth of the ancient prophet in which the Gospel shall be proclaimed to them."¹

1 ¶ COMFORT ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.

2 Speak ye comfortably[✓] to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished,[✓] that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

✓ to the heart

✓ ✓ or, appointed time

נַחֲמוּ נַחֲמוּ עַמִּי יְאֹמַר אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:
דַּבְּרוּ עַל-לֵב יְרוּשָׁלַם

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.

Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished. These words fill me with inexpressible joy and divine comfort. Henderson

says: "The repetition נַחֲמוּ נַחֲמוּ gives intensity to the address." In Isaiah 40:2, however, rather than

comfortably, we tenderly have, to the heart, עַל-לֵב, as

indicated by the margin || דַּבְּרוּ עַל-לֵב יְרוּשָׁלַם,

speaking ye to the heart of Jerusalem. ¶ The Targum (Ⓢ)

has, "O ye prophets, prophesy comforts to my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably (Chaldee, 'to the heart'), to Jerusalem, and prophesy concerning her."

The LXX (Ⓣ) reads, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith God: priests, speak to the understanding of Jerusalem; comfort her; for her humiliation is accomplished." Instead of her warfare is accomplished, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) sadly has that Jerusalem has filled herself with violence and delighted in sin. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, "Be comforted, be comforted, my people, saith your God. Speak ye to the heart of Jerusalem, and call to her: for her evil is come to an end." ¶ It is a wonderful thing when the Lord owns His people and says, "my people" עַמִּי, and furthermore

calls Himself to them, "your God" אֱלֹהֵיכֶם. I never tire of the felicitous contrast between Israel's rejection and her acceptance—for I feel my heart intertwined with hers as one. In Hosea we have, "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her [וְדַבַּרְתִּי עַל-לִבָּהּ]"

{Hosea 2:14 in KJV, 2:16 in Masoretic Text (Ⓜ)}. The more correct translation is "Therefore, behold, I will

¹ Orson Pratt, March 26, 1871. *Journal of Discourses*, 26 March 1871. The restoration of the Jews and the rebuilding of Jerusalem, see pp. 59–70.

lure her and bring her to the wilderness, and speak to her heart” (LITV, also see ABP {LXX (6)}, AMP, Darby, ISV, YLT and most Spanish editions, as well, *hablaré a su corazón*). It is clear that the Lord is speaking of Israel, who would one day be brought back into His fold after a long departure. The time will come when the people of Jerusalem—the Jewish people and the rest of the house of Israel—will be comforted. Ibn Ezra says: “The expression *דַּבֵּר עַל-לֵב* ‘speak to the heart’ means always ‘to speak kindly,’ so as to remove sorrow and regret for things which have already past.” ¶ Cheyne does well in reminding us of *Rain in Due Season*, regarding Israel, “that her guilt is paid off” (*that her iniquity is pardoned*—AV), by pointing us to Leviticus 26:41 ff.: “And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes” (Leviticus 26:41–43). Birks says: “The voice is addressed to the Prophet [and announces the] sure recovery [of the Jewish nation], after grievous sins and sore judgments, to the enjoyment of the lasting favor of the God of Israel.” ¶ Regarding these verses, President Wilford Woodruff taught: “The Gospel is now restored to us Gentiles, for we are all Gentiles in a national capacity,² and it will continue with us if we are faithful, until the law is bound, and the testimony sealed, and the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, when it will again revert to the Jews, whom the Lord will have prepared to receive it.³ They will gather to their own land, taking with them their gold and silver, and will re-build their city and temple, according to the prediction of Moses and the Prophets. When this time arrives, which is nigh, even at our doors, let the Gentile nations who reject the Gospel which is now sent to them, prepare to meet the judgments of an offended God! For when their cup is full even to the brim, the Lord will then remember the chastisement of the Jews, his favored people, and at

whose hands they will have received double for their iniquities. Offenses must come, said the Savior, but woe unto them by whom they come. Woe unto the Gentiles, who have administered afflictions to the Jews for these many years! Woe unto them if they now reject this only means of salvation, for the awful calamities spoken of in these books, the Bible and Book of Mormon, will certainly befall them.”⁴ ¶ *That her iniquity is pardoned*: The Targum (7) has, “That she shall be filled with the people of the captivity, because her sins are forgiven.” The LXX (6) reads, “Her iniquity is pardoned.” The Douay-Rheims (8) has, “Her iniquity is forgiven.” There is a sweetness in these words, *that her iniquity is pardoned*. Rashi, in Rosenberg, has, “has been appeased—Heb. *נִרְצָה*.” Rosenberg, quoting *Rain in Due Season*, explains: “I.e. her punishment has been completed. We find a similar expression in Leviticus 26:43: ‘Then the land shall appease its Sabbaths.’” This is an interesting word, *נִרְצָה*. HALOT defines its root *רָצָה*, as to *expiate* or *atone*. Let us also look at the broader context of this expiation from Leviticus: “If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me; And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes. And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God. But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD” (Leviticus 26:40–45; also see Deuteronomy 30:4–6). ¶ Elder Orson Pratt explained: “In consequence of the wickedness of that people [the inhabitants of Jerusalem], and the great transgressions that they committed in the sight of heaven in rejecting the Lord, their true Messiah, great and severe calamities and judgments came upon them, and have continued upon them and their posterity until this age of the world. In other words, all those curses which are pronounced in

² That is, found in the Gentile nations.

³ I cannot contain the tears of gratitude that I feel for these promises on behalf of the Jewish people and of Israel. I have traveled throughout the world and I have seen how the Lord has, since the words of President Wilford Woodruff, begun to gather Israel back. The Church today is not only found in the Gentile nations, but also among the nations of the Lamanites. As a convert, I am a partial fulfillment of many of these promises, being a descendant of both Ephraim (maternal side, including Lamanite blood) and Judah (paternal side).

⁴ Woodruff, Elder Wilford, *Journal of Discourses* 18:221.

the Book of Deuteronomy upon the head of Israel have literally been fulfilled during the past eighteen hundred years {see *Rain in Due Season*—GB}.”⁵ ¶ The Book of Mormon also summarizes some of this: “Wherefore, the Jews shall be scattered among all nations; yea, and also Babylon shall be destroyed; wherefore, the Jews shall be scattered by other nations. And after they have been scattered, and the Lord God hath scourged them by other nations for the space of many generations, yea, even down from generation to generation until they shall be persuaded to believe in Christ, the Son of God, and the atonement, which is infinite for all mankind—and when that day shall come that they shall believe in Christ, and worship the Father in his name, with pure hearts and clean hands, and look not forward any more for another Messiah, then, at that time, the day will come that it must needs be expedient that they should believe these things. And the Lord will set his hand again the second time to restore his people from their lost and fallen state. Wherefore, he will proceed to do a marvelous work and a wonder among the children of men.” (2Nephi 25:15–17). The inhabitants of Jerusalem and the descendants of Israel—wherever they may be—then, will have once again turned their hearts towards their God and their Lord. ¶ *For she hath received of the LORD'S hand double* [כפלים] *for all her sins*. The Targum (ܬ) has, “For she hath received the cup of consolations from the Lord, as if she had been smitten twice for all her sins.” The LXX (Ϯ) reads, “For she hath received from the hand of the Lord [blessings] double to the punishment of her sins.” The Peshitta (ܥ) explains that Jerusalem has received a double punishment for her sins as a natural consequence for her love for iniquity. The Douay-Rheims (Ϸ) has, “She hath received of the hand of the Lord double for all her sins.” ¶ Henderson says: “The language is hyperbolic, and is designed to inspire the strongest consolation.” Kay explains: “*Double for all her sins*” – Compare Jeremiah 16:18; 17:18. It was the ordinary rule under the law that ‘for all manner of trespass’ a man condemned by the judges should ‘pay double,’ Exodus 22:9.” CBNNotes additionally give us “Put by figure of speech metonymy (of subject), for that which is complete, thorough, ample. See ISAIAH 61:7; Genesis 43:22; Job 11:6; 42:10; 41:13; and Zechariah 9:12).” Israel was warned in *Rain in Due Season* that she would be repeatedly punished if she did not repent. Also see in Isaiah (ISAIAH 5:25; 9:12, 17, 21; 10:4). Nyman has: “Judah was to be sent through the ‘furnace of affliction’ (see ISAIAH 48:10), so the message given here is to be fulfilled after she has been through that furnace. A look

at history and at present-day circumstances shows her still to be going through that furnace.”

vv. 3–8. Elias prepares the way for the Lord’s coming. Great physical upheavals will take place before the Second Coming. When the glory of Christ is revealed at His coming, all people shall see it together. Mortal man is compared to grass and flowers, which wither easily. The Word of our God, in contrast, shall stand forever. ¶ After quoting the first five verses in ISAIAH 40, Elder Parley P. Pratt said: “From these verses we learn, first, that the voice of one shall be heard in the wilderness, to prepare the way of the Lord, just at the time when Jerusalem has been trodden down of the Gentiles long enough to have received, at the Lord’s hands, double for all her sins, yea, when the warfare of Jerusalem is accomplished, and her iniquities pardoned. Then shall this proclamation be made as it was before by John, yea a second proclamation, to prepare the way of the Lord, for his second coming; and about that time every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and rough places plain, and then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”⁶

3 ¶ The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Ibn Ezra says: “These words are addressed to all nations.” The voice that cries in the wilderness is also one that invites all to come unto Christ—“whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:38) for “Behold, that which you hear is as the voice of one crying in the wilderness—in the wilderness, because you cannot see him—my voice, because my voice is Spirit; my Spirit is truth; truth abideth and hath no end; and if it be in you it shall abound” (D&C 88:66). These verses continue to clarify that if we are faithful, we shall see God: “And if your eye be single to my glory, your whole bodies shall be filled with light, and there shall be no darkness in you; and that body which is filled with light comprehendeth all things. Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God, and the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto

⁵ Orson Pratt, 26 March 1871. *Journal of Discourses*, pp. 59–70. “The restoration of the Jews and the rebuilding of Jerusalem.”

⁶ Pratt, Parley P. *A Voice of Warning and Instruction to All People Or, an Introduction to the Faith and Doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. New Edition. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1957. Included is the preface to the First American Edition (1837) and the Second European Edition (December 4, 1846), pp. 118–119.

you, and it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will” (D&C 88:67–68). ¶ This verse lays out the first hint regarding the coming verses which all of Christendom loves but often does not understand, which culminates in verse eight. We hear a voice crying in the wilderness; it is the voice of John the Baptist. He was sent as an Elias to prepare the way of the Lord in the meridian of time. And then in the latter-day, through the restoration of the Priesthood, he helped lay out the way for the Second Coming. What is John the Baptist proclaiming? That the time has come! That the Savior is about to make His presence known! The light would shine in darkness yet the darkness would not comprehend it (John 1:5). In contrast, in the latter-day, the whole world would see the glory of the Lord and comprehend it together. ¶ The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “A voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way before the people of the Lord; cast ye up a highway in the plain before the congregation of our God.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, for the last clause, “Make straight the roads for our God.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “The voice of one crying in the desert: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the wilderness the paths of our God.” ¶ This verse is frequently and correctly quoted as an allusion to the Lord’s first coming. In the meridian of time John the Baptist was asked: “Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.” (John 1:22b–23). ¶ Keith explains that these verses have a strong application to the Second Advent: “While, therefore, the Baptist is to be regarded as the voice, what he did cry is not to be limited to the coming of Christ in his days.” On 15 May 1829, John the Baptist also played a vital role in the Restoration by conferring the Aaronic Priesthood upon the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery.⁷ John the Baptist acted through the *spirit of Elias*,⁸ preparing the way for the conferring of the Melchizedek Priesthood and all things that had to be restored before the Second Coming. In Doctrine and Covenants we read: “HEARKEN, and lo, a voice as of one sent down from on high, who is mighty and powerful, whose going forth is unto the ends of the earth, yea, whose voice is unto men—Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth, and from thence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth. Yea, a voice crying—Prepare ye

the way of the Lord, prepare ye the supper of the Lamb, make ready for the Bridegroom” (D&C 65:1–3).

4 Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: ✓ ✓

✓ or, a straight place

✓ ✓ or, a plain place

Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Let every valley be filled up, and every mountain and hill be leveled.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has “Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low.” In 3 Nephi 8 ff. we read of the great geological upheavals at the time of the death of our Saviour. At the time of the Second Coming, the scene will likewise be one of great cataclysms. Beside the physical changes, the low and humble followers of Christ shall be exalted while the prideful made low. ¶ *And the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain:* The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And let all the crooked be made a straight road, and the rough way, smooth plains.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has, “And the steep place shall become straight, and the rough places smooth.” Henderson has: “That עֶקֶב is not to be taken in the acceptation of *hill* or *acclivity*, but in that of *crooked*, is evident, both from the primary meaning of מִישׁוֹר,⁹ its opposite.” Speaking of the Second Advent, President Joseph Fielding Smith felt that this scripture along with ISAIAH 54:10 and others support the fact that “The land of Zion and the land of Jerusalem shall be turned back into their own place and the sea be driven back to the north, and the earth be as it was before it was divided.”¹⁰

5 And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see [it] together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken [it].

The *hints* about the meaning of ISAIAH 40:8 continue to mount. ¶ *And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed.* The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And the glory of the Lord will appear.” The glory of the Lord will be revealed in many ways, including the restoration of His Church. When the Savior comes for the second time, in that day will His glory be made fully manifest. “They shall not hurt

⁷ JS—History 1:72.

⁸ TPJS, pp. 335–336.

⁹ Straight (KJV).

¹⁰ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Church History and Modern Revelation*. Salt Lake City, Utah: The Council of The Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1946.

nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea” (cf. Habakkuk 2:14). Wade says that the Glory of the Lord is “the visible splendour that indicated the Divine Presence.” ¶ *And all flesh shall see [it] together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken [it].* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And all the sons of flesh shall see together, that by the Word of the Lord it has been decreed thus.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And all flesh shall see the salvation of God. For the Lord hath spoken.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, for the second half, “That the mouth of the Lord hath spoken.”

¶ Henderson says regarding *all the flesh*: *כָּל-בָּשָׂר, flesh*, is used metonymically of all animated beings, but especially of man; hence *כָּל-בָּשָׂר*, or *כָּל-בָּשָׂר*, means *all mankind*.” As we turn to Luke 3, the JST has, “As it is written in the book of the prophet Esaias; and these are the words, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight. For behold, and lo, he shall come, as it is written in the book of the prophets, to take away the sins of the world, and to bring salvation unto the heathen nations, to gather together those who are lost, who are of the sheepfold of Israel; Yea, even the dispersed and afflicted; and also to prepare the way, and make possible the preaching of the gospel unto the Gentiles; And to be a light unto all who sit in darkness, unto the uttermost parts of the earth; to bring to pass the resurrection from the dead, and to ascend up on high, to dwell on the right hand of the Father, Until the fulness of time, and the law and the testimony shall be sealed, and the keys of the kingdom shall be delivered up again unto the Father; To administer justice unto all; to come down in judgment upon all, and to convince all the ungodly of their ungodly deeds, which they have committed; and all this in the day that he shall come; For it is a day of power; yea, every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God” (JST Luke 3:4–11). Elder McConkie¹¹ points us to: “For as the light of the morning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, and covereth the whole earth, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be” (JS–Matthew 1:26).

6 The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh [is] grass, and all the goodliness thereof [is] as the flower of the field:

Alexander writes: “That two distinct speakers are here introduced, seems to be granted by [almost] all interpreters . . . There is a pleasing mystery, as Hitzig well observes, in the dialogue of these anonymous voices, which is dispelled by undertaking to determine too precisely who the speakers are. All that the words necessarily convey is, that one voice speaks and another voice answers. Interpreters are universally agreed that the last clause contains the words which the second speaker is required to utter [i.e., proclaim].” ¶ A voice is heard, “Cry!” This is a command to speak out or proclaim a message that comes from God Himself. A second voice—received by a disciple of Christ—inquires, “What shall I cry?” While we are not sure which prophet is receiving this message—Isaiah or John the Baptist or Joseph Smith—at the end, the command has been delegated to each disciple of Christ to proclaim the divinity of our Savior and the restoration of His Church. We are to proclaim these truths fearlessly and humbly. ¶ *The voice said, Cry.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The voice of one crying, Prophecy!” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “‘A voice of one saying, Proclaim.’” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “The voice of one, saying: Cry.” That is, to proclaim. ¶ *And he said, What shall I cry?* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “He answered and said, What shall I prophesy?” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Wherefore I said, What shall I proclaim?” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “And I said: What shall I cry?” ¶ *All flesh [is] grass, and all the goodliness thereof [is] as the flower of the field:* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “All the wicked are as grass, and all their strength as chaff of the field.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “All flesh is grass; and all the glory of man as a flower of grass.” Instead of *goodliness*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *beauty*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “All flesh is grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of the field.” Cheyne, leaning on Weir, shows us a similar expression, found in ISAIAH 2:22b: “man, whose breath is in his nostrils.” Ibn Ezra quoted from Psalms: “*As the flower of the field*, ‘which flourisheth in the morning and groweth up, but is cut down and withereth in the evening’ (Psalm 90:6).” Rashi, in Rosenberg, has: “All those who are haughty—their greatness shall be turned over and become like grass.” Speaking of the haughtiness of some of the leaders of the United States at the time of Joseph Smith we have (D&C 124:3–10): “. . . for they are as grass, and all their glory as the flower thereof which soon falleth” (D&C 124:7b). ¶ Elder Neal A. Maxwell warns: “. . . we might myopically conclude that ‘all flesh is grass’ (ISAIAH 40:6) . . . Isaiah’s words, however, pertain not to man’s worthlessness but to the transitoriness of this second estate.”¹²

¹¹ McConkie, Bruce R. Bruce R. McConkie. *The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man*, pp. 418–419.

¹² Maxwell, Neal A. *But for a Small Moment*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1986. p. 88.

7 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people [is] grass.

Mankind is represented by a fading flower and withering grass. Mankind is upon the earth for an instant. The breath of the Lord—represented poetically as the dry, hot sirocco winds of the Middle East—is sufficient to cause these to wilt. The key to understanding ISAIAH 40:8 is to contrast it to ISAIAH 40:7. We must focus on the fact that flowers and grass represent man, who often in his pride thinks he has dominion of all things in heaven and upon the earth. Yet we read in Doctrine and Covenants: “As well might man stretch forth his puny arm to stop the Missouri river in its decreed course, or to turn it up stream, as to hinder the Almighty from pouring down knowledge from heaven upon the heads of the Latter-day Saints” (D&C 121:33b). ¶ *The grass withereth, the flower fadeth:* In the LXX (Ⲯ), ISAIAH 40:7 has fallen off and has been lost. *Because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it:* Instead of *spirit*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *breath*. This at once leads us to think of the hot, dry and devastating sirocco winds.¹³ That God has control of all of the elements is clear to me. In 1988, when Chile was experiencing a strong drought, I had prayed to the Father in the name of Christ for rain, only to be told not to pray for rain—but to know when to pray for rain—as this was the Lord’s doing. The grass and the flowers are left in wilted condition by the *spirit* of the *Lord*, or *wind* of the *Lord*, רִיחַ יְהוָה. ¶ *Surely the people [is] grass.* The Targum (ⲡ) has, “Surely the wicked among a people are considered like grass.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) also makes the comparison, “this people is like *grass* (Lamsa) / *herb* (BPE). The meaning of the text is that *the people* may be compared to *grass*.

8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

For the longest time I loved this scripture without knowing why. I ask that you read and ponder it carefully before reading the comments below. The flower and the grass are chosen to represent a short lifespan, and represent the *life of man*. But the *word* of our God, וְדְבַר אֱלֹהֵינוּ, shall stand for ever. So what does the Word stand for? I believe this clause has at least two beautiful meanings: (1) what the Lord has

spoken will come to pass, “my word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:38b). (2) Is not the expression *word* used in a special way in another scripture? “In the beginning was the Word (λογος), and the Word (λογος) was with God, and the Word (λογος) was God” (John 1:1). *Who*, then, is the Word of our God? The Word is the very Messiah, the Son of God the Eternal Father, even Christ Jesus who shall stand forever. I know this to be true with the deepest sentiment of my being. I bear the most solemn witness of this, that the Word represents Christ, the Holy One of Israel. This was revealed to me by the Holy Spirit years ago as I pondered over this scripture. It is through Messiah that we can obtain comfort (ISAIAH 40:1). In Spanish, the expression word is translated as verb, and Christ is called *el Verbo Divino*, or the Divine Verb. ¶ The Hebrew text (BHS) uses the expression “*but-word-our Elohim*,” וְדְבַר אֱלֹהֵינוּ in contrast to the *word of the LORD* דְּבַר יְהוָה “*word-Yahweh*” (e.g. Genesis 15:3; ISAIAH 1:10). 1 Peter 1:24–25 needs to be considered with this understanding and the following capitalization: “For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the Word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the Word which by the gospel is preached unto you” (see also, AMP version in 1 Peter 1:25 and LITV in ISAIAH 40:8). ¶ Alexander suggests: “The quotation in Peter confirms the supposition, here suggested by the context, that the words have reference to the preaching of the gospel, or the introduction of the new dispensation.” No doubt Alexander is correct, but the greater meaning is the announcement of the Word Himself, it is He who would *stand forever*. Alexander continues: “[Peter] adds, *and this is the word which is preached* (εὐαγγελισθέν) *unto you*.” Once again, yes, but the more perfect Word is Christ Himself, “*This is the Word which is preached unto you*.” Gill well says, in referring us to Paul’s words and interpreting these to equate the Word with Christ: “*and this is the word, which by the Gospel is preached unto you*] – who seems to distinguish the word from the Gospel, by which it is preached, and to intend Christ the essential Word; who stands or abides for ever as a divine Person; in his office as Mediator, being Prophet, Priest, and King forever.” Rawlinson, in ISAIAH 40:6 well has: “The speakers ... contrast the perishable nature of man with the enduringness and unchangingness of God. The point of their discourse is that ‘the Word of the Lord endureth for ever,’ and therefore the preceding promises (ISAIAH 40:2, 5) are sure.” And then adds here in ISAIAH 40:8: “Amid all human frailty, shiftingness, changefulness, there is one thing that endures, and shall endure—God’s Word.” Luther, Calvin, Kay, Ironside and others also

¹³ I note that J. D. Michaelis (in Alexander) came to the same conclusion, calling it the “east wind.”

capitalize “The Word of our God,” but invariably mean the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Keith says, regarding these verses: “One voice should be represented as announcing the approach to earth of the King of righteousness.” Simeon says: “The ‘word of God’ here spoken of, may be understood as relating to *Christ*, who is often called by this name, and whose immutability is mentioned by the Psalmist in this very view (Psalm 102:11–12, 26–27). These verses provide additional proof: “My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass. But thou, O LORD, shall endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations ... They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.” Wordsworth, almost alone among the Gentile authors, boldly testifies: “... therefore the Word which ‘endureth for ever was made flesh’ (John 1:14) by the operation of the Spirit, and God was ‘manifested in the flesh.’ The Word, which is here contrasted with the Voice, is (in the highest sense) the Eternal Word, Who became Incarnate for us, and Whose Advent was heralded by ‘the Voice of one crying in the wilderness,’ and Who animates the written Word, and speaks in it.” ¶ The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The wicked dieth, and his thoughts perish; but the word¹⁴ of our God¹⁵ shall stand forever.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “The grass is withered and the flower fallen; but the word of our God will endure forever.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, “The grass is withered, and the flower is fallen: but the word of our Lord endureth for ever.” One last thought, here. The expression “**but-word-our Elohim**,” **וְכַלְהֵם אֱלֹהֵינוּ** is a clear instance where God the Eternal Father is mentioned in relationship to His beloved Son. Word and Elohim are title-names. Isaiah knew that the Scriptures would be corrupted by the hands of men, and left, along with the other prophets of God, hidden testimonies in verses like this. Yes, indeed, the Son of our Heavenly Father will stand forever! Even Christ Jesus!¹⁶

vv. 9–11. Zion can now proudly proclaim, “Behold your God!” as she boldly invites all to come unto Christ and into the Holy Temple. In the Second Coming the Lord God will come in strength and glory. And He shall tenderly care for his flock.

¹⁴ Here not Meimra, but *fitnama*, ‘word’ in Aramaic, **וּפְתִימָא**.

¹⁵ Elohim, or *Elahana*, **אֱלֹהָנָא**.

¹⁶ It was after I was so inspired to understand ISAIAH 40:8 that I looked at the footnotes of the LDS 1984 Holy Bible and found: “TG: Jesus Christ: Messenger of the Covenant.” It was probably Elder Bruce R. McConkie who put that note there. I was thrilled to have a second confirmation of the inspiration I had felt.

9 ¶ O Zion, that bringest good tidings, ✓
get thee up into the high mountain; O
Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, ✓
lift up thy voice with strength; lift [it] up, be
not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah,
Behold your God!

✓ or, O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion

✓ ✓ or, O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem

Many a person has missed that the Word is given as a synonym to Christ in ISAIAH 40:8. But note that ISAIAH 40:4–7 build to this glorious testimony, and note what Henderson has to say about ISAIAH 40:3 as well as ISAIAH 40:9: “The purport of the message is the appearance of God in the person of Messiah, which had been predicted ISAIAH 40:3, and is here repeated for the sake of amplification in the following verses. The prophet employs the Divine names **יְהוָה**, **אֱלֹהֵינוּ**, and **אֱלֹהִים** specifically with this reference.” That is, **LORD**, **Lord**, and **God** (ISAIAH 40:9–10). And of course, not just in ISAIAH 40:9–10, but also in ISAIAH 40:8 where Christ is revealed as the Word. Henderson continues: “These verses exhibit certain attributes of the character and work of Christ; such as power, tenderness, and love.” It was not only predicted in ISAIAH 40:3, but with a glorious crescendo amplified from the promise, to the allusion, to the exquisite conclusion: *Behold your God!* ¶ The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Upon a high mountain get up, ye prophets, that bring good tidings unto Zion; lift ye up your voice with strength that bring good tidings to Jerusalem; lift *it* up, be not afraid, say to the cities of the house of Judah, The kingdom of your God is revealed.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Ascend a lofty mountain, thou who proclaimest good news to Sion: exalt thy voice with strength, thou who bringest glad tidings to Jerusalem: raise it up; be not afraid; say to the cities of Juda, Behold, your God!” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, “Get thee up upon a high mountain, thou that bringest good tidings to Sion: lift up thy voice with strength, thou that bringest good tidings to Jerusalem: lift it up, fear not. Say to the cities of Juda: Behold your God.”

¶ Alexander says: “This construction is further recommended by the beautiful personification which it introduces of the Holy City as the seat of the true religion and the centre of the church. The office here ascribed to it is the same that is recognised in ISAIAH 2:3: *the law shall go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem*. Not only in the restoration from captivity, or in the personal advent of the Saviour, but in every instance of the Lord’s return to his forsaken people, it is the duty of the church to communicate as well as to receive the joyful tidings ... The exhortation,

fear not, does not imply that there was danger in making the announcement, but that there might be doubt and hesitation as to its fulfilment.” ¶ President Lorenzo R. Snow explained, “The city of Zion will be built in Jackson County. The site for the city of Zion was pointed out by the Prophet Joseph Smith as Jackson County, Missouri, and there some of our people settled in 1831, but were subsequently driven from their homes. This event, while it delayed the building of the city, did not change the place of its location. The Latter-day Saints fully expect to return to Jackson County and ‘build up Zion.’ Their exodus to the Rocky Mountains and their sojourn in the stakes of Zion, as the places are called which they now inhabit, they regard as preparatory to that return, and as events that had to be in order to fulfill scripture, notably these words of Isaiah: ‘O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain’ [ISAIAH 40:9]. (2 January 1902, MS, 64:2.)”¹⁷ Elder Orson Pratt taught: “We find, in the 40th chapter of the prophecies of Isaiah, that the people of Zion are to be raised up preparatory to the second advent of the Son of God. Isaiah uses an exclamation something like this— ‘O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain.’ It seems by this, that the people called Zion, wherever they might be, were to be removed from the regions they originally inhabited, and were to be located in a high mountain, or in a very elevated region. If you wish to know the time which this prophetic exhortation to the people of Zion had reference to, read the whole of the 40th chapter of Isaiah, and you will find that, at that period, the glory of God is to be revealed and all flesh is to see it together, evidently referring to the great day when the Son of God shall come in his glory, when every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him, and all people, nations and tongues under heaven, who are spared unto that day, shall behold him descend in power and majesty to this earth ... Prior to the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord predicted through him that this people should be gathered out from all the nations under heaven, and should be established in the mountains, or elevated regions of this continent...”¹⁸ Finally, for a discussion of the expression *your God*, אֱלֹהֵיכֶם, see my notes under ISAIAH 37:4.

10 Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong ✓ [hand], and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward [is] with him, and his work ✓ before him.

¹⁷ Lorenzo Snow. Edited by Clyde J. Williams. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1984.

¹⁸ Elder Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*. “The rise of Zion in the last days,” 15 June 1873, pp. 79–80.

✓ or, against the strong

✓ ✓ or, recompence for his work

Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong [hand], and his arm shall rule for him: The Targum (Ⲛ) has, “Behold, the Lord God shall be revealed, and the strength of the arm of His might shall rule before him.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Behold the Lord! The Lord is coming with majesty; and his arm with dominion.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has something like, “Behold, Yahweh God comes with might, and his arm with strength.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) renders it without the ellipsis, “Behold the Lord God shall come with strength, and his arm shall rule.” Note the exhortation of the double *behold!* (הִנֵּה, הִנֵּה). The word *hand*, as indicated by Ibn Ezra, is elliptical, and not included in the original: “**ⲡ** ‘hand’ is to be supplied.” Govett explains that while ISAIAH 40:11 may well have a focus on the meridian of times, that ISAIAH 40:10 is centered on the Second Coming: “Words which, as Eusebius perceived, must be spoken of his second appearing. Then shall also his gracious character of a shepherd be manifested in its full blessedness to his risen saints, and the inhabitants of the world living under his rule.” ¶ *Behold, his reward [is] with him, and his work before him.* The Targum (Ⲛ) has, “Behold, the reward of those who perform His word is with Him, because their works are manifest to Him.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Behold his reward is with him; and his work, before him.” A number of exegetes suggest that the reward spoken of here belongs to the Lord himself. Along with the Jewish Rabbis Ibn Ezra, Kimhi and Kara (see Slotki/Rosenberg) I believe the reward is intended for the righteous. The greatest reward is exaltation and eternal life such that God will walk among His people to be their God.

11 He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry [them] in his bosom, [and] shall gently lead those that are with young. ✓

✓ or, that give suck

The Targum (Ⲛ) has for the third clause, “He shall carry the tender ones in His bosom,” and also prefers the margin ||, “that give suck,” in the last clause. The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Like a shepherd he will tend his flock; and with his arm he will gather the lambs, and comfort the ewes that are with young.” For the last clause, *shall gently lead &c.* the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *sustains the new borns* (BPE) / *shall feed again those who give suck* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather together the lambs with his arm, and shall take them up in his bosom, and

he himself shall carry them that are with young.”

¶ Linda & I had the great blessing of seeing shepherds gently leading—rather than pushing from behind—their small flocks in Jordan in our 2012 Israel-Jordan trip. Lowth says: “A beautiful image, expressing, with the utmost propriety as well as elegance, the tender attention of the shepherd to his flock. That the greatest care in driving the cattle in regard to the dams and their young was necessary, appears clearly from Jacob’s apology to his brother Esau, ‘The flocks and the herds giving suck to their young are with me; and if they should be over-driven, all the flock will die’ (Genesis 33:13).” Henderson says: “The figures here borrowed from pastoral life are exquisitely beautiful; expressing, with the utmost elegance of language, the infinite care and tenderness of ‘the good Shepherd.’ He not only exercises a sovereign and uncontrollable power for the defence of his sheep (John 10:28), but attends to the weak and feeble, tenderly carries the young in his bosom, and gently guides such as give suck, that they may not be overdriven.” Alexander says: “The word correctly rendered *feed* denotes the whole care of a shepherd for his flock, and has therefore no exact equivalent in English.” A number of translators use the word *tend*: “He will tend his flock like a shepherd” (ESV, also see NASB, ABP {LXX (6)}) and in Spanish, *apacentará* (RV, LBLA, NBLH, RVG, SRV, SSE). מְרִעֵה means to shepherd, shelter, protect, guard, tend (HAL, Gesenius). ¶ Elder Delbert L. Stapley has: “The testimony that Jesus is the Good Shepherd was a figure of speech familiar to those accustomed to the pastoral conditions of Palestine. Jesus knew His hearers were acquainted with the prophecy that a shepherd had been promised the children of Israel. David, the shepherd boy who became king, wrote the beautiful Twenty-third Psalm that begins: ‘The Lord is my shepherd.’ ISAIAH prophesied that when God would come down, ‘He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm’ (ISAIAH 40:11). There was no mistaking what Jesus meant. He was their Lord—the promised Messiah!”¹⁹ Govett said of the Messiah’s first advent: “John the Baptist spoke of Christ in his first character of meekness as ‘the Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world,’ answering to the well known description of the Saviour given in the 11th verse, as ‘feeding his flock like a shepherd.’ This the Lord applied to himself in his beautiful parable of the shepherd and his flock.” ¶ Everyone who accepts the invitation to *come unto Christ* will feel of His love. Elder Groberg shared how he was feeling an overflow of the Spirit and so much joy until suddenly he was accosted by feelings of inadequacy and despair. After

reading the words in 2 Nephi 4:17 something happened: “As I slowly read and pondered those verses the former feelings of warmth and love began to return. Finally, as light chases away darkness, these good feelings pushed the painful feelings out and I was once more filled with light and joy. What contrast! What gratitude! For a long time I basked in the warmth of eternal love and forgiveness and felt the approbation of a caring Savior. When we see more clearly everything He has done for us we will realize that what we feel and understand now is but the tiniest part of all He has actually done for us. Our whole desire will be to sing praises to His name forever. How good and forgiving and loving God is! The words of Isaiah sang in my heart: ‘He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young’ (ISAIAH 40:11). I could literally feel the Savior’s mercy cover my weaknesses in a blanket of forgiveness and love. I could do nothing but quietly weep and pray and express gratitude. I felt as though I was not in my body but somewhere else floating in a sea of ecstasy and peace and love, and moving through space and seeing and understanding things in a way I had not previously seen or understood them ... It came to me with brilliant clarity that I shouldn’t worry about the challenges ahead, for if we did our best, someday the Lord would see that things worked out.”²⁰

vv. 12–17. These verses seem to contrast God’s infinite understanding, knowledge and power with that of finite man. Three important *who* (מִי) questions are considered.

12 ¶ Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure,[✓] and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?

✓ a tierce

The first question asked is *who formed the earth*. ¶ *Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span*. The Targum (ܬ) has, “He who hath promised these things, shall confirm them; He hath spoken it, and He will do it; He in whose sight all the waters of the world are accounted as a drop in the hollow of the hand, and the expansion of the heavens as if they had been prepared with the span (‘the little finger’).” The LXX (6) reads, “Who hath

¹⁹ Elder Delbert L. Stapley, Of the Council of the Twelve, What Constitutes the True Church, A:22, 1977.

²⁰ Groberg, John H. *The Fire of Faith*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1996, pp. 303–304.

measured the water with his hand, and the heaven with a span and the whole earth with a hand breadth?” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and weighed the heavens with his palm?” Skinner (and many others) explains מִן, *a measure*, as in the margin ||, “‘a third part,’ a tierce ... a small measure, probably a third of an ephah.” Ibn Ezra has: “There are some that ask, How is it possible that such a thing shall happen? The answer is that the same Supreme Being will cause it to pass, who has created the whole universe, who knows the quantity of the water in the sea, as if He had measured it with His hand. בשעלו *In the hollow of His hand*, Comp. בשעלו ‘for handfuls’ (Ezekiel 13:19). *And meted out heaven with the span*. He knows the measure of heaven, which He has stretched out like a curtain; He has created it with His omnipotence, according to His wisdom, as if He had measured it with the span. The words of the text are an anthropomorphism.” This verse is a description of the role of Christ in the formation of this earth. Elder Heber C. Kimball explains that as he molds some clay—from materials that already existed—so likewise, our Savior, from materials that already existed, formed this earth.²¹ And we could add, worlds without number. Many of the Church leaders use the expression “in the hollow of His hand” as an expression of hope, that the Lord will safely preserve them. ¶ *And comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?* The Targum (T) has, “And the dust of the earth as if in a measure, and the mountains as if weighed in scales, and the hills in a balance.” The LXX (G) reads, “Who hath weighed the mountains in scales and the dales with a balance?” Instead of *comprehended*, the Peshitta (S) has *measured*. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Who hath poised with three fingers the bulk of the earth, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?” Skinner suggests: “*scales and balance*” – might be better transposed; the first word (פֶּלֶס)

denotes the horizontal beam, the second (מִאֲזִינִים) the pair of scales.” ¶ President Brigham Young used some of the language in this verse to speak of the world’s reaction to the gospel truth: “[The world] will not be governed by the Spirit of God. We may correctly say that there is no difficulty in convincing people of the truth of the work in which we are engaged. We send our Elders into the world, in the midst of all the religion and philosophy of the day, and ‘Mormonism’ takes them up and weighs them ‘in the balances,’ as the Prophet says of the Lord’s measuring the seas in the hollow of his hand, and taking up the mountains as a very little thing. A person who understands the truth of the principles

and doctrines we preach and believe in can handle the religions and philosophy of the day as a small matter; consequently, it is not difficult to convince the world. There is but very little difficulty in convincing every person who will hearken to reason. You can convince them; but what is the difficulty. . . [t]he majority of the human family do not love the truth, and many forsake it after they have embraced it.”

13 Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or [being] his counsellor[✓] hath taught him?

✓ man of his counsel

The second question asks *who could possibly be capable of instructing the Lord or giving Him advice*.

¶ The Targum (T) has, “Who hath directed the Holy Spirit in the mouth of all the prophets? Is it not the Lord? He maketh known the words of His will to the righteous, the servants of His Word.” The LXX (G) reads, “Who hath known the mind of the Lord? and who hath been of his counsel to teach him?” For the last clause, the Peshitta (S) ask who has been His counselor. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Who hath forwarded the spirit of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor, and hath taught him?” In ISAIAH 55:8–9 the Lord makes it clear that His thinking is higher than man’s.

14 With whom took he counsel, and [who] instructed him,[✓] and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?^{✓ ✓}

✓ made him understand

✓ ✓ understandings?

The third question, like the second, asks *who is capable of counseling, instructing or imparting knowledge to the Lord*. ¶ The Targum (T) has, “I will make known wisdom to them who pray for it from Him (according to the Royal Polyglot קִדְמִי, ‘from me’), and I will teach them the way of justice; yea, He will give the law to their sons, and He will make known to their sons’ sons the path of understanding.” The LXX (G) reads, “Or whom hath he consulted that he might instruct him? or who hath pointed out judgment him? or who hath shewn him the way of knowledge?” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “With whom hath he consulted, and who hath instructed him, and taught him the path of justice, and taught him knowledge, and shewed him the way of understanding?”

²¹ Heber C. Kimball, JD 2:161a.

15 Behold, the nations [are] as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.

We now receive the answer to these questions: the nations are but a speck of dust in a balance in contrast to the Lord. ¶ *Behold, the nations [are] as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance:* The LXX (6) reads, “If all the nations are as a drop from a cask; and are accounted as the turning of a balance.” Instead of *small dust*, the Peshitta (5) has *dipping* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “Behold the Gentiles are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the smallest grain of a balance.” Ibn Ezra suggests: “כִּמְד מִדְּלִי As a drop of a bucket, as a drop that falls from the bucket.” Birks says: “There is a progress and climax in the figures. To Him who measures the ocean in the hollow of His hand, nations are less than a handful, even as a single drop spilt from a vessel.” ¶ *Behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.* The Targum (7) has, “Behold, the isles are as fine dust that flieth away.” The LXX (6) reads, “May be reckoned as spittle.” The Peshitta (5) has the isles being cast away as fine dust. The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “Behold the islands are as a little dust.” Birks says: “He who weighs the hills in a balance, counts the people as the small dust of the balance of which the weight is insensible, and cannot even turn the scale.”

16 And Lebanon [is] not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering.

All of Lebanon is too small and insufficient for a burnt offering to be offered to the Lord. ¶ The Targum (7) inserts the *trees* of Lebanon. The LXX (6) reads, “If Lebanon is not sufficient for a fire, nor all the beasts sufficient for an homage offering.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has *not be enough* instead of *not sufficient*. ¶ Ibn Ezra says: “God does not want burnt offerings; Lebanon would not suffice for fuel, if He wanted offerings. Lebanon is mentioned by the prophet simply as an example which his hearers can understand; in reality, however, he refers to all the woods of the earth. The same remark applies to the words ‘and the beasts thereof.’” Birks explains: “If Lebanon were the altar, its pine-forests and cedar-groves the pile, and its countless beasts the sacrifice, all would be far unworthy of His greatness . . . [and thus this message] prepares the way for [the] central truth [of these prophecies], the true

Sacrifice and great Sin-offering of the Son of God (ISAIAH 53:5–11).”

17 All nations before him [are] as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.

Indeed, *all the nations* (כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם) are nothing, less than nothing, but rather, pure vanity, when compared to the Lord. ¶ The Targum (7) has for the second clause, “their works are accounted before Him as naught.” The LXX (6) reads, “And all the nations are as nothing and reckoned as nothing.” The last clause in the Peshitta (5) has “And they are counted to him for destruction and for the sword.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “All nations are before him as if they had no being at all, and are counted to him as nothing, and vanity.” The full expression is quite interesting, מְאֵפֶס וְתוֹהוּ, translated in the AV as *less than nothing, and vanity*, meaning in a more literal way, “less than nothing and emptiness” (ESV, YLT), “nothing and chaos” (ISV). The first of these expressions (אֵפֶס) means *nothing* and in Modern Hebrew it also used to express the number *zero*. The second expression (תוֹהוּ) we have seen in Genesis to describe the disorganized nature of the materials before the Lord began to form the earth as “And the earth was *without form*, and void” (Genesis 1:2a). Skinner says, “The Hebrew is תוֹהוּ, a word which means primarily ‘a waste,’ and is applied in Genesis 1:2 to the primeval chaos . . . Here and in many other cases it is a synonym for nonentity.”

vv. 18–26. God is incomparable, yet will man compare Him to idols? Or make Him equal to man? It is God who created the heavens and the earth and is incomparable. As Skinner says, “This is the first of several sarcastic passages in which the processes of an idol factory are minutely described.”

18 ¶ To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?

The Targum (7) has, “And whom do you think able to contend with God? and what is the likeness that ye can compare with Him?” The LXX (6) reads, “To whom have you likened the Lord? and to what likeness have you compared him?” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, for the second clause, “Or what image will you make for him?” In the DSS 1QIsa^a (9) we have “to whom *will ye liken me*, God,” תִּדְמִינִי, while the Masoretic text (22) has “to whom *will ye liken* God,” תִּדְמִינֵהוּ. Also, the

DSS 1QIsa^a (Q) has “will ye compare *unto me*,” תַּעֲרוֹכִי לוֹ, while the Masoretic text (M) has “will ye compare *unto him*,” תַּעֲרוֹכִי לוֹ.

19 The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains.

The workman melteth a graven image. The LXX (G) reads, “Hath a carpenter when he hath made an image.” The BPE (S) follows the Masoretic text (M) here while Lamsa makes this a question, “Is he an image which the carpenter has &c.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Hath the workman cast a graven statue?” The DSS 1QIsa^a (Q) adds *and he maketh* (וַיַּעֲשֶׂה) to the process of pouring out a graven image. Henderson says of this verse and the next: “If the entire creation is nothing in comparison of God, how absurd to invest a piece of metal, or a block of wood, with the attributes of divinity; or even merely to regard such as an image of him! In the former of these verses is described the costly idol of the rich; in the latter, that of the poor, צַרְיָה²² is repeated in order to add to the force of the irony; and רָקַע²³ is understood, only in the acceptance of *beating*, to express the making of chains. In many of the Egyptian idols holes are found, through which chains passed for the purpose of suspending them on the wall.”²⁴ ¶ *And the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold.* The LXX (G) reads, “Or the goldsmith when he hath melted gold and gilded it.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Or hath the goldsmith formed it with gold.” ¶ *And casteth silver chains.* The Targum (T) has, “And with silver chains the silversmith fasteneth it.” The LXX (G) reads, “Prepared this as a likeness of him?” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Or the silversmith with plates of silver?”

20 He that [is] so impoverished[✓] that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree [that] will not rot; he seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, [that] shall not be moved.

✓ is poor of oblation

He that [is] so impoverished that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree [that] will not rot. The Targum (T) has, “He cuts a wild ash (the Royal Polyglot reads

²² Goldsmith or silversmith.

²³ Strike or beat.

²⁴ And, shall we also add, as idolatrous pendants carried on the chest.

בְּרִאָעָא דְלֵא אָחָד, ‘wood on which rottenness will not lay hold on’) of the forest, which rottenness will seize.” The LXX (G) reads, “For the carpenter chuseth a sound piece of timber and will inquire wisely.” The Peshitta (S) also has fine good wood that is selected for the project. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “He hath chosen strong wood, and that will not rot.” ¶ Alexander, leaning on some comments by Gesenius, partly has: “To say that the poor man uses wood instead of gold and silver, is coherent and appropriate, but far less significant and striking than to say, that the man who has already reduced himself to want by lavish gifts to his idol, still continues his devotions, and as he no longer can afford an image of the precious metals is resolved at least to have a durable wooden one. Thus understood, the verse adds to the general description a particular trait highly expressive of the folly of idolaters.” The idolaters are careful to choose the very best wood that will not rot, but will endure (Rashi, in Rosenberg, and others as well). ¶ *He seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, [that] shall not be moved.* The LXX (G) reads, “How he may place his image that it may not be moved.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “The skilful workman seeketh how he may set up an idol that may not be moved.” Regarding *cunning* חָכָם, Alexander has: “*Wise* is here used in what appears to be its primary meaning of artistically skilful.” Skinner prefers, for *shall not be moved*, “that will not totter”²⁵ (1 Samuel 5:3–4; cf. Wisdom of Solomon 13:15 f.)”

21 Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth?

The Targum (T) has, beginning with the third clause, “Hath not the work in the creation been declared unto you in its order from the beginning? Have ye not understood that ye ought to fear Him, who hath created the foundations of the earth?” The LXX (G) reads, “Will you not know? will you not hear? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have you not known the foundations of the earth?” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Do you not know? hath it not been heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have you not understood the foundations of the earth?” ¶ Alexander, leaning on the LXX (G) suggests: “But the most satisfactory, because the safest and most regular construction, is the strict one given in the Septuagint

²⁵ See also HALOT for this word, מוֹרֵט with root מוֹרֵט, “2. to be made to totter” מוֹרֵט ISAIAS 40:20.”

(οὐ γνώσεσθε; οὐκ ἀκούσεσθε;), revived by Lowth (*will you not know? will you not hear?*), and approved by Ewald (*o wollt ihr nicht erkennen? o wollt ihr nicht hören?*). The clause is then not a mere expression of surprise at their not knowing, but of concern or indignation at their being unwilling to know.”

Regarding *from the beginning* בְּרֵאשִׁית, Alexander suggests: “בְּרֵאשִׁית is not a mere indefinite expression meaning *long ago*, *of old*, or the like, but must refer to some specific *terminus a quo* . . . the reference of the words [is] to the beginning of the human race, or of the world itself, which is, moreover, favoured by the subsequent appeal to the creation.” These comments are an allusion to the בְּרֵאשִׁית in Genesis 1:1.

22 [It is] he that sitteth[✓] upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof [are] as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in:

✓ or, Him that sitteth, &c.

[It is] he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof [are] as grasshoppers. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Who maketh the Shekinah of His glory to dwell in exalted strength, and all the inhabitants of the earth are in His estimation as locusts.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “He it is, who occupieth the circuit of the earth; and the inhabitants thereon are as grasshoppers.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “It is he that sitteth upon the globe of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as locusts.” Regarding *upon the circle of the earth*

[עַל-חֲגִיב תִּפְּאֵץ], Ibn Ezra has: “Here it is stated that the earth is round and not square.” So also Gill, who comments: “Or, ‘the globe’ of it; for the earth is spherical or globular: not a flat plain, but round.” Redak [in Rosenberg] explains that “God is depicted anthropomorphically” as sitting in upon the center of the earth, and further adds: “He sees everything as one who sits on a high place sees everything that transpires on the lower places before him. For this reason, the prophet describes the inhabitants of the earth as grasshoppers, in keeping with the anthropomorphism of the person sitting on high and viewing all that is below him.” ¶ *That stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in:* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “He that stretched out the heavens as a little thing, and spreadeth them out as the tent of the glory of the house of the Shekinah.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “He it is, who established the heaven as an arch, and spread it out as a tent to be dwelt in.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has *as nothing* instead of *as a curtain*.

23 That bringeth the princes to nothing; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity.

The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Who gives princes over to weakness; the judges of the earth He bringeth to naught.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Who giveth chiefs as a nothingness to govern: and hath made the earth as a mere nothing.” Instead of *as vanity*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *as if they were non-existent*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has *searchers of secrets* instead of *princes*. Here we return to what was said earlier by the Prophet Joseph Smith (see ISAIAH 40:6) about the haughtiness and pride of the judges or leaders of nations.

24 Yea, they shall not be planted; yea, they shall not be sown: yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth: and he shall also blow upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble.

Yea, they shall not be planted; yea, they shall not be sown: yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth: The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Although they multiply, although they increase, although their children become great in the earth, yet, nevertheless, He will send his wrath among them, and they shall be confounded .” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For they could not plant nor could they sow, nor could their root strike into the ground.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “And surely their stock was neither planted, nor sown, nor rooted in the earth.” These comments speak about the impotence of mortal man, once again, following the earlier theme of the chapter of the withering plants and flowers. ¶ *And he shall also blow upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And His Word shall scatter them, as the whirlwind the chaff.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “He blew upon them and they withered, and a whirlwind will sweep them away like stubble.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “Suddenly he hath blown upon them, and they are withered, and a whirlwind shall take them away as stubble.” There seems to be a chiasmus, then, returning to many of the early expressions. Here, that of the power of even the breath of the Lord, “because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it.”

25 To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One.

The LXX (6) reads, “Now therefore to whom have you likened me; that I may be exalted? Said the Holy One.” ¶ Alexander says: “The epithet *Holy* is in this connection well explained by J. D. Michaelis as including all that distinguishes between God and his creatures ...” *Shall I be equal* seems to have an allusion to the nations who considered Jehovah just one more god of many.

26 Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these [things], that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that [he is] strong in power; not one faileth.

Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these [things], that bringeth out their host by number: The Targum (7) has, “Lift up your eyes on high, and behold, that ye may fear Him, who hath created these things, who bringeth forth the host of the heavens by number.” The LXX (6) reads, “Raise your eyes upwards and take a view: who hath displayed all those? He who bringeth out his host by number.” This is an invitation to consider the truth, and consider the great majesty and power of God. ¶ *He calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that [he is] strong in power; not one faileth.* The Targum (7) has, “He calleth them all by their name: on account of the combination of forces and might of power, not one is hindered in its orb.” The LXX (6) reads, “Can call them all by name. On the account of abundant glory, by reason of the mightiness of his power he hath in no wise escaped thy notice.” In the Peshitta (S) the clause ends, “By the greatness of his glory and the strength of his power; none is missing.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And calleth them all by their names: by the greatness of his might, and strength, and power, not one of them was missing.” ¶ Elder Neal A. Maxwell said: “I testify to you that God has known you individually, brethren, for a long, long time (see D&C 93:23). He has loved you for a long, long time. He not only knows the names of all the stars (see Psalm 147:4; ISAIAH 40:26); He knows your names and all your heartaches and your joys!”²⁶

vv. 27–31. Indeed, God is almighty. All those who lean upon Him will be lifted up and their weaknesses shall be turned into strength.

²⁶ Maxwell, Neal A. Remember How Merciful the Lord Hath Been, *Ensign* (CR), May 2004, p. 44.

27 ¶ Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is passed over from my God?

The Targum (7) has for the last clause, “And my cause is removed from my God?” The LXX (6) reads, “Wherefore, thou, Jacob, shouldst not say, yet what hast thou, Israel, spoken? ‘My way is hidden from God’ and, ‘My God hath put off my cause and is gone.’” For the second half, the BPE Peshitta (S) has “My ways are hidden from the Yahweh, and before God my cause passes unobserved.” This dialogue reminds us a little of the argument between the people and the Lord cited in Malachi (2:13 ff.; 3:7 ff.).

28 Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, [that] the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? [there is] no searching of his understanding.

Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, [that] the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth. The Targum (7) has for the last clause, “the Lord who hath created the foundations of the earth.” The LXX (6) reads, “Hast thou then not known? hast thou not heard? The everlasting God, the God who fitted up the ends of the earth.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Knowest thou not, or hast thou not heard? the Lord is the everlasting God, who hath created the ends of the earth.” Ibn Ezra and the Prophet Joseph Smith agree on the meaning of ברא, “בורא Creator. I have explained already (Genesis 1:1), that ברא literally means ‘to cut.’ [Translator’s note: Ibn Ezra repeatedly remarks, that ברא means (1) to shape, to produce a thing from a given substance (לחוציא יש מיש): (2) to decree, or to decide: both meanings he derives from ברא = נזר ‘to cut.’” ¶ *Fainteth not, neither is weary? [There is] no searching of his understanding.* The Targum (7) has, “Is not fatigued, neither is weary? (Chaldee, ‘in fatigue, neither in weariness’) there is no end to His wisdom.” The LXX (6) reads, “Cannot hunger, nor can he be weary; nor can his understanding be searched out.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “He shall not faint, nor labour, neither is there any searching out of his wisdom.”

29 He giveth power to the faint; and to [them that have] no might he increaseth strength.

All strength and power come from the Lord. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Who giveth wisdom to the righteous that long for the words of the law; and to those who have no strength, he multiplieth strength.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “He it is who giveth strength to the hungry and grief to them who have not had sorrow.” Instead of *them that have no might*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *to them that are affected by sickness*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “It is he that giveth strength to the weary, and increaseth force and might to them that are not.”

30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

The Targum (Ⲯ) adds *wicked* and *impious* to modify *youths* and *young men* respectively. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For youths will hunger and young men be weary, and chosen warriors will become strengthless.” Instead of *utterly fall*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *stumble*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “Youths shall faint, and labour, and young men shall fall by infirmity.” In contrast to God [ISAIAH 40:28], the *youth* בְּחֹרִים —or as Alexander explains, “not only of men in general, but of the stoutest and most vigorous, aptly represented by the young men chosen for military service” —we again return to what we saw earlier in the chapter: that man is nothing, less than nothing. ¶ *Shall utterly fall* (כָּשׁוּל יִפְּשָׁל). The repetition of the word shows not only falling, but *utterly* falling.

31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew[✓] [their] strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; [and] they shall walk, and not faint.

✓ change

But they that wait upon the LORD. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “But they who wait upon God.” The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “But they that hope for the salvation of the Lord (וְדֹסְבְּרוֹ לְפָרְקָא דִּי) shall be gathered together from the midst of their captivity.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “But they that hope in the Lord.” Several translations use the word *trust*, as does Bishops, “But vnto them that haue their trust in the Lorde, shall &c.”

AMP renders it “But those who wait for the Lord [*who expect, look for, and hope in Him*] shall &c.” The Spanish Reina Valera 1960 and LDS 2009 use the expression “pero los que esperan” the word *esperar* has various significations including to wait, but the first given by the iREA (the dictionary of the Real Academia) is “tener esperanza de conseguir lo que se desea,” i.e., hope). Only the third meaning is related to waiting. The Masoretic text (ⲙ) has, וְקִוִּי יְהוָה, where the lexicons include the word *hope* as one of the principal meanings of the word קוּה. For instance, Gesenius explains that when used in conjunction with the word YHWH, קִוִּי אֶת־יְהוָה, as is also used in this verse, that it means to “to fix one’s hope on Jehovah.” This verse, then, would be better translated as “*But they that place their hope upon the LORD* &c.” It is precisely this word; *hope*, that Elder Robert D. Hales explains is at the core of *waiting upon the Lord* (e.g., also see Psalm 37:9; 123:2; ISAIAH 8:17; ISAIAH 33:2 and Jeremiah 14:22). The psalmist says: “I wait for the LORD {קִוִּי יְהוָה קִוִּי}, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning” (Psalm 130:5–6).

Alexander has “קִוִּי is to *wait* for or *expect*, implying faith and patience. This is also the old English meaning of the phrase *to wait upon*, as applied to servants who await their master’s orders; but in modern usage the idea of personal service or attendance has become predominant, so that the English phrase [*they that wait upon the Lord*] no longer represents the Hebrew one.”²⁷ ¶ Alexander himself prefers “those waiting for Jehovah.” ASV translates this verse as: “but they that wait for Jehovah shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint” (see also ESV, JPS, LITV, and NASB). There is nothing *passive* about this קִוִּי. As I was subsequently asked to prepare a Priesthood class based on Elder Hales’ talk, I realized that only five days earlier, I had been prompted to use very similar language in a Priesthood blessing given to someone suffering great anguish and affliction. Truly, the Lord is good: *for his mercy endureth for ever*. I only include a portion of his talk. “During the past few months,” explained Elder Hales. “I have had the

²⁷ I asked my friend Ryan Boothe for his interpretation of Alexander’s comments: “As I read it, Alexander appears to be saying that the word *wait* used to have a similar meaning as *esperar*. We wait upon the Lord by waiting for His command (as opposed to doing our own thing) and expecting that it will come. In Modern English, if I’m waiting on a customer that implies that I am going to write down what food and drink he wants and make sure that he is satisfied with his order. The meaning is similar but the first wait is not exactly the same as the second.”

opportunity to study and learn more about the Savior's atoning sacrifice and how He prepared Himself to make that eternal offering for each one of us ... I have often pondered, Why is it that the Son of God and His holy prophets and all the faithful Saints have trials and tribulations, even when they are trying to do Heavenly Father's will? ... Why such terrible tribulation? To what end? For what purpose? As we ask these questions, we realize that the purpose of our life on earth is to grow, develop, and be strengthened through our own experiences. How do we do this? The scriptures give us an answer in one simple phrase: we 'wait upon the Lord.' Tests and trials are given to all of us ... [But] What, then, does it mean to wait upon the Lord? In the scriptures, the word *wait* means to hope, to anticipate, and to trust. To hope and trust in the Lord requires faith, patience, humility, meekness, long-suffering, keeping the commandments, and enduring to the end. To wait upon the Lord means planting the seed of faith and nourishing it 'with great diligence, and . . . patience.'²⁸ ... Waiting upon the Lord means pondering in our hearts and 'receiv[ing] the Holy Ghost' so that we can know 'all things what [we] should do.' As we follow the promptings of the Spirit, we discover that 'tribulation worketh patience' and we learn to 'continue in patience until [we] are perfected.' Waiting upon the Lord means to 'stand fast' and 'press forward' in faith, 'having a perfect brightness of hope.' It means 'relying alone upon the merits of Christ' and 'with [His] grace assisting [us, saying]: Thy will be done, O Lord, and not ours.' As we wait upon the Lord, we are 'immovable in keeping the commandments,' knowing that we will 'one day rest from all [our] afflictions.' And we 'cast not away ... [our] confidence' that 'all things wherewith [we] have been afflicted shall work together for [our] good.' ... Even with the shining examples of Job, the prophets, and the Savior, we will still find it challenging to wait upon the Lord, especially when we cannot fully understand His plan and purposes for us. That understanding is most often given 'line upon line, [and] precept upon precept.' In my life I have learned that sometimes I do not receive an answer to a prayer because the Lord knows I am not ready. When He does answer, it is often 'here a little and there a little' because that is all that I can bear or all I am willing to do. Too often we pray to have patience, but we want it right now! ... We may not know when or how the Lord's answers will be given, but in His time and His way, I testify, His answers will come. For some answers we may have to wait until the hereafter. This may be true for some promises in our patriarchal blessings and for some blessings for family members. Let us not give

up on the Lord. His blessings are eternal, not temporary. ... As we endure physical suffering, we are increasingly aware of how many wait upon each of us. To all the Marys and Marthas, to all of the good Samaritans who minister to the sick, succor the weak, and care for the mentally and physically infirm, I feel the gratitude of a loving Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son ... He knows your sacrifices and your sorrows. He hears your prayers. His peace and rest will be yours as you continue to wait upon Him in faith.

Every one of us is more beloved to the Lord than we can possibly understand or imagine. Let us therefore be kinder to one another and kinder toward ourselves. Let us remember that as we wait upon the Lord, we are becoming 'saint[s] through [His] atonement . . . submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon [us], even as a child doth submit to his father.' Such was the submission of our Savior to His Father in the Garden of Gethsemane . . . [Where He] 'shrank not to drink the bitter cup.' He waited upon His Father, saying, 'Thy will be done,' and He humbly trod the winepress alone ... On this Sabbath morning, I express gratitude that 'in my Gethsemane' and yours, we are not alone. He that watches over *us* 'shall neither slumber nor sleep.' His angels here and beyond the veil are 'round about [us], to bear [us] up.' I bear my special witness that our Savior's promise is true, for He says, 'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.' May we wait upon Him by pressing forward in faith, that we may say in our prayers, 'Thy will be done,' and return to Him with honor. ...'²⁹ Elder Hales seems to be describing the process of sanctification wherein the Holy Spirit of Promise, after putting a stamp of approval or justifying individual acts, slowly begins to transform our lives into true disciples of Jesus Christ. ¶ *Shall renew [their] strength.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "And shall increase their strength." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "Shall have new strength." Lowth writes: "It has been a common and popular opinion that the eagle lives and retains his vigor to a great age; and that, beyond the common lot of other birds, he moults in his old age, and renews his feathers, and with them his youth. 'Thou shalt renew thy youth like the eagle,' says the Psalmist (Psalm 103:5) ... Whether the notion of the eagle's renewing his youth is in any degree well founded or not, I need not inquire; it is enough for a poet, whether profane or sacred, to have the authority of popular opinion to support an image introduced for illustration or ornament." ¶ *They shall mount up with wings as eagles.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "And their youths shall be

²⁸ Regarding ISAIAH 40, Alexander says: "That the ultimate fulfillment of the promise was still distant is implied in the exhortation to faith and patience."

²⁹ Hales, Robert D. 2011 October General Conference, Sunday morning session.

renewed like the sprout that springeth up: they shall hasten upon the wings of eagles.” The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “They shall put forth fresh feathers like eagles.” Instead of *eagle*, the Peshitta (ܣ) has *dove*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “They shall take wings as eagles.” ¶ Alexander explains that the beauty of this verse does not come from the idea of the eagle molting, but rather, from the very act of rising up the wings in majesty as the eagle takes off. ¶ *They shall run, and not be weary; [and] they shall walk, and not faint.* The Targum (Ⲛ) has, “And not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.” The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “They shall run and not be wearied; they shall march on and shall not faint.” We find a similar promise given to those who keep the Word of Wisdom: “And shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint” (D&C 89:20). Ludlow suggests “that those who wait and trust in the Lord will share in

his powers and renew their strength (through the resurrection so that they will ‘run and not be weary,’ and ‘walk, and not faint.’” Alexander has: “In the last clause the verbs **יָרַץ** and **יָחַץ** are introduced together for the third time in a beautiful antithesis. In ISAIAH 40:28 they are applied to Jehovah, in ISAIAH 40:30 to the strongest and most vigorous of men, as they are in themselves, and here to the waiters for Jehovah, the believers in his promises, who glory in infirmity that his strength may be made perfect in their weakness (2Corinthians 12:9).”

13 January 2014

Isaiah 41

All are invited to pass judgment on the divinity of Christ—and to contrast His power to that of the idols. We have Jehovah, speaking by Divine Investiture from the Father, announcing the coming of the Son, even Jesus Christ. There are transitional frames in a movie where one sees both the old and new scenes at one time. What we see in ISAIAH 41 is a somewhat faded frame of Abraham being supplanted by a more clear and glorious frame of Christ. Powerful scriptures are given about missionary work being carried out by *the weak and the simple* in gathering Israel in the last days, even by *thou worm Jacob*. Idols, or rather those who lean upon them, are invited into a contest with the Lord, who is able to clearly show His superiority. These are given at the beginning and end of the chapter as a chiasmus. All of these things are given as signs and tokens to scattered Israel to trust in Jehovah and come unto Christ in the last days. Tender and beautiful reassurances are given to those who would walk with Christ.

vv. 1–9. These verses are quite similar to the contest with the false prophets of Baal in 1 Kings 18. Here, with worthless idols. The Man from the east is spoken off.

1 ¶ KEEP silence before me, O islands; and let the people renew [their] strength: let them come near; then let them speak: let us come near together to judgment.

The Lord invites all the people, including those from the islands, to the judgment bar. ¶ *KEEP silence before me, O islands; and let the people renew [their] strength*: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Listen unto my words, ye islands, and let the kingdoms increase their strength.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Dedicate yourselves to me, Islands, for the Archons will gather new strength.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) is missing *before me*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “And the nations take new strength.” ¶ Young says: “God does not appear before a judge, waiting to hear a verdict pronounced. Rather, He addresses the isles with the voice of absolute authority.” Gill has: “The great controversy in the world after the coming of Christ, which is expressly spoken of in the preceding chapter, was, as Cocceius observes, whether he was a divine Person; this was first objected to by the Jews, and afterwards by many that bore the Christian name; some, in the times of the apostles, especially the Apostle John; and others in later ages; some affirmed that he was a mere man ... and now, as when the judge is on the bench, and the court is set, and a cause just going to be tried, silence is proclaimed; so here, Jehovah himself being on the throne, and a cause depending between him and men being about to be tried, they are commanded silence (see Zechariah 2:13).” Not only is there a controversy as to whether Jesus be the Christ or the promised Messiah, but also if Jesus is the Son of God and divine in nature. The Jews,

for the most part, are waiting for either the Messiah, or for the Messianic Age. Muslims recognize the Messianic nature of Christ but expressly deny His divinity—as well as His atoning sacrifice for us. There are a number of Christian religions who deny His divinity.¹ ¶ Barnes explains: “On the word ‘renew,’ . . . Here it means, ‘Let them make themselves strong; let them prepare the argument; let them be ready to urge as strong reasons as possible; let them fit themselves to enter into the controversy about the power and glory of Yahweh’ (see ISAIAH 41:21).” ¶ Regarding the *islands*, they sometimes refer to the American continent and islands of the sea, but they can also at times refer to the countries away from Israel. ¶ *Silence*. Faussett has: “God is about to argue the case; therefore let the nations listen in reverential silence.” ¶ *Renew their strength*. As Wordsworth noted in ISAIAH 40, these words from the end of Isaiah 40 are repeated here in ISAIAH 41. While there they referred to those who put their trust in Jehovah, here they are a sarcastic invitation to the enemies of God to attempt to show strength. ¶ *Let them come near; then let them speak: let us come near together to judgment*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Let them come nigh, then let them speak; let us approach one another for judgment.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Let them draw near and confer together, then let them announce judgment.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *let them come near* instead of *let us come near*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has,

¹ The scriptures testify of the divinity of Christ: (1) turn to ISAIAH 6, footnote 4, in regard to John 12:36–41), for proof that Jesus Christ is the Jehovah of the Old Testament; and (2) for an example of a scripture speaking of the divinity of Christ as well as His sonhood, we have ISAIAH 9:6, “For unto us a **child** is born, unto us a **son** is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty **God**, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” These verses make it clear that there would be a child, and that this child would also be God. And the greatest proof of all is the powerful testimony of the Holy Spirit. I received such a testimony as a young man of thirteen. I bear the most solemn witness of the Divinity of Jesus the Christ.

“Let them come near, and then speak, let us come near to judgment together.” ¶ This is an invitation to approach the bench, or judgment bar, with the best arguments that those who detest the Lord can muster. Delitzsch asks: “But if Jehovah is one party to the cause, who is the judge to pronounce the decision? The answer to this question is the same as at ISAIAH 5:3. ‘The nations,’ says Rosenmüller, ‘are called to judgment, not to the tribunal of God, but to that of reason.’ The deciding authority is reason, which cannot fail to recognise the facts, and the consequences to be deduced from them.” Wesley has, “I will give them free liberty to say what they can on their own behalf.” In his translation, Lowth has, for the last clause: “Let us enter into solemn debate together,” a translation particularly celebrated by Keith, who goes on to say: “The same form of address occurs in other instances, as when it is said, ‘Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord.’”

2 Who raised up the righteous [man] from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made [him] rule over kings? he gave [them] as the dust to his sword, [and] as driven stubble to his bow.

✓ righteousness

Who raised up the righteous [man] from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made [him] rule over kings? The Targum (T) has, “Who openly brought Abraham from the east? He brought the chosen of the righteous in truth to his place, He delivered up nations before him, and broke in pieces mighty (the Royal Polyglot omits **יְהִי**, ‘strong, mighty’) kings.” The LXX (G) reads, “Who raised up righteousness from the East—called upon it to attend his steps? when he marcheth on, he will exhibit it before nations and confound kings.” The Lamsa Peshitta (S) has, “Who has stirred up the righteous one from the east, and hastened him on? The nations shall surrender before him, and kings shall be confounded.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Who hath raised up the just one from the east, hath called him to follow him? he shall give the nations in his sight, and he shall rule over kings.” ¶ If we accept the ellipsis and permit the clause to read the *righteous man*, then we are speaking of Christ, or those that through Him may be called righteous. Wordsworth says: “We need not be surprised that many ancient interpreters (as S. Cyril, and S. Jerome) saw here a prophecy of CHRIST—‘the Lord our Righteousness.’ Cyrus, whose name signifies Sun, in many signal respects was a type of Christ,—the ‘Sun of Righteousness’ (Malachi 4:2) ... It will be found, that

whenever Isaiah has made mention of Cyrus, he almost always proceeds to speak of Christ.” Cowles suggests that the proper meaning may well be that justice was raised up. When one considers that the word **יָשָׁר** can also be translated as *salvation*, or *well-being*, we have some interesting options here (for instance, see the 4th acceptance for **יָשָׁר** in HAL). Some interesting translations include: “Who awakened [from *the* east righteousness]” (ABP {LXX (G)}). Or, by substituting salvation, “Who awakened salvation from the east.” The emphasis is on God’s power to awake, or to bring forward salvation. That Cyrus could be meant in such circumstances is certainly possible. AMP renders it: “Who has roused up one [*Cyrus*] from the east, whom He calls in righteousness to His service . . .” Or, “Who hath raised up one from the east, whom he calleth in righteousness to his foot?” (ASV), or “Who appointed this ruler from the east? Who puts nations and kings in his power?” (CEV). Finally: “Who raised up iustice from the East, and called him to his foote?” (Geneva).

Alexander argues: “Here and elsewhere **יָשָׁר** means the *righteousness* of God as manifested in his providence, his dealings with his people and their enemies ... To *call to one’s foot* is a Hebrew idiom for calling to one’s service, or summoning to take a place among one’s followers. This act is here ascribed to the divine righteousness as a personified attribute. The other verbs may agree with the same subject or directly with Jehovah.” ¶ Gill writes: “The Targum interprets this of Abraham; and so the Talmud (T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 156. 2. Bava Bathra, fol. 15. 1. Sanhedrin, fol. 108. 2. and Taanith, fol. 21. 1.); and this way go most Jewish and Christian commentators, and to him the characters agree; he was a righteous man ...” Birks writes: “The God of glory appeared to Abraham in Chaldea, stirred up his spirit to forsake his country’s idols, and made him heir of the righteousness of faith.” ¶ Any righteousness found in man is Christ’s righteousness. In the meridian of times a star to the East announced His coming: “Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him” (Matthew 2:2). Of the Second Coming we read: “For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be” (Matthew 24:27). While Cyrus, Abraham, Joseph of Egypt and others are given as types of Christ, it is the Messiah who is the *Βασιλεὺς βασιλέων καὶ κύριος κυρίων*, *King of kings*, and *Lord of lords* (Revelation 19:16). He will subdue the nations and overcome Satan as well as mystic Babylon. Horsley testifies: “Christ is perpetually described in the prophecies under the image of a conqueror, and the propagation of the Gospel under the image of universal conquest ... I have no doubt that Christ is the person meant under the character of the

righteous man raised up from the east.” Horsley continues: “It is to be observed, however, that the LXX rendered the noun צַדִּיק by δικαιοσύνην, as if they conceived that righteousness, or the true religion, was personified in this chapter; and I think this notion deserves great attention. It is adopted in the margin of our English Bible. Righteousness was throughout all the Divine dispensations raised up from the east. Paradise was planted in the east of Eden. After the Fall, the symbols of the Divine presence, the cherubim, were placed at the east of the garden. Abraham was called from the east. The chosen people of God were a people of the eastern quarter of the globe. Our Lord was the righteous man raised from the east.” ¶ *He gave [them] as the dust to his sword, [and] as driven stubble to his bow.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “He cast the slain down like the dust before his sword, and he pursued them like stubble before his bow.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And dash their swords to the ground, and their bows shall be driven away like stubble.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “As stubble driven by the wind, to his bow.” ¶ The expression, *dust to his sword* means that the sword found no resistance at all. Likewise, stubble to his bow, i.e., arrow propelled by a bow finds no resistance in wind-driven chaff (allusion to fanned grain). AMP provides an interesting translation in that the Lord is shown to be behind all things but Cyrus the instrument in His hands: “He [*the Lord*] subdues nations before him and makes him ruler over kings. He turns them to dust with the sword [*of Cyrus*], and to driven straw and chaff with his bow. [*Ezra 1:2*].” Wordsworth points out to 2 Chronicles 36:23a, “Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.” Alexander says: “Umbreit supposes a specific reference to the course of the sun, from which the name of Cyrus was derived.”

3 He pursued them, [and] passed safely; ✓
[even] by the way [that] he had not gone
with his feet.

✓ in peace

The Targum (Ⲯ) has for the last clause, “The roughness of the path shall not affect his feet (Chaldee, ‘the strength of the path shall not enter his feet’).” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “When he pursueth them, the road for his feet shall pass through to peace.” The BPE (ⲱ) has, “He shall pursue after them, then make peace; but he shall not enter with his feet on the road.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “He shall pursue them, he shall pass in peace, no path shall appear after his feet.” ¶ Skinner says, “*the path with his feet he does not tread*”—a picture of the

celerity of his movements (Daniel 8:5).” Alexander likewise has: “[Based on] Ewald’s supposition that the clause describes the swiftness of his motions, as flying rather than walking on foot. This, which would be natural and striking, even in itself considered, is confirmed by the analogy of Daniel 8:5, where we read that *an he-goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground.*” ¶ Rawlinson instead has: “*Even by the way that he had not gone with his feet*]; rather, *a path with his feet he shall not tread.* The meaning seems to be that he will dispense with customary paths, making his advance everywhere over all obstacles, by untrodden ways. Compare the frequent boasts of the Assyrian kings: ‘To the recesses of the deep forests and the peaks of the difficult mountains, which had never been trodden by the foot of man, I ascended’ (‘Records of the Past,’ 5:13). ‘Difficult mountain chains, and inaccessible hills, which none of our kings had ever previously reached tedious paths and unopened roads I traversed’ (ibid., p. 16).” As Horsley well says, so also the Gospel of Christ was taken by paths not taken before. ¶ Barnes writes: “*He pursued them*] – When they were driven away. He followed on, and devoted them to discomfiture and ruin. *And passed safely*] – Margin ||, as Hebrew, ‘In peace.’ That is, he followed them uninjured; they had no power to rally, he was not led into ambush, and he was safe as far as he chose to pursue them.”

4 Who hath wrought and done [it], calling
the generations from the beginning? I the
LORD, the first, and with the last; I [am] he.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Who hath promised these things and established them? Who hath spoken, and it was done? And *who* hath ranged the generations in their order from the beginning; yea, ages after ages are mine, and besides me there is no God.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Who hath performed and done these things? He who called that righteousness—who from the generations of the beginning is calling it—I God the First, and to the succeeding ages, THE I AM (Brenton, ‘I God, the first and to all futurity, I AM’).” Instead of *wrought*, the Peshitta (ⲱ) has *prepared*. Regarding the last clause, we have in the Peshitta (ⲱ), “I the LORD, the first and the last; I am he” (Lamsa); and “I the LORD, the first and the last; I am” (BPE) whereas the AV last clause follows the Masoretic text (ⲙ) and has אֲנִי-הוּא, I [am] he. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “Who hath wrought and done these things, calling the generations from the beginning? I the Lord, I am the first and the last.”

אֲנִי יְהוָה רִאשׁוֹן וְאַחֲרֵימֵן אֲנִי-הוּא, I LORD, first and last, I He. LITV has: “I Jehovah am the first and the last; I am He.” The 1899 Douay-Rheims Bible

(**ⲅ**), based on the Vulgate (**ⲅ**), “Ego Dóminus: primus et novíssimus ego sum,” that is, “I the Lord, the first and the last, I am.” So also the Peshitta LBP (**ܣ**), “I the LORD, the first and the last; I am he.” ¶ We essentially have the same text in the Book of Revelation “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last” (Revelation 22:13). In Doctrine and Covenants we often hear the equivalent expression, Alpha and Omega used in the same context as we have here: “Thus saith the Lord your God, even Jesus Christ, the Great I Am, Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end” (D&C 38:1a). ¶ We have another *who* **ⲁⲓ** question. Rawlinson has: “*i.e.* ‘by whom has this mighty conqueror been raised up?’ Can any of the idol-gods claim him as their *protege*? Assuredly not. He is my work; I, Jehovah, that have called (into being) the generations (of man) from the beginning (of the world) I, Jehovah, the First, and with the last, am he that he has done this thing. By ‘the First, and with the last’² a favourite phrase in these later chapters (*see ISAIAH 45:6; 48:12*) seems to be meant simply ‘the Eternal.’”

5 The isles saw [it], and feared; the ends of the earth were afraid, drew near, and came.

The Targum (**ⲧ**) translations (Chilton, Stenning, Pauli) have, from the second clause on, the future tense. Pauli has all of it in the future tense. The LXX (**Ⲭ**) reads, “The nations saw and were affrighted; the ends of the earth drew near and came together.” The Douay-Rheims (**ⲅ**) has *astonished* instead of *afraid*. ¶ The paronomasia or play on words regarding the words *saw* and *feared* is mentioned by Delitzsch and Young: “The *isles saw and feared*, **ⲓⲣⲁⲓⲁⲓ ⲁⲓⲓⲁⲓ ⲓⲣⲁⲓⲁⲓ**. The fear of the nations leads them to lean on each other and on idols—but to no avail.

6 They helped every one his neighbour; and [every one] said to his brother, Be of good courage. ✓

✓ Be strong

The Targum (**ⲧ**) has, “Let everyone help his neighbor, and *every one* say to his brother, Be of good courage (or, ‘be strong’).” The LXX (**Ⲭ**) reads, “Every one is determining to help his neighbour and his brother, and one will say.” The Douay-Rheims (**ⲅ**) has, “Every one shall help his neighbour, and shall say to his brother: Be of good courage.” Barnes has: “*They helped everyone*

² The Alpha and Omega with which Christ is often described in the Doctrine and Covenants.

his neighbor] – The prophet describes a state of general consternation existing among them, when they supposed that all was in danger, and that their security consisted only in confederation; in increased attention to their religion; in repairing their idols and making new ones ... *Be of good courage*] – Margin ||, as Hebrew, ‘Be strong.’ The sense is, Do not be alarmed . . . Make new images, set them up in the temples, show unusual zeal in religion, and the favor of the gods may be secured, and the dangers be averted.”

7 So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, ✓ [and] he that smootheneth [with] the hammer him that smote ✓ ✓ the anvil, saying, It [is] ready for the soldering: ✓ ✓ and he fastened it with nails, [that] it should not be moved.

✓ or, founder

✓ ✓ or, the smiting

✓ ✓ ✓ or, saying of the soder, It is good

The Targum (**ⲧ**) has, “Shall they not be confounded in their works? Because the artificer encourageth the silversmith, and he that smiteth with the great hammer him that smiteth with the small: It is time, one saith, for the soldering, it is ready; he fasteneth it with nails, that it may not be moved.” The LXX (**Ⲭ**) reads, “The carpenter had strength, so had the smith who beateth with a hammer and plateth it. Sometimes indeed one will say, ‘It is a beautiful composition? ‘These things they made strong with nails; they will fix them up that they may not be moved.’” The Douay-Rheims (**ⲅ**) has, “The coppersmith striking with the hammer encouraged him that forged at that time, saying: It is ready for soldering: and he strengthened it with nails, that it should not be moved.” ¶ Rawlinson observes: “Each encourages the others to manufacture a right good god. When all is done, there is, however, need of soldering, and of nails, that the wretched object may be kept erect, and not show its weakness by falling, like Dagon, upon its own threshold (*1 Samuel 5:4*).” Faussett has: “**nails** — to keep it steady in its place. Wisdom of Solomon 13:15, 16³, gives a similar picture of the folly of idolatry.” ¶ Next, in contrast, we see how those who lean upon the Lord are sustained in their moments of need.

³ “And when he had made a convenient room for it, set it in a wall, and made it fast with iron: For he provided for it that it might not fall, knowing that it was unable to help itself; for it is an image, and hath need of help” (Apocrypha, Wisdom of Solomon 13:15–16).

8 But thou, Israel, [art] my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend.

The Targum (C) has **וְאֶתֵּרְעִיתִי**,⁴ in whom I “delight” (Pauli) or in whom I am “pleased” (Stenning, Chilton) rather than *chosen*. The LXX (G) reads, “But thou Israel my servant; thou Jacob, whom I have chosen; thou seed of Abraham whom I loved! The last clause is rendered by the Peshitta (S) as, “The descendants of Abraham my friend, whom I have strengthened.”

Delitzsch writes: “The **וְ** [but—GB] before **וְאֶתֵּרְעִיתִי** [but thou—GB]⁵ connects together antitheses, which show themselves at once to be antitheses. Whereas the nations, which put their trust in idols that they themselves had made, were thrown into alarm, and yielded before the world-wide commotions that had originated with the eastern conqueror, Israel, the nation of Jehovah, might take comfort to itself. Every word here breathes the deepest affection. The address moves on in soft undulating lines.” ¶ *My servant* (**עֶבֶדִּי**, from servant, **עָבַד**). Hawker⁶ says “For all the promises of the Bible are first made to the Person of Christ, and then in Him, they are all yea and amen, to his people.” This is much like my *How beautiful are the feel principle*.

The *Servant of the Lord* (**עֶבֶד יְהוָה**) is *Jesus Christ* but that He shares this title with His people Israel and with His disciples, and at times even with others through whom He accomplishes work. Young suggests: “No sooner had intimations been given of a human deliverer than the prophet, rising from consideration of the nation as a servant, focuses attention upon the Servant *par excellence*, who will perform for Israel a work that neither they themselves nor Cyrus can accomplish. Whereas Cyrus will set the people free from Babylonia, the Servant will deliver them from the spiritual bondage of sin in which they find themselves.” ¶ Nägelsbach says, “The Prophet turns to Israel with well-founded and glorious consolation. The LORD calls His people **Israel my servant**. We consider here for the first time the significant notion of the **עֶבֶד יְהוָה** ... they are so named because the LORD has chosen Israel

⁴ Gesenius defines as object of thoughts and desires.

⁵ So also Westermann, who explains that with the words **וְאֶתֵּרְעִיתִי** [but thou—GB] we have an *oracle of salvation*: “the address to Israel begins . . . they correspond to the *waw* adversative (= but) which in a number of psalms of lamentation indicates the change from distress to salvation in accordance with the oracle of salvation, or presupposing it.”

⁶ Robert Hawker, (1816–1820). *Poor Man’s Old Testament Commentary*, Volume 5.

for his possession, His instrument, His servant. For a servant is the property of his lord, and Israel is the ‘peculiar people’ (Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 7:6; 14:2; Psalm 135:4; Malachi 3:17).” Matthew Henry says: “Happy are the servants of the Lord, whom he has called to be his friends, and to walk with him in faith and holy obedience. Let not such as have thus been favoured yield to fear; for the contest may be sharp, but the victory shall be sure.” Baltzer writes: “It is also unambiguously clear in this text who the servant is. It is ‘Israel/Jacob.’ Since the text goes on in the singular form of address, the servant is initially a single individual. The name ‘Israel’ and his description as ‘Abraham’s seed/offspring’ give the figure its special significance: he is the personification of God’s people.”

¶ **וְאֶתֵּרְעִיתִי** **וְאֶתֵּרְעִיתִי**, *Jacob whom I have chosen*.

The Holy One of Israel has chosen Jacob, indeed He has chosen Israel. Westermann says, “Israel’s election is carried back to the patriarchs.” ¶ *My friend* (**אֶתֵּרְעִיתִי**).

More than just a *friend*, someone who is *greatly beloved* (“the seede of Abraham my beloued” 1568 Bishops’ Bible). GW renders it: “But you are my servant Israel, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the descendant of Abraham, my dear friend.” Westermann correctly has: “Whom I loved.” The expression “I have loved”

(Brenton) or “my beloved” (Bishops), as well as the others mentioned above, here come to mean both love and friendship. And the love and friendship here extend beyond Abraham to all of Israel. Note clearly the Hebrew word for love (**אָהַב**) in “seed of Abraham my friend / whom I have loved” (**וְאֶתֵּרְעִיתִי אֶתֵּרְעִיתִי**).

Literally, “Seed of Abraham [whom] I [have] loved.”

Kimhi (in Slotki) suggests, “Abraham . . . who loved Me.” In James we read: “And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only” (James 2:23–24).

Skinner says: “Among the Mohammedans, Abraham is designated *chalil ullah* [خليل الله], ‘Friend of God.’”

Alexander says, “Or absolutely, **خَلِي** the Friend.”

¶ Since the Restoration we similarly have: “And as I said unto mine apostles, even so I say unto you, for you are mine apostles, even God’s high priests; ye are they whom my Father hath given me; ye are *my friends*” (D&C 84:63, also see D&C 84:77).

9 [Thou] whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou [art] my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away.

[Thou] whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “I have brought thee out of the families of the earth, I have chosen thee out of a kingdom.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Have I not taken thee from the ends of the earth, and from the speculations thereof called thee.” The BPE (Ⲯ) leaves out the expression *from the chief men thereof* (BPE), while Lamsa has “from among the prophets.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “In whom I have taken thee from the ends of the earth, and from the remote parts thereof have called thee.” ¶ Abraham was found by God in Ur of the Chaldees, and taken from the ends of the earth to be the father of the nations. The very name *Abraham* may well mean father of the beloved [people], not just father of many (see ISBE). When Abram was about to be sacrificed in his father’s (Terah) house, he cried to God for help. The Lord tells him about the land that he would go to: “And his voice was unto me: Abraham, Abraham, behold, my name is Jehovah, and I have heard thee, and have come down to deliver thee, and to take thee away from thy father’s house, and from all thy kinsfolk, *into a strange land* which thou knowest not of (Abraham 1:16, emphasis added). This was a way to say that the land of Israel would be very far from his present residence. We next consider a completely different interpretation of this verse, from speaking of Abraham to speaking of Israel. But first, let us consider the clause in question. ¶ *From the chief men thereof*. The Vulgate (Ⲯ) has: “in quo apprehēdi te ab extrémis terræ, et a longínquis ejus vocávi te, et dixi tibi : Servus meus es tu: elégi te, et non abjéci te.” Rawlinson explains that the only other place where אֲצִיל appears in the Hebrew Bible, it “has the meaning of ‘chief men’ (Exodus 24:11).” There is another possible meaning to consider—that of a distant location. It is so rendered by most moderns (for example, see AMP, ASV, CJB, Darby, ERV, ESV, FDB, FLS, HCSB, ISV, JPS, LBLA, LITV, NASB, RV, RV60, RV2009 SUD [LDS 2009 Spanish edition⁷], Luther, YLT). The first acceptance of HAL for אֲצִיל is *remotest parts*; for Gesenius, *sides, extremities*. Whitehouse has: “We have a similar word אֲצִיל in Heb., Ezekiel 13:18; Jeremiah 38:12].” ¶ If we accept this last translation, about the *extremities* of the earth, then the verse ceases to focus on Abraham as our Patriarch. Instead it speaks of Israel and her calling to be a *servant of the Lord* (עֶבֶד יְהוָה). It would then be best understood of the latter-day gathering of Israel from the extremities of the earth: The NASB renders ISAIAH 41:9 thus: “You whom I have taken from the

⁷ The LDS Spanish translation is absolutely wonderful and great care was taken in its production. No assumptions should be made, however, about the text itself being more correct or inspired than the KJV.

ends of the earth, And called from its remotest parts And said to you, ‘You are My servant, I have chosen you and not rejected you’” (NASB). This, then, would be a summary of *Rain in Due Season*. The Lord was to *take*, bring back or gather Israel [Ezekiel 36:24; 37:15 ff.] from the *ends of the earth*, even *its remotest parts* [Deuteronomy 30:1–8]. Israel would be charged with helping with this process, especially Ephraim at first with the help of Manasseh. Truly, Israel would be a *servant of the Lord* in this matter. ¶ *And said unto thee, Thou [art] my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And I have said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I delight in thee, and I will not thrust thee away.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And said to thee, Thou art my servant I have chosen thee and have not forsaken thee.” ¶ Skinner says: “Note that *Abraham* is called ‘my servant’ in Genesis 26:24 [אַבְרָהָם עֶבְדִּי]; and Psalm 105:6 [אַבְרָהָם עֶבְדִּי]. Psalm 105:42 [אַתָּה-אַבְרָהָם עֶבְדִּי].” Here in ISAIAH 41:8, we have עֶבְדִּי-אַתָּה, *my servant you are*. ¶ Delitzsch writes of the past: “The leading thought, ‘servant of Jehovah,’ which is characteristic of chapters 40–46, and lies at the root of the whole spirit of these addresses, more especially of their Christology, we first meet with here ... On the one hand, Israel is the *servant of Jehovah* [עֶבֶד יְהוָה] by virtue of a divine act ... On the other hand, Israel was the servant of Jehovah, inasmuch as it acted out what Jehovah had made it, partly in reverential worship of this God, and partly in active obedience.” But Israel would play a key role in the latter days, also. ¶ *And not cast thee away*. This was promised to Israel in *Rain in Due Season*. Baltzer⁸ notes: “But Leviticus 26 [see Leviticus 26:42, 44], the end of the Holiness Code, justifies the exile on the grounds of the people’s transgressions, and goes on: ‘Yet even then, when they are in the land of their enemies, I have not rejected them (בָּאֵס), or abhorred them (נִעַל), so as to destroy them utterly by breaking my covenant with them; for I Yahweh am their God; I will remember on their behalf the covenant with their forefathers.’” *I have chosen and not rejected you* is also an allusion back to ISAIAH 40:1–2. The proof that Israel was not rejected is that she would once again have a vital role to play in the latter days. Most of the members

⁸ Baltzer also has: “Various scholars have noted that the section has rhythmical characteristics. In this relatively short section [ISAIAH 41:8–13], eighteen words end with the second person masculine suffix. In the present MT at least, the ך echoes throughout ... It contrasts with the fourfold ך of the first person masculine singular suffix (‘my servant’; twice ‘my friend,’ ‘I’). But this is not merely a superficial literary device. The correspondence between the ‘you’ of the servant and the ‘I’ of God is the real theme of the passage.”

of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are direct descendants of Israel (and a few are adopted) and are, beginning with the Prophet Joseph Smith, servants of the Lord.

vv. 10–20. Regarding the verses of comfort in this section, Jenour says: “... may not every believer [liken these] promises to himself? Who can doubt that they were intended for the strengthening and consolation of the church to the end of the world?” Keith considers yet another application: “The language of the 10th verse, which is renewed in the 13th and 14th verses, describes the fears and the deliverances of Israel at last, when all nations shall be gathered against Jerusalem ... It will be in the moment of their utmost extremity that deliverance will come.”

10 ¶ Fear thou not; for I [am] with thee: be not dismayed; for I [am] thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Fear thou not; for I [am] with thee: be not dismayed. The Targum (ⓧ) has, “Fear not for my Word shall be thy support; be not dismayed.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “Fear not, for I am with thee; be not led astray.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “Fear not, for I am with thee: turn not aside.” Kay (as does Rawlinson) notes that *I am with thee* [אֲנִי-עִמָּךְ] will “fulfill all that was implied in the name, *Immanu-El* [אֱל-עִמָּנוּ].” *Fear not* אַל-תִּירָא.

Revelation 1:17 has: “And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last.” Young says: “God had once spoken, ‘Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward’ (Genesis 15:1) [and then to Isaac in Genesis 26:24⁹].” Fear and hope cannot co-exist in the mind at the same instance. ¶ *Yeah*, or *surely*, אַךְ, we have a double instance, אַךְ-עֲזֹרְתִּיךָ אַךְ-תִּמְכָּתִיךָ (*yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee*). President Thomas S. Monson explained that this verse was given as a promise to those who will trust in the Lord.¹⁰ Once we have learned how to pray and hear the comfort that the Lord gives, we need to trust these promises. Here, God tells us *not* to be *dismayed* (אַל-תִּשְׁתָּע). The DBL has שְׁתַּע as: “[to] be in a state of great alarm,

⁹ “And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham’s sake.”

¹⁰ Monson, President Thomas S. Monson. *Stand in Holy Places*. Retrieved from LDS.org 18 January 2014.

with a possible focus of discouragement about the future.” ¶ I believe this is one of the most significant lessons Heavenly Father wishes for me to learn: to trust in His reassuring spirit when dark clouds approach or doors close. Since joining the Church I have been able to see His hand in my life. Shortly after joining the Church I wanted to become a high school science teacher. I was asked to write an essay about the most important thing that happened to me when I was a college student as part of my application to enter a credentialing program. I knew that if I wrote about the most important thing that transpired during those years—my joining The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—I would most likely not be accepted into the program. I wrote my testimony and I was not accepted. In the interest of full disclosure, I should say that my grades were not good, either. While that door closed, another opened. In a year I was hired by the University of California where I was able to develop—with the Lord’s help—several models of conflict management and improved worker productivity.¹¹ As we put our trust in God and refuse to yield to feelings of despair we will experience emotional wellbeing and joy. The Lord always comes through. When people have needed my empathic listening, I often have had things happen in my life to permit me to be more empathetic.¹² Yes, God loves us and knows us and our needs intimately. ¶ *For I [am] thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee.* The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “For I am thy God. I have strengthened thee and helped thee.” God knows of our weaknesses and will strengthen us if we will permit Him to do so. ¶ *Yea, I*

¹¹ I cringe at the thought of the pressures that would have been placed upon me to teach science in a way that would have been incompatible with my religious views. While religion need not be afraid of science, for science will eventually conform itself to eternal truth, science is one of many of today’s idols. I have no problem with science as long as it does not contradict what God has taught through His scriptures and holy prophets. My work for the University of California, on the other hand, was guided by the hand of the Lord and permitted me to travel all over the world and especially to return frequently to the country of my birth. This also paved the way for my return to Chile with my wife after retiring.

¹² I have been blessed with amazing health. Yet sometimes we do need to suffer so that we can show empathy for others. In March 2014, I was operated and two benign tumors were found, associated with my salivary glands. The blood in the tube to drain my wound coagulated and within half an hour of coming home that night, I had to return to the hospital for a follow-up operation. I was able to clearly see the merciful hand of the Lord in all of this (I had a wonderful surgeon who was extremely careful not to sever nerves in the first operation and a wonderful second surgeon who was able to go in and clean up and thus permit me to avoid an infection during the second operation), and besides, I had a chance to bear my testimony to the medical staff as I was coming out of my second operation while I was still under the effects of the anesthesia. And He also knows how we can succor each other. When I came back to Church after my operation, young deacon Alan Uriel Martínez approached me and tenderly and empathically told me he understood what I was going through as he had been operated twice himself.

will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. The Targum (Ⓒ) has קִישׁוּרִי, *my truth* rather than *my righteousness*.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And secured thee with my just right hand.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “And the right hand of my just one hath upheld thee.” ¶ President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “There are numerous passages in the scriptures referring to the right hand, indicating that it is a symbol of righteousness and was used in the making of covenants.” President Smith quotes this verse and others in teaching that the Sacrament and other ordinances need to—when possible—be partaken off or carried out with the right hand.¹³ ¶ It is by the right hand that Peter strengthened the man who had been disabled for a lifetime (Acts 3:1–8). In General Conference today 6 April 2014, Sister Jean A. Stevens spoke about the importance of our reaching out for that hand of comfort and healing. It is not enough for the Savior or others who kindly love us to extend their hand out to us. We must take hold of it.¹⁴ Indeed, the Lord’s hands are always stretched toward us in loving invitation (Matthew 23:37b). To Israel the Lord says: “And I will bring you out from the people [or rather, אֲרָצוֹת, *the peoples*, suggestive of *the nations*—GB], and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out” (Ezekiel 20:34).

11 Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive[✓] with thee shall perish.

✓ the men of thy strife

Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Behold all thine adversaries shall be ashamed and confounded.” Instead of *incensed against thee*, the Peshitta (Ⓔ) has *reproach you* (Lamsa) / *envy thee* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has *fight* instead of *incensed*. While the Lord will comfort those who lean upon God for help, there is no such promise for those who reject Him. ¶ Cowles says: “God will confound and even annihilate the enemies of his people. They are described as having been enraged against Zion as having striven and fought against her; but God will bring them utterly to nought, so that, though sought for, they shall not be found.” ¶ Young says: “By means of an introductory *Behold!*

[Ⓔ] the prophet directs attention to his message. The two verbs immediately follow, the first of which may be rendered *they will be ashamed*, and the second *they will be confounded* [יִבְשׁוּ וְיִכָּלְמוּ].” Note that in the Hebrew text, these verbs follow immediately after the *Behold!* יִבְשׁוּ וְיִכָּלְמוּ, “Behold, they shall be ashamed and they shall be confounded ...” Leeser preserves the right emphasis: “Behold, ashamed and confounded shall be all that were incensed against thee.” ¶ *They shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish.* The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “For they shall be as nothing and all thine opponents shall be destroyed.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “They shall be as nothing, and the men shall perish that strive against thee.” All those who contend with thee shall perish. So it is that we read: “And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:3).

12 Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, [even] them that contended with thee: [✓] they that war against thee[✓] shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.

✓ the men of thy contention

✓ ✓ the men of thy war

Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, [even] them that contended with thee: The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Thou mayst seek but thou shalt not find the men, who through drunkenness will dare to insult thee.” The Peshitta (Ⓔ) has, *those who contend against thee shall not be found*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find the men that resist thee.” Those who fight against the Lord’s children shall not be found anymore. Those Saints who were persecuted, such as the Prophet Joseph Smith, will no longer be contending with the mobs and others who sought their harm: “Traitors and tyrants now fight him in vain” (Praise to the man¹⁵). ¶ *They that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.* The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “They shall be as nothing; the men that stirred themselves up to make war with thee *shall* be less than nothing.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “For they shall be as mere nothing: and they who war against thee shall be no more.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “They shall be as nothing: and as a thing consumed the men that war against thee.” Alexander notes, as we have previously (see אֵין in ISAIAH 40:17), that “אֵין and אֵין strictly denote nonexistence and annihilation.” אֵין is an

¹³ Joseph Fielding Smith, President. *Answers to Gospel Questions*, p. 153; *Doctrines of Salvation* 3:107–8.

¹⁴ Sister Jean A. Stevens: ‘Fear not I am with thee.’ Sunday Morning General Conference address, 6 April 2014.

¹⁵ William W. Phelps, 1792–1872.

expression of negation that also means non-existence, emptiness, vacuity (HALOT, Gesenius).

13 For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.

For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “For I am the Lord thy God, that will hold thee fast by thy right hand.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For I am thy God, who have hold of thy right hand.” Instead of *hold*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *strengthen*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “For I am the Lord thy God, who take thee by the hand.” ¶ Elder W. Craig Zwick quoted this scripture and observed that we must do our part: “If we will keep the commandments of God and walk hand in hand with Him in His paths, we will go forward with faith and never feel alone. Trust in His promise of eternal life, and allow peace and hope to distill upon you. When we connect with the Author of Peace and with His perfect and redeeming love, then we can come to know the reality of the Lord’s promise [in ISAIAH 41:13].”¹⁶ Note that the Lord offers to hold our right *hand*, which is very important, as it shows that the Prophet Joseph Smith did well in correcting the scriptures, for instance, where Abraham’s servant, incorrectly, entered into a covenant or swore, by putting his hand under Abraham’s thigh (Genesis 24:2, 9; 47:29). Instead, like here, it should be *hand*. The Lord gives us assurances, then, *by taking hold of our right hand* (also see Galatians 2:9, *the right hands of fellowship*). The Lord comes to our rescue. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “Nothing is so much calculated to lead people to forsake sin as to take them by the hand, and watch over them with tenderness. When persons manifest the least kindness and love to me, O what power it has over my mind ...”¹⁷ ¶ *Saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Who saith unto thee, Fear not, my Word *shall be* thy help (or, ‘thy support’).” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And who say to thee, Fear not.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “And say to thee: Fear not, I have helped thee.” There is nothing to fear when the Lord extends His hand to us. We must lay hold of it, however.

14 Fear not, thou worm Jacob, [and] ye men[✓] of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

✓ or, few men

Fear not, thou worm Jacob, [and] ye men of Israel. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Fear ye not, ye tribes of the house of Jacob, ye seed of Israel.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Jacob, diminutive Israel!” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, for the second clause, “You that are dead of Israel.”

¶ Alexander explains: “The same encouragement is here repeated, but with a direct contrast between Israel’s weakness and the strength of God.” Ibn Ezra suggests: “Israel had been considered by the Babylonians as worms.” Birks says: “This worm must prevail over all the banded strength of idolatrous kingdoms. This dying remnant shall beat into dust the confederacies of the world’s ungodliness ... above all, the time when the Stone shall smite the divided kingdoms of the fourth and latest empire (Daniel 2:34). Then all rule and authority that resists the dominion of Christ will be as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor, and the wind of judgment will carry it away for ever.” Regarding *worm*, Cowles says: “‘Not for your sake, be it known unto you, nor for your righteousness; but for my holy name’s sake’ (Compare with Ezekiel 36:32). There is but too much occasion to introduce this idea in connection with God’s exceeding great and precious promises, lest his people should assume that their own personal merits lie at the foundation of God’s discriminating mercies toward them.” ¶ One can always count on Kay to bring forth brilliant ideas and scripture links: “To accomplish that work the Redeemer Himself became ‘as a worm, and no man’ (Psalms 22:6¹⁸).” ¶ We here have an allusion to weakness—whether in numbers or strength as in: “That the fulness of my gospel might be proclaimed by the weak and the simple unto the ends of the world, and before kings and rulers” (D&C 1:23). Some of the exegetes have suggested that the mountains (ISAIAH 41:15) may well represent the powerful. In D&C we also have: “The weak things of the world shall come forth and break down the mighty and strong ones” (D&C 1:19a). As members of the Lord’s Church we can only be an instrument in His hand if we retain the humble qualities of the weak and the simple. ¶ *I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer* [ⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓ], *the Holy One of Israel.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “My Word shall be your help (or, ‘thy support’), saith the Lord, and your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “I have helped thee, saith thy God, who redeemeth thee, Israel.” ¶ Alexander suggests: “The word ⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓ, *redeemer*, would suggest to a Hebrew reader the ideas of a near kinsman (Leviticus 25:24, 25) and of deliverance from bondage by the payment of a ransom ... [as accomplished by the Son of God].” The Lord is

¹⁶ Elder W. Craig Zwick, *The Lord Thy God Will Hold Thy Hand*, *Ensign* (CR), November 2003, p.34.

¹⁷ *History of the Church* 5:23–24.

¹⁸ “But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people” (Psalm 22:6). Westermann suggests that we also look at Psalm 119:141.

our **נִסְלֵל**, all other instances being but a type of the deliverance from sin and from perdition through the infinite atonement and expiatory sacrifice of our Lord, Savior and Redeemer, even Jesus Christ.

15 Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: [✓] thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat [them] small, and shalt make the hills as chaff.

✓ mouths

Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: The LXX (⚡) reads, “Behold I have made thee like the wheels of a wain¹⁹ bruising to pieces a brood of pigeons (Brenton, ‘saw-shaped threshing wheels of a wagon,’ NETS, ‘new threshing wheels of a cart, new and saw shaped’).” In the Peshitta (⚡) it then adds that this threshing instrument *tears and crushes*. The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, “I have made thee as a new thrashing wain, with teeth like a saw.” The Talmud tradition (Seder Nezikin, Avodah Zarah 24b) has this related to goats who can then thresh the mountains. “What are *morigim*²⁰?— ‘Ulla said, It is a ‘turbel bed’, And what is a ‘turbel bed’? — Rab Judah said, A ‘goat with hooks’, wherewith the threshers thresh. Said Rabbi Joseph, What is the Scriptural [evidence]? It is written, Behold, I make thee a new *morag*²¹ having sharp teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountains” (Talmud, Soncino). ¶ Alexander says: “The image presented is [that of a] down-trodden worm reducing hills to powder, the essential idea being that of a weak and helpless object overcoming the most disproportionate obstacles.” Cowles says in part: “The ancient threshing sledge was built of planks of which two or three might be attached together in the manner of a stone-boat, with the forward ends raised, and the bottom set with sharp pieces of stone or iron, projecting downward to cut the straw and beat out the grain ... Here the bold figure makes it thresh the mountains and beat them fine as dust, and then the people fan their threshed-out grain and the Lord’s whirlwind scatters chaff and grain alike to the four winds—a clean and terrible destruction; in view of which the Lord’s people exult in him as their strength in the day of battle.” It is a day of battle for human souls. Ironside suggests, “The

¹⁹ “A wagon or cart” (Oxford).

²⁰ מורינים, Gesenius explains, “Spanish, *trillo*, an instrument of husbandry for rubbing out corn on a threshing floor. It consists of three or four wooden cylinders armed with stones or iron, and joined together as a sledge; it is drawn by cattle over the corn, to separate the grains from the ear.”

²¹ מורג

expression concerning Israel that God will make them a ‘sharp threshing instrument with teeth,’ points on to the great harvest of the last days when a remnant of Israel restored to the Lord will be used of Him to bring many down before Him in repentance and lead them to put faith in the message that they proclaim.” Jenour says: “It seems to intimate generally the gradual overthrow, by the instrumentality of the church, of all false religions and their upholders, who are compared to *mountains* and *hills*, which mean therefore idolatrous princes and governments.” ¶ *Thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat [them] small, and shalt make the hills as chaff.* The Targum (⚡) has, “Thou shalt slay the nations, thou shalt consume the kingdoms, thou shalt make *them* like chaff.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “Thou indeed shalt grind mountains and reduce hills to small pieces, and make them like dust.” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, “Thou shalt thrash the mountains, and break them in pieces: and shalt make the hills as chaff.” ¶ Keith says: “The instrumentality of Israel in the infliction of the judgments of heaven upon the nations of the world, here represented by mountains, is often asserted. The very same figure is employed in another instance, in reference to the same events, ‘Arise and thrash, daughter of Zion: for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass (in allusion to the dragging of the thrashing machine by cattle): and thou shalt beat in pieces many people’ (Micah 4:13).” It speaks of the gathering of Israel.

16 Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the LORD, [and] shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel.

Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: The Targum (⚡) has for the last clause, “And my Word shall scatter them as the whirlwind scattereth the chaff.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “And thou shalt winnow them; and a wind shall take them up, and a whirlwind shall sweep them away.” The Talmud tradition (Seder Nezikin, Avodah Zarah 44a), in speaking about the scattering, has: “It is an expression for scattering, as Rabbi Joseph translated the word in the passage, Thou shalt fan them and the wind shall carry them away, and we translate it: ‘Thou shalt winnow them and a wind will disperse them’!” (Talmud, Soncino). ¶ Whitehouse says: “The metaphor is continued: ‘Thou shalt winnow (literally, scatter) them, and a wind shall carry them away.’ This was the next stage in the agricultural operations. After the threshing of the corn, by the threshing-sledge driven over it, came the winnowing process. ‘The bruised

corn-ears were thrown up on wooden shovels when a moderate wind was blowing. The wind carried away the chaff from the threshing-floor while the heavier grains remained behind' (*Hebrew Antiquities*, p. 92). This metaphor of the bruising and the scattering describes Yahweh's treatment of the enemies of Israel. We have a similar use of this agricultural metaphor in Jeremiah 15:7 ['And I will fan them with a fan in the gates of the land; I will bereave them of children, I will destroy my people since they return not from their ways.']. The metaphor is frequently used to describe the separation of the wheat from the chaff, spiritually speaking. ¶ *And thou shalt rejoice in the LORD, [and] shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "But as for thee, thou shalt rejoice in the Word of the Lord, thou shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "But thou shalt be gladdened in the sanctuaries of Israel." The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, for the second clause, "In the Holy One of Israel thou shalt be joyful." ¶ Keith well says: "The conversion of the nation to God will follow or accompany these doings—they will then rejoice in him. The signal deliverance then vouchsafed to Israel will be blessed for the removal of the veil from their eyes at last." I love to rejoice in the Holy One of Israel, even Jesus the Christ. Tears stream down my face with joy and gratitude that I have this testimony of Christ. The two things I am most grateful in my life are my testimony of Jesus Christ and the knowledge that God **hears** [עָנָה] my prayers (see ISAIAH 41:17). These words about glorying or boasting in the Holy One of Israel, **בְּקִדּוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּתְהַלֵּל** are further developed in Jeremiah:

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִתְהַלֵּל חָכָם בְּחֻמָּתוֹ
וְאֵלֵי יִתְהַלֵּל הַגִּבּוֹר בְּגִבּוֹרָתוֹ אֱלֹהֵי יִתְהַלֵּל
עֲשִׂיר בְּעֲשָׂרוֹ:
כִּי אִם־בְּזֹאת יִתְהַלֵּל הַמִּתְהַלֵּל הַשָּׂבִיל וַיֵּדַע
אוֹתִי כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה עֹשֶׂה חֶסֶד מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה
בָּאָרֶץ כִּי־בְאֵלָה חִפְצָתִי נֶאֱמַר־יְהוָה:

"Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man **glory** in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man **glory** in his might, let not the rich man **glory** in his riches: But let him that **glorifieth glory** in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 9:23–24, in *Biblia Hebraica*, *Jeremia* 9:22–23).

17 [When] the poor and needy seek water, and [there is] none, [and] their

tongue faileth for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "The poor and the needy long after instruction (or, 'doctrine'), as the thirsty after water, but do not find it; their spirit faints in affliction. I, the Lord, will hear their prayer; I, the God of Israel, will not cast them off." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "And the poor and the needy shall exult with joy: for when they shall seek water and there shall be none, and their tongue is parched with thirst; I the Lord their God, I the God of Israel will hear and will not forsake them." The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) renders *been dry* instead of *faileth*. ¶ Rashi, in Rabbi Rosenberg correctly explains that this verse is similar to Amos 8:11, at it refers to the latter days. Rashi adds (see R. Rosenberg, who also mentions *Shabbath* 138b,²² *Midrash Psalms* 63:2): "He shall prepare for them bread and water and cause His Shechinah and His spirit to rest in the mouth of their prophets." ¶ This verse is a promise that the Lord will not abandon Israel and will also cause Zion to flourish like a rose. Horsley explains of Isaiah 41:17–19: "The images used in these verses are consecrated by the perpetual usage of the prophets to denote the spiritual blessings and graces of the Gospel." ¶ *I the LORD will hear them.* Alexander says: "עָנָה is not to hear in general, but to hear prayer in a favourable sense, to answer it." This is because of the new covenant wherein God will again be the God of Israel, and the children of Jacob His people.

18 I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.

I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "I will gather their captives from the midst of the nations, and I will lead them in the right path; and I will open for them rivers in torrent-beds, and fountains in the midst of the valleys." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "But will open rivers on the mountains, and fountains in the midst of plains." Instead of *high places*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has the

²² "For Rab said, 'Our Rabbis taught . . . The Torah is destined to be forgotten in Israel, as it is said, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. And it is said, And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it. "The word of the Lord" means . . . prophecy"' (Talmud, Mas. Shabbath 138b).

equivalent of **הַר** *mountain* (Lamsa) or *mount* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (**D**) has, “I will open rivers in the high hills, and fountains in the midst of the plains.” ¶ Orelli says: “Physical and spiritual here pass into each other ... hereafter it will enjoy, even in inhospitable paths, inwardly and outwardly divine fulness of blessing, as to which it is to be noted, that already such a recreating even of the most barren tracts of its land was often promised the nation in reference to the time of its gracious restoration.” ¶ The opening of rivers in high places seems an allusion to the river that will come out of the House of the Lord in Jerusalem—a river associated with the healing of the Dead Sea.²³ Keith explains: “Another consequent, or concomitant, of the foregoing events, is the restored fertility of the land. That this description is to be understood literally, and not of spiritual blessings, which are often represented by water, although these will then also be bestowed, appears from the 19th verse, which will not bear such an application.” Rashi (in Rabbi Rosenberg) suggests that the rivers also stand for the revelatory power of prophecy that will be manifest in the last days. Rabbi Rosenberg suggests we return to look at the Talmudic note we quoted in ISAIAH 41:7. Here is an additional quote of interest: “. . . for Rab [Rashi] said: ‘The Torah is destined to be forgotten in Israel, because it is said, Then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful: now, I do not know what this wonder is, but when it is said, Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a wonderful work among this people, even a wonderful work and a wonder [and the wisdom of their wise men shall perish], it follows that this wonder refers to Torah.’” The context makes it clear that **Torah** means not just the *law*, or the five books of Moses. There also will be **Torah** **הַרְוֵהוּ**, or *instruction*. For more on this acceptance, see Gesenius, HALOT, BDB, DBL and other lexicons. In

²³ “Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar. Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side. And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters were to the loins. Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over. And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen this? Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the brink of the river. Now when I had returned, behold, at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other. Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed” (Ezekiel 47:1-8).

ISAIAH 42:4, the children of Israel wait to receive the law or instruction from the Lord. This is to be understood as renewed revelation from on high. ¶ And this has been fulfilled beginning with the day a young Ephraimite boy went to the woods to pray. In Joseph’s own words we read: “I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me ... When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*” (JS-History 1:16–17). It is at this point where **הַרְוֵהוּ** has once again poured out upon the earth and the gathering of Israel begun in earnest as spoken about in Deuteronomy 30 and Ezekiel 37. Wordsworth similarly suggests that this verse is made manifest: “By the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit on all nations (ISAIAH 30:25; 35:6; 44:3).” ¶ Elder LeGrand Richards said of Isaiah: “He saw the water flow down from the high places where we have reservoired it in these mountain fastnesses for summer’s use.”²⁴ Besides its application to the Saints lodging in the Rocky Mountains, this verse speaks about the land of Israel. George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl wrote: “On December 9, 1917, General Allenby took possession of Jerusalem, and on November 2, the same year, Balfour issued his famous letter to Baron Rothschild, in which he stated that, ‘His Majesty’s government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.’ Ten nations, including the United States, gave official endorsement to that policy. ... The barren soil has been covered with trees, and herds and flocks have found feed on the hill sides (ISAIAH 41:18–20).”²⁵ Pools of water, especially in high places, as has been mentioned, can be applied to revelation and inspiration from God. Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained in part: “It will be but a similitude of the living waters then being poured out upon the Lord’s people.”²⁶ ¶ *I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.* The Targum (**Ⲯ**) has **חַיִּי**, *thirsty* instead of **יָבֵשׁ** *dry* land in the Masoretic text (**מ**).²⁷ The LXX (**Ⲭ**) reads, “I will turn the wilderness into watery fens (Brenton, ‘I will make

²⁴ Elder LeGrand Richards, A Testimony, *Ensign* (CR), November 1980, p.63.

²⁵ George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, The World War Predicted, edited and arranged by Philip C. Reynolds, 7 vols., 4:, p.263–264.

²⁶ Bruce R. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ*, p.204–206.

²⁷ Halfway through verse 18 to the end of the chapter, Pauli’s Targum (**Ⲯ**) translation is missing. For the rest of this chapter I lean mostly on Stenning and Chilton as well as on the Aramaic text in the CAL Targums.

the desert pools of water'), and with streams refresh the thirsty ground." The Douay-Rheims (D) has, "I will turn the desert into pools of waters, and the impassable land into streams of waters." ¶ Once again, water is used to describe the gift of revelation as well as gifts from on high.

19 I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, [and] the pine, and the box tree together:

The LXX (G) reads, "And I will plant in the dry wilderness the cedar and box, the myrtle and cypress and elm." The Douay-Rheims (D) has *olive tree* instead of *oil tree*. ¶ The blessings that will accompany the gathering will be spiritual and physical. Cowles says: "He plants all the choicest trees in the most unlikely situations, where you would least of all expect them. With trees [fertility, verdure and beauty return]—God makes these extraordinary superhuman changes that all men may know that this is his almighty hand, working to new-create where needs be, for the relief, comfort and joy of his trusting people."

20 That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the LORD hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.

The LXX (G) reads, "That they may see and know, and consider and understand at once that the hand of the Lord hath done these things; even what the Holy One of Israel hath pointed out." ¶ To **see**, and **know**, and **consider** and **understand** form a most forceful expression of comfort that a believer may put on the Holy One of Israel (יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמֹ וְיִשְׁכִּיל).²⁸

Alexander says: "יְשִׁמוּ, they may place, seems to be an elliptical expression for יְשִׁמוּ לֵב may place their **heart**, i.e. apply their mind, or give attention." LHI translates it as *take to heart*. Jenour says: "Here the reason why God had predicted these things is assigned. It was, that men, before ignorant of him, might see and know, by the accomplishment of these prophecies, that he, by whose inspiration they were uttered, is the only true God." This rings a bell to us as Latter-day Saints that realize that the Book of Mormon was specially preserved for us, in the latter days. Westermann says: "Here the verb [בְּרָאָה] has the overtone, inherent from the beginning, of miraculous new **creation**." Indeed, **and** the **Holy One of Israel** hath **created** it,

וְקִדְּשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרָאָה. It seems to bring forth the time spoken of by Jeremiah when a new heart²⁸ shall be put into us: "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; **and will be their God**, and they shall be **my people**. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jeremiah 31:33–34, emphasis added).

vv. 21–29. Jenour says: "Jehovah, having proved his divinity by the prediction of future events; and having, as it were by the way, addressed his people in terms of consolation, now turns to the idolaters supposed to be assembled before him, and calls upon them to bring forth their idols, that they in their turn might speak and foretell something [that would] take place immediately, or more distant events, which would not happen for a long time: or, if they confessed themselves unable to do either of these, to shew by the performance of some action, either good or evil, that they at least possessed some power. But, in answer to this appeal, the idols can neither say nor do anything, and are therefore pronounced vain and unprofitable." Keith here goes beyond the nothingness of the idols to the nothingness of man—unless man leans upon God.

21 ¶ Produce your cause, saith the LORD; bring forth your strong [reasons], saith the King of Jacob.

✓ Cause to come near

The LXX (G) reads, "The trial of you is near, saith the Lord God; your councils are nigh at hand, saith the king of Jacob." The BPE (S), instead of *your strong [reasons]* has *your arguments*. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, "Bring your cause near, saith the Lord: bring hither, if you have any thing to allege, saith the King of Jacob." ¶ Birks has: "The controversy with the nations is resumed again, under the same figure of a trial or assize.²⁹ The idolaters are called to state their own case, and bring forward their strongest reasons, to disprove God's charge against them of blindness and folly. The appeal turns from God's power to His prescient wisdom, in which these idols, their priests, and their worshippers, have no share." ¶ **King of Jacob**,

²⁸ Also see Psalm 51:10.

²⁹ Judicial inquest (Webster).

מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל. Nägelsbach explains: “Jehovah is often called King of the chosen people (compare on ISAIAH 43:15); but the expression *King of Jacob* occurs only here ... In ISAIAH 41:22 the LORD addresses Israel, claiming them for His side, and identifying His and their cause.” ¶ Elder Bruce R. McConkie gave us an exquisite application for this scripture: “On the one hand we are obligated and required to know the doctrines of the Church. We are to treasure up the words of eternal life. We are to reason as intelligently as we are able. We are to use every faculty and capacity with which we are endowed to proclaim the message of salvation and to make it intelligent to ourselves and to our Father’s other children. But after we have done that, and also in the process of doing it, we are obligated to bear testimony—to let the world know and our associate members of the Church know—that in our hearts, by the revelation of the Holy Spirit to our souls, we know of the truth and divinity of the work and of the doctrines that we teach. Now let me, if I may, take a classical illustration from the ancient records of how this is done. Peter and his associates had the same obligation for their day that we have for ours: to carry the message of salvation to the ends of the earth. I suppose Peter read and taught the revelations that Isaiah and the prophets gave about Christ and his gospel. He reasoned with the people about them. He followed the divine counsel, ‘Come now, and let us reason together ...’ (ISAIAH 1:18). He obeyed the divine decree, ‘... bring forth your strong reasons’ (ISAIAH. 41: 21). But he did something more than that. After he had taught the doctrines and after he had reasoned, he bore a personal witness of the truth and divinity of what he was presenting to his fellowmen; and the Lord prepared him to do just that by giving him spiritual experiences, by letting the power of the Holy Spirit rest upon him.”³⁰

22 Let them bring [them] forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things, what they [be], that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come.

✓ set our heart upon them

Let them bring [them] forth, and shew us what shall happen: The LXX (6) reads, “Let them draw near and tell you what will happen.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Let them come, and tell us all things that are to come.” ¶ Cowles writes: “The single point here is a challenge to produce a case of real prophecy. It may be a prediction previously made, but of events then appearing or about

to appear; or a new prophecy first brought out at that time.” ¶ People in the latter-days were challenged to come up with a prophecy to equal the least of those found in the Doctrine and Covenants: “Your eyes have been upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and his language you have known, and his imperfections you have known; and you have sought in your hearts knowledge that you might express beyond his language; this you also know. Now, seek ye out of the Book of Commandments, even the least that is among them, and appoint him that is the most wise among you; Or, if there be any among you that shall make one alike unto it, then ye are justified in saying that ye do not know that they are true” (D&C 67:5–7). A similar challenge is made by Allah regarding the Quran (Hud 11:13; Yunus 10:38), about coming up with ten surahs (i.e., chapters) or even one. ¶ *Let them shew the former things, what they [be], that we may consider them.* The LXX (6) reads, “Or such things as these before they come to pass. Tell us that we may apply our understanding.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Tell us the former things what they were: and we will set our heart upon them.” ¶ Barnes says: “Let the idols, or the worshippers of idols, bring forth the evidences of their divine nature and power. Or more probably it means, ‘let them draw near or approach.’” ¶ *And know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come.* The LXX (6) reads, “And that we may know the final issue, and the train of events leading to it.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, for the second half, “And tell us the things that are to come.” Faussett, leaning on Maurer, has: “Show what former predictions the idols have given, that we may compare the event (‘latter end’) with them; or give new prophecies (‘declare things to come’) (ISAIAH 42:9).” The idols are challenged to bring forth any sort of prophecy, form the most basic.

23 Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye [are] gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold [it] together.

Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye [are] gods: The Stenning Targum translation (T) has, “Declare the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know whether ye are serving idols wherein is any profit.” The LXX (6) reads, “Tell us, announce to us the things in successive train to the issue; and we will acknowledge that you are gods.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, for the second clause, “And we shall know that ye are gods.” ¶ Elder B. H. Roberts beautifully testified: “Such the challenge of God to those who questioned the things that he had done in

³⁰ Elder Bruce R. McConkie, Upon Judea’s Plains, *Ensign* (CR), July 1973, p.27.

Israel in ancient times; that doubted that he had made Israel; and now, looking into the future, doubted if God would bring forth Israel's deliverer, the Messiah. God was saying to these: Produce your cause, let us reason together; 'show us things that are to come, that we may know that ye are gods.' God's challenge to their unbelief, makes it clear that the future, the knowledge of it, belongs to God alone, and to his servants to whom he reveals it; not to those who question his work, or challenge his power. 'Prophecy' or power to penetrate into the future, is not given to Satan or to his emissaries. For them that veil will not part. 'For prophecy came not in olden time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' So now, prophecy, knowledge of the future, is of God, and of his servants to whom he reveals it. Prophecy, in a way, is history reversed. Prophecy is a fore-telling of that which shall be; History, an aftertelling, events that have been."³¹ Elder Parley P. Pratt suggested, "Says the prophet to the idols, 'Tell us what shall be, that we may know that ye are gods.'"³² ¶ Cowles has: "The challenge, 'Do good, or do evil,' we must consider as addressed to idol gods. Let them really show that they do anything, good or evil; and they shall have all credit for it. The implication here—affirmed in the strongest form in ISAIAH 41:24—is that they are mere nothings, utterly powerless for any result, even the least possible, good or evil.—The word 'dismayed,' (here as in ISAIAH 41:10) has the meaning of *looking about* on all sides." ¶ I testify that Latter-day Prophets, Seers and Revelators have the gift of prophecy and prophecy to the whole world as directed by the Lord. Members receive revelation and inspiration for themselves. On occasion, members may receive revelation through the *tender mercies of the Lord* for their own edification.³³ Joseph

³¹ Roberts, B. H. *Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. 6 vols. 1930. Reprint. Orem, Utah: Sonos Publishing Inc., 1991, p. 550.

³² Pratt, Parley P. *A Voice of Warning and Instruction to All People Or, an Introduction to the Faith and Doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* By Elder Parley P. Pratt. New Edition. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1957. Included is the preface to the First American Edition (1837) and the Second European Edition (December 4, 1846), p. 27.

³³ I had one such experience in 1998. I feel that since the event has transpired, I may share it here. Elder Travis Tuttle and Elder Andrew Propst were taken hostage for a ransom, when they were serving as LDS missionaries in Samara, Russia, in March 1998. I wrote in my journal: "Two Elders were abducted in Russia last Wednesday. It came out in the local paper Friday morning. When I read the information to Linda she was quite shaken and filled with empathy for the missionaries and for their families. There was much prayer on their behalf around the world. Saturday night, as I was ready to go to bed, after having said my kneeling prayers, I heard the Spirit: 'The missionaries will be released tomorrow.' I wondered if that meant my tomorrow or if I would find out tomorrow (Sunday). Sunday morning, while I was working translating a patriarchal blessing for a friend in our ward, Linda came in all excited to tell me the Elders had been freed. Linda followed the whole event very closely, by

Smith the Prophet taught that "No man can receive the Holy Ghost without receiving revelations. The Holy Ghost is a revelator."³⁴ Although most revelations are driven by a question or a request, this is not always the case. Many scholars deny the unity of Isaiah simply because they do not believe that God can reveal the future to man; and that Isaiah was too accurate about the future. Thus, they argue, someone else wrote ISAIAH 40 ff. One well-known present-day Rabbi and university biblical professor declared that you have to begin exegesis from the perspective of an atheist. At least he was willing to admit it on the record, and I heard him say it. The Savior warned: "Yea, wo unto him that shall deny the revelations of the Lord, and that shall say the Lord no longer worketh by revelation, or by prophecy, or by gifts, or by tongues, or by healings, or by the power of the Holy Ghost!" (3 Nephi 29:6).

¶ *Yea, do good or do evil*, אַף-יִשְׁכַּחוּ יַתְרָעוּ, *that we may be dismayed, and behold [it] together*. The LXX (Ϟ) reads, "Confer favours and inflict punishments, and we will pay respect and see at once." The Douay-Rheims (ϟ) has, "Do ye also good or evil, if you can: and let us speak, and see together." ¶ Of course the idols were no more able to do good or evil than to prophesy of something good or bad. ¶ Alexander says: "The Hebrews constantly employing *and* where *or* in English seems essential to the sense ... Most interpreters retain the idiomatic meaning of the same expressions elsewhere, namely, that of doing anything whatever, good or bad (see Jeremiah 10:5, Zephaniah 1:12)." Westermann cleverly suggests: "Do something, good or evil, so that we bow down and feel dread." Nägelsbach calls the clause אַף-יִשְׁכַּחוּ יַתְרָעוּ a "proverbial expression." ¶ *And be dismayed*, וְנִשְׁתַּחֲוּהוּ, שָׁתַע. Baltzer suggests: "The reaction that must be meant could be described as *stupor*, a word that can cover fear, awe, astonishment, and paralysis."

24 Behold, ye [are] of nothing, וְ and your work of nought: וְ an abomination [is he that] chooseth you.

- ✓ or, worse than nothing
- ✓ ✓ or, worse than a viper

The Stenning Targum (Ϡ) translation has, "wherein ye take pleasure" rather than "chooseth you." The LXX

monitoring papers on the Web etc. Later on that day, Linda came in crying as she saw an interview of the parents of one of the missionaries. The mother, according to Linda, kept asking her son if he was Okay. 'I don't have to wait 'till Mother's Day to talk to you?' the mother had asked in disbelief" [Journal entry, 23 March 1998].

³⁴ Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:58.

(6) reads, “That wherever you are thence is your operation. They have chosen you an abomination from the earth.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Behold, you are of nothing, and your work of that which hath no being: he that hath chosen you is an abomination.” ¶ McFadyen says: “A dead silence follows the challenge. The gods have nothing to say; therefore they are of nothing, nonentities, not gods at all.”

25 I have raised up [one] from the north, and he shall come: from the rising of the sun shall he call upon my name: and he shall come upon princes as [upon] mortar, and as the potter treadeth clay.

The Targum (T) is explicit about making this *one from the north* a מֶלֶךְ, or king. Rather than *call upon my name*, Chilton (C) has “I will make him mighty by my name,” and Stenning (S) “I will make him strong in my name.” The LXX (6) reads, “But I have raised up that one from the north, and that other from the risings of the sun; they shall be called by my name: let the Archons come, and as the clay of the potter— even as a potter treadeth clay so shall you be trampled down.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “I have raised up one from the north, and he shall come from the rising of the sun: he shall call upon my name, and he shall make princes to be as dirt, and as the potter treading clay.”

¶ Whitehouse says about יִקְרָא בְּשֵׁמִי: “*calleth upon my name*” is the ordinary Hebrew phrase for ‘invoke’; cf. Genesis 4:26 [יְהוָה בְּשֵׁם יִקְרָא לַיהוָה] ‘then began men to call upon the name of the LORD’].” Many exegetes make much of this chapter, and certainly this verse, about Cyrus. Alexander explains it: “[The passage] affords a remarkable example of prophetic foresight. The act of calling on the name of Jehovah is commonly regarded as an allusion to the profession of the true religion, or at least the recognition of Jehovah as the true God, on the part of Cyrus (Ezra 1:2).” Birks has: “The change from the past to the future tense is ... to teach that this coming of Cyrus, though future, is as sure as if already past. The promise ‘he shall call upon my name’ is the counterpart to ISAIAH 45:3–4, ‘I have called thee by thy name.’ ... The Allwise God here calls Cyrus by his name, long before his birth; and Cyrus owns, in his turn, the Power which has exalted and honoured him. In his decree he calls Him by His own proper name, ‘Jehovah, the God of Israel, He is the God, Whose house is in Jerusalem.’” The Lord prophecies of such notable future events; the idols are left speechless.

26 Who hath declared from the beginning, that we may know? and beforetime, that we may say, [He is] righteous? yea, [there is] none that sheweth, yea, [there is] none that declareth, yea, [there is] none that heareth your words.

Who hath declared from the beginning, that we may know? and beforetime, that we may say, [He is] righteous? The Targum (T) translations render, instead of “[He is] righteous?” the expression “It is true” as a question (Stenning) and as an exclamation (Chilton). The LXX (6) reads, “Who now can tell these things from the beginning, that we may know, even these things before hand: that we may say, The prediction is true.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has *and from time of old* instead of *and beforetime*. ¶ Ibn Ezra says that here צָדִיק means *correct* (as compared to false) rather than *righteous*. HALOT likewise gives as one acceptance “I. of a thing which is examined and found to be in order: just: —a. נִאֲמָר צָדִיק we say, ‘It is correct’ [as in ISAIAH 41²⁶].” ¶ *Yea, [there is] none that sheweth, yea, [there is] none that declareth, yea, [there is] none that heareth your words.* The LXX (6) reads, “There is none who predicteth, nor doth any one hear your words.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Thou art just. ¶ Keith says: “The tone of irony is here resumed.” The Lord asks why there is silence.

27 The first [shall say] to Zion, Behold, behold them: and I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings.

The first [shall say] to Zion, Behold, behold them: The Stenning Targum translation (S) has, “The words of comfort that the prophets prophesied aforetime concerning Zion, behold, they have come to pass.” Chilton renders it “*The words of consolation which the prophets prophesied from the first to Zion, behold they come [to pass].*” The LXX (6) reads, “I will first give notice to Sion.” For the first clause, the Peshitta (S) explains that these things are important for Zion. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, for the second clause, “Behold they are here.” ¶ Cowles explains: “The reader will scarcely get the sense of this verse unless he considers that ‘*the first*’ is taken from ISAIAH 41:4, ‘I the Lord, *the first*.’ ... The sense therefore is not, I was the first to make this prediction; but [rather that Christ is the Alpha and Omega.]” ¶ *And I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings.* The LXX (6) reads, “And I will comfort Jerusalem on the way.” The Douay-Rheims (V)

has, “And to Jerusalem I will give an evangelist.” Cowles suggests this is intimately tied to ISAIAH 40:9.

28 For I beheld, and [there was] no man; even among ~~them~~ **men**, and [there was] no counsellor, that, when I asked of them, could answer [✓] a word.

✓ return

For I beheld, and there was no man; even among men. The Stenning Targum (Ⓢ) translation has, “And it is revealed before me that (lit. *and*) there is no man whose works are good.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “For of the nations behold there is none, and of the idols none giveth warning.” The Peshitta (Ⓟ) renders it something like, “I observed that there was none who could meditate upon these things.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “And I saw, and there was no one even among them to consult.” ¶ It is clear from the JST textual correction that it was not only the idols who were left speechless, but also the men who leaned upon them. ¶ *And there was no counsellor, that, when I asked of them, could answer a word.* The Stenning Targum (Ⓢ) translation has, “And of these that (lit. *and*) there is no one that giveth counsel: and I asked them, *to see* if they would answer a word,” while Chilton has, “Among these there is no counsellor. I asked them, *if only* they *would* give an answer!” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And should I ask them, Whence are you? They could not make me any answer.” The Peshitta (Ⓟ) renders it something like, “Nor that I could ask and receive an answer.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “Or who, when I asked, could answer a word.” ¶ And indeed, no answer would be forthcoming. All falsehood—whether it comes from philosophy, science or false religion—will fall before the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

29 Behold, they [are] all vanity; their works [are] nothing: their molten images [are] wind and confusion.

Behold, they [are] all vanity. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “For are these they who made you? They are indeed those who vainly lead you astray.” The Peshitta (Ⓟ) has “Behold, they are all nothing.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “Behold they are all in the wrong.” ¶ Returning to the idols again, the Lord makes it clear that they have

nothing positive to contribute to the conversation. Cowles notes: “The English version seems to assume that the Lord has looked among the heathen gods for some wise man to give counsel or aid, but finds none; and assigns this as a reason for what he is said in the verse previous to have done. A closer rendering will much improve the sense: ‘I *will* look’ (i.e., once more, to give the idol gods yet another trial), ‘but there is no one’ [to attempt it]; ‘even of them all, there is none to speak wisdom.’ The whole verse is remarkably elliptical. The last clause seems to mean; I will ask them yet again, and [perhaps] they will give back a word.” ¶ *Their works [are] nothing:* The Peshitta (Ⓟ) has *their works are in vain* (BPE) / *their works are vanity* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “And their works are vain.” ¶ *Their molten images [are] wind [ⓈⓇⓇ] and confusion [ⓈⓇⓇ].* The Stenning Targum (Ⓢ) translation has, “Plunder and destruction are *the subject of* their thoughts.” The Peshitta (Ⓟ) has *their works are wind and vanity* (BPE) / *their images are wind and vanity* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “Their idols are wind and vanity.” The word for *wind* (ⓈⓇⓇ) in this instance is equivalent to the expression *hot air*. That is, nothing but empty and vain words. Cowles has: “But no; not the first word can be elicited from these senseless gods, even by the most reasonable call, the fairest opportunity, the most pressing exigency, or the most caustic sarcasm. They are utter vanity, mere nothings. Their molten images are only wind—void and empty as old chaos. The word rendered ‘*confusion*’ is the same that Moses applies to chaos (Genesis 1:2) [ⓈⓇⓇ, *without form*, KJV—GB].” A FINAL NOTE: Many suggest that this and other chapters that speak of Cyrus were written after-the-fact, to which Birks says: “Those who seek to degrade these chapters into forgeries after Cyrus had arisen and prospered, only range themselves, in this great controversy, side by side with the idolatrous heathen of ISAIAH’s days.” Birks chastises the critics: “The whole description is true, not only in reference to these old heathen idolaters, but to heathenized critics in modern times, who see only forgeries after the event in these Divine prophecies.”

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Isaiah 42

Henderson explains: “In determining the application of this prophecy, it is necessary to ascertain the meaning of the phrase, **עֶבֶד יְהוָה**, *the servant of Jehovah*. That Isaiah uses it in various senses, no one familiar with his writings will deny. It is applied to himself (ISAIAH 20:3); to Eliakim (ISAIAH 22:20); to the Jewish people (ISAIAH 41:8, 9; 41:8, 9; 44:1, 2, 21; 45:4; 48:20); and to a distinguished Divine Legate ... (in particular, ISAIAH 42:1–7; 49:1–9; 50:5–10; 52:13–53 with which compare Zechariah 3:8) ... That [these last mentioned apply] exclusively to the Messiah has been maintained by the great body of interpreters, both ancient and modern, and more especially by Vitringa, Michaelis, Lowth, V. d. Palm, Umbreit, Hengstenberg, Jenour, and Scholz. The principal reasons advanced in defence of this position are the following: First, the passage is directly applied to our Saviour by the inspired evangelist Matthew 12:17–21; and part of the first verse is verbally adopted in the Divine testimony to his Messiahship at the Jordan (Matthew 3:17), and on the mount of transfiguration (Matthew 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 9:35). To which add the reference made to the 6th verse by Simeon, in his inspired testimony (Luke 2:32). Secondly, this interpretation is that of the Chaldee Paraphrast, and is advocated by Kimhi and Abarbanel ... The latter writer scruples not to assert that all those who do not interpret the prophecy of the Messiah have been struck with **blindness**, **סְנוּרִים**. Thirdly, the totality of character exhibited in the passage is such as to render it inapplicable to any but our Lord ... Fourthly, the subject to which the prophecy has respect, is obviously identical with that exhibited in ISAIAH 49:1–12. The person and office of the same individual are described in both. They equally insist on his mediatorial character, and the universality of the dispensation of knowledge and happiness which he was to establish in the world. Lastly, every predicate here specified most aptly applies to Christ.” ¶ Simeon exhorts: “Surely if Moses was commanded to put off his shoes because the place where he stood was sanctified by the Divine presence, it becomes us to express the profoundest reverence, while we listen to the God of heaven giving his commission to his only dear Son respecting the redemption of a ruined world.” Spurgeon says: “Now Isaiah, by God’s Spirit, told the Israelites concerning Christ hundreds of years before Christ came; and yet the terms are so express that one might almost think that they were written after the event.” ¶ **Jehovah** speaks about Himself in this chapter (e.g., ISAIAH 42:6, “**I Jehovah**,” **אֲנִי יְהוָה**) through the principle of *Divine Investiture* (that is, He represents the Father):

אֲנִי יְהוָה קְרָאתִיךָ בְּצֶדֶק וְאֶתֵּן כִּי יָדְךָ וְאֶצְרֶךָ לְבְרִית עִם לְאוֹר בְּנֵי־אָדָם׃

(I the LORD [Jehovah] have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the nations.)

Jenour has: “The Messiah is called a servant,—how then can he be equal with God? ... But does not St. Paul solve the difficulty in the passage in ... Philippians 2:5 [Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God (Philippians 2:5)] ... The Son of God, then, is called a servant, because he undertook the *obligations* of a servant ... he acted not for himself, but as the minister of his Father ...”

vv. 1–3 make reference to the coming of our Savior in the meridian of times, while ISAIAH 42:4 speaks of the restoration of the Gospel in the last days, when His law shall be made known again. Rawlinson says: “There are comparatively few who deny that, in this place at any rate, the ‘Servant of the Lord’ is the Messiah. (So the Targum on the passage; so Abar-banel; so, among moderns, Oehler, Delitzsch, and Mr. Cheyne.) The portraiture has ‘so strong an individuality and such marked personal features, that it cannot possibly be a mere personified collective;’ and it goes so ‘infinitely beyond anything of which a man was ever capable that it can only be the future Christ’ (Delitzsch). It may be added that St. Matthew (Matthew 12:17–21¹) distinctly

applies the passage to our Lord.” Indeed, contrasting The Servant of the Lord, Christ, to others who play servant roles also, Rawlinson says: “One is proclaimed to us greater than the sons of men the perfect model of a ‘servant of God,’ obedient in all things, unceasingly active in God’s service, never fainting, never wearying. ‘My Father worketh hitherto, and I work,’ said Jesus; (John 5:17); ‘My meat is to do the will of my Father which sent me, and to finish his work’; (John 4:34); ‘Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?’ (Luke 2:49).” Cowles declares that these verses in Isaiah are about Christ but admits that the

whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.” —Matthew 12:17–21

¹ “That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in

Savior does call on others to help Him accomplish the work. This is what we have called the *How beautiful are the feet principle*. Cowles points us to John 20:21b: “As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you” (John 20:21). ¶ In these verses we will also see the scattering and gathering of Israel. The reader will probably say that I see the scattering and gathering of Israel *everywhere*, and certainly this is true in the Hebrew Scriptures. The work of gathering will be intimately—on a one-by one basis—carried out by the Lord Himself, as He invites us to come unto Him.

1 ¶ BEHOLD my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, [in whom] my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

BEHOLD my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, [in whom] my soul delighteth. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “**בְּחִירִי**,” or, *chosen*.² Chilton (Ⲯ) has, “my chosen in whom my *Memra* is pleased.” Baltzer says: “There is something mysterious about the not naming of the one whom Yahweh installs. The name is ‘hidden’ with God—in *petto*,³ so to speak. This intensifies the dramatic tension.” According to Wordsworth: “The Chaldee Targum begins this chapter with the remarkable words, ‘Behold My servant, Messiah⁴, My Beloved, in Whom My Word is well pleased: I will put My Holy Spirit upon Him, and He will reveal My Judgment to the Gentiles.’” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “JACOB is my servant, I will uphold him, Israel is my chosen one, my soul hath embraced him.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “Behold my servant, I will uphold him: my elect, my soul delighteth in him.” Redak (Rabbi David Kimhi) identifies “my servant” here with “King-Messiah” who will be an arbiter among the nations, bringing about world peace (in Rosenberg). ¶ **הִנֵּן**, *behold*. Henderson says: “The transition was easy, from the temporal deliverance to be effected by Cyrus, to the spiritual salvation to be accomplished by the Messiah, **הִנֵּן** has there all its force as a demonstrative interjection, and marks the transition to a new subject, on which it

² Pauli (Ⲯ) renders **בְּחִירִי**, *chosen*, as *Messiah*. On the other hand, see ISAIAH 43:10, **עֲבָדִי מְשִׁיחָא**. For **מְשִׁיחָא** also see Jastrow, *my chosen, my select* (but see next note on **הָא עֲבָדִי מְשִׁיחָא**).

³ A secret held closely in the breast (see Webster).

⁴ This is found in the “First and Second Rabbinic Bibles, the Antwerp Polyglot, Reuchlinianus, and Ms. Jews’ College” (Chilton, *The Aramaic Bible: The Isaiah Targum*). Wordsworth explains that this manner of language is also followed by Rabbis Kimhi and Abarbanel. Stenning, *The Targum of Isaiah*, in his critical apparatus has “**הָא עֲבָדִי מְשִׁיחָא**” [*my servant, Messiah*] according to R (Codex Reuchlinianus, *Prophetæ Chaldaice*) and N (Nürnberg MS).

fixes the attention of the reader.” Birks writes, “‘Behold!’ This word is a contrast to ISAIAH 41:24, 29, where God proclaims the heathen idols to be worthless. But here He sets before the islands and nations an object worthy of all admiration and reverence, the Seed of the woman, promised long ago, and more lately by Isaiah himself (ISAIAH 7), the Divine Saviour and Redeemer of a guilty world. The favour of the LORD, resting largely on this His Servant, is the ground of an appeal to all mankind. So the Baptist in the Gospel: ‘Behold the Lamb of God!’ The Son of God, from His birth, was His Father’s delight and good pleasure in the midst of sinful men (Luke 2:14).” ¶ Horsey says, regarding ‘my elect’: “I see not why the word **רְצִיָּה** may not be taken as a noun—‘my chosen one, the *delight* of my soul.’” Wordsworth explains: “The ancient Hebrew Church regarded ‘the Servant of Jehovah’ as the Messiah (see *Bp. Chandler*, 1:160); and this was the uniform judgment of all early Christian expositors.” Wordsworth testifies: “The ‘Servant of Jehovah,’ as represented by Isaiah, is a Person; He is a Prophet, Priest, and King. He is more than Prophet, as teaching the World; He is more than a Priest, as offering Himself for all; He is King of kings, and Lord of lords.” In the Targum we have **מְשִׁיחָא**, *My servant Messiah*, **הָא עֲבָדִי מְשִׁיחָא**. ¶ **הָא עֲבָדִי מְשִׁיחָא**. Clark has, “**אֶתְמַךְ-בּוֹ**, on *whom I lean*. Alluding to the custom of kings leaning on the arm of their most beloved servant.” Cheyne (in *The Biblical Illustrator*)⁵, explains that *servant* and *son* are synonyms in this case (see Psalm 2:7). ¶ *I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has *reveal* rather than *bring forth*. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “I have put my spirit upon him; he will publish judgment to the nations.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, for the first clause, “I have given my spirit upon him.” ¶ According to Birks, “‘Judgment’ here denotes true righteousness, or ‘the end of the commandment, love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.’” Wordsworth notes: “Observe the connexion of this with the close of the foregoing address, at the end of the preceding chapter. There God says, ‘Their molten images are wind’ (Heb. **רֵיחַ**). But here God says of the Messiah, ‘I have put upon Him My Spirit’ (Heb. **רֵיחַ**). How striking is the contrast! Idols are mere wind; but God’s breath is in Christ.” Such are the stunning nuances that are often lost when we translate from Hebrew. ¶ When we think of *Gentiles*, we do so in contraposition to Jews or Israelites. Here is an instant where the better expression is as the LXX (Ⲅ), *nations*. The Lord will bring forth his judgment—or Gospel—to the *nations*, not just to the Gentiles. Leeser renders it

⁵ But not in my Cheyne (1889) two-volume commentary.

“that he may bring forth justice to the nations” [לְגוֹיִם]. AMP has, “He will bring forth justice and right and reveal truth to the nations.” About half the translators use Gentiles; the other, nations. Although not as literal, the ISV also gives the correct idea: “and he’ll deliver his justice throughout the world.”

2 He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.

The Targum (ܬ) has, “He shall not cry aloud, nor raise a clamour, and He shall not lift up His voice in the street.” Chilton and Stenning (ܬ) render בְּכִרָא, “outside.” The LXX (ϸ) reads, “He will not scream, nor urge with vehemence: nor will his voice be heard abroad in the streets.” Instead of *nor lift up*, the Peshitta (ܫ) has, *nor make a sound* (Lamsa) / *nor raise his voice* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (ܕ) has, “He shall not cry, nor have respect to person, neither shall his voice be heard abroad.” ¶ According to Cheyne, Dr. Weir considers this verse “as an anticipation of ISAIAH 53,” and that before this time, “this view has been expressed ... by Kleinert (*Theolog. Studien und Kritiken*, 1862 (pp. 709–710).” ¶ Rawlinson fills in the ellipsis: “Supply, after ‘lift up,’ ‘his voice’ from the next clause. His methods shall be quiet and gentle.” Jenour well says: “The manner in which St. Matthew has applied this passage, affords us a clue to its true meaning. He tells us, that Jesus having healed great multitudes, ‘charged them that they should not make him known; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet,’ &c. (Matthew 12:17). The general import, therefore, of this verse is, that the Messiah, when he came, would teach the people in a mild and gentle manner; without contention and noise, and without disturbing the peace of the state by exciting popular tumults and seditions.” ¶ Jenour contrasts the Savior’s teaching by the Spirit—to priestcraft: “There seems to be an allusion to the manner in which fanatics and demagogues deliver their harangues to the deluded multitudes; their object being by impassioned declamations, and virulent abuse of others, to make themselves popular. Nothing could be further removed from any thing of the kind than our Lord’s method of teaching.” Cowles writes: “This describes the quiet, unostentatious manner of our Lord’s personal ministry and life. He never sought but rather shunned notoriety and applause.” Skinner notes that the teaching style of the עֶבֶד-יְהוָה, “... reminds us of the ‘still small voice’ in the which Elijah was made to recognise the power Jehovah (1Kings 19:12 f.).” Indeed, the *Servant* of the *Lord* usually invites and reproves with gentle tenderness. Govett says: “... when the Pharisees were enraged against him and sought his death, he did not

oppose them on their own ground and dispute their power, but meekly retired from Capernaum to the neighborhood of the sea. Again, unlike the Pharisees, who made their prayers audible in the street, and sounded a trumpet before them to give notice of their alms-giving, the Lord retired frequently to desert places, and there taught the multitudes.”

3 A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking[✓] flax shall he not quench:[✓] he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.

- ✓ or, dimly burning
- ✓ ✓ quench it

A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: The Targum (ܬ) makes the chosen one treat the *meek* and the *poor* with this care. The LXX (ϸ) reads, “A bruised reed he will not break, nor extinguish a dimly burning taper.” Horsley suggests that the *quenching* will not come “‘Until he have published judgment, so as to establish it perfectly,’ or ‘until he shall have published judgment firmly.’” In the word לְאִמָּה, the prefix ל signifies ‘until,’ and is to be understood in connection with the verb.” Rawlinson writes: “*A bruised reed shall he not break*] Egypt was compared to a ‘bruised reed’ by Sennacherib, (ISAIAH 36:6) as being untrustworthy and destitute of physical strength; but here in ISAIAH 42:3, the image represents the weak and depressed in spirit, the lowly and dejected. Christ would deal tenderly with such, not violently. *Smoking flax shall he not quench*] rather, *the wick which burns dimly* (margin ||) he shall not quench. Where the flame of devotion burns at all, however feebly and dimly, Messiah will take care not to quench it. Rather he will tend it, and trim it, and give it fresh oil, and cause it to burn more brightly.” Is this not the way the Brethren teach us? Are they not constantly inviting, with tenderness, the sheep who have wondered to come back to the fold? The study of Scripture is a never ending joy and the finding of hidden treasures and of multiple meanings. So it is, for instance, as we were reading Ezekiel 34 in Gospel Doctrine that I realized how this chapter is intimately linked with key phrases, types and shadows associated with the scattering and gathering of Israel. “For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, *even* I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep *that are scattered*; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the

country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and *in* a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD. *I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick:* but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment” (Ezekiel 34:11–16, *emphasis added*). Orelli explains that פֶּשֶׁתָּה normally represents “the single flax-stalk, but here the lamp-wick made of flax, which, when lacking oil, gives a dull, glimmering light easily extinguished (compare with ISAIAH 43:17).” ¶ *He shall bring forth judgment unto truth.* The LXX (Θ) reads, “But will publish judgment to establish truth.” Cowles has: “It shall be his great work as a teacher to correct prevalent errors and to teach men the vital things of divine truth.” Alexander suggests: “This passage also throws light on the true sense of the somewhat obscure phrase לְאֵמֶת, by showing that it means *with respect to the truth*, which is here equivalent to saying *by the truth*. This construction, by presenting an antithesis between the true and false way of bringing forth judgment to the Gentiles, is much to be preferred to those constructions which explain the phrase as simply meaning *in truth*, (*i.e.* truly), or *in permanence*, (*i.e.* surely), or *unto truth*, (*i.e.* so as to establish and secure it). All these may be suggested as accessory ideas; but the main idea seems to be the one first stated, namely, that the end in question is to be accomplished not by clamour, not by violence, but by the truth.”

4 He shall not fail nor be discouraged, ✓ till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.

✓ broken

He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: ¶ The LXX (Θ) reads, “He will shine out, and shall not be broken until he hath established judgment on the earth.” The Douay-Rheims (Ϸ) has, for the first half, “He shall not be sad, nor troublesome.” ¶ Kay, enthusiastically endorsed by Cheyne, suggests rather, “He shall not burn dimly.” Skinner observes, “The words *fail* [יִכְהֶה / יִכְהֶה] and *be discouraged* [רָצִין / רָצִין] correspond in the original to “dimly burning” and “broken” ... in ISAIAH 42:3. The former is used of the failing eyesight of Eli (1Samuel 3:2). So Cowles: “The two Hebrew verbs, translated ‘fail’ [יִכְהֶה / יִכְהֶה] and ‘be discouraged,’

[רָצִין / רָצִין] are the same which appear in ISAIAH 42:3, in their participles or derived adjectives, qualifying ‘flax’ and ‘reed,’ expressing the failing, dying out of the burnt ‘flax,’ and the bruising of the ‘reed.’ This circumstance determines their meaning here with great precision and certainty. As the Messiah would not use violence upon others, so neither will he falter before the violence inflicted or attempted upon himself. He will not languish nor will his light be put out as one might quench burnt tow; neither will he be crushed or broken as a reed. Though apparently weak and apparently sure to be suppressed by the violence of his enemies, yet such means, however extreme, will fail to arrest his progress, not only during his personal life on earth, but evermore thereafter, until he shall have established pure religion in all the earth.” ¶ Wordsworth adds this observation: “Christ will not break, nor will He be broken. This was fulfilled literally of Him, of Whom it was written, ‘That a bone of Him shall not be broken’ (Exodus 12:46; John 19:36).” Alexander, along the same lines, says: “He shall neither conquer nor be conquered by violence. This verse is a new proof that the one before it does not describe mere tenderness and pity for the weak. The antithesis would then be, he shall neither be unkind to the infirm nor infirm himself.” Nägelsbach writes: “[Despite] his gentleness, He shall be firm as a rock (ISAIAH 17:10; 26:4), on which all attacks of His enemies shall dash to pieces, and He shall carry out His counsel victoriously.” ¶ *And the isles shall wait for his law.* The LXX (Θ) reads, “In his name therefore let the nations trust.” The Douay-Rheims (Ϸ) has, “Till he set judgment in the earth: and the islands shall wait for his law.” ¶ Rosenberg has that the isles shall *long* for the law or *instruction*, rather than *wait*. *Torah*, as we saw in ISAIAH 41:8, means not just the *law*, or the five books of Moses. There also will be *Torah* תּוֹרָה, or *instruction*, or in other words, brand new revelation. For Rashi (in Rosenberg), the coming of the Messianic age will promote the hearing and heeding of God’s word. ¶ In the prophets, אִי (island, or אִים, isles) is sometimes—especially when used together with the expression *wait for me*⁶ כִּי־לִי אִים יִקְוּ—used to refer to *scattered Israel*.⁷

⁶ Or, wait for the LORD. ISAIAH 42:4; 51:5; 60:9; as well, also, in a number of the servant songs.

⁷ Terry B. Ball, Dean of Religious Education, speaking of ISAIAH 49:1–9, explained how the word *isles* are associated with “scattered covenant Israel” and used 1 Nephi 21:1 to strengthen his argument. 38th Annual Brigham Young University Sidney B. Sperry Symposium: The Gospel of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament, “Isaiah’s other servant songs.” BYU Broadcasting, 14 March 2010. Bell argues that the portion of ISAIAH 49:1 that appears in the Book of Mormon clearly explains that scattered Israel becomes synonymous with the *isles*.

Nägelsbach suggests: “*The islands* are named as representing the remotest regions.” As LDS we often refer to the islands (אִיִּם) as representing both the American Continent as well as the isles of the sea, such as Samoa and other nations inhabited from Book of Mormon descendants. Interestingly, Henderson says: “For אִיִּם, in the sense of remote western countries [with] special reference to those of Europe and other western parts, in which Christianity has most prevailed.” So, we have in Jeremiah, “Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel (יִשְׂרָאֵל) will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock” (Jeremiah 31:10).

vv. 5–12. The Lord created the heavens and the earth and prepared the gospel to be delivered to both living and dead, that all may have the opportunity to partake of it.

5 ¶ Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein:

Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out. He that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it. The Targum (ܬ) has, “Thus saith the God of eternity, who hath created the heavens and suspended them.” The LXX (Θ) reads, “Thus saith the Lord, the God who made the heaven and fixed it.” The Targum (ܬ) has, “*Who* hath founded the earth.” The LXX (Θ) reads, “Who established the earth and the things therein.” The Douay-Rheims (Ϯ) has, “That established the earth, and the things that spring out of it.” The correct translation of the Masoretic text (מ) into English would be “Thus saith the God Yahweh (יְהוָה).” Or we may say, filling a possible ellipsis, “Thus saith the God *even* Jehovah.” Only a few translations render the expression literally, and these are from the Spanish: “Así dice el Dios Jehová” (RV1865, 1906, 1909, the latter of which I have often quoted as SRV). ¶ Nägelsbach explains: “יְהוָה ... meant to designate emphatically the true God, who alone has power, in contrast with the powerless false gods.” ¶ Alexander points out the present continuing tense: “... *creating the heavens and stretching them out, &c.*” ... —The substitution of the preterite for the participle in the English Version (*he that created the heavens, and stretched them out*) is not only a gratuitous departure

from the form of the original, but hides from the English reader the allusion to the creative power of God, as constantly exercised in the continued existence of his works.” From latter-day revelation we know that Christ is involved in creating *worlds without end*. Cowles makes similar observations: “... these verbs which express the divine agency upon matter: ‘created,’ ‘stretched out,’ ‘spread forth’ etc., are all *in the present tense*. Hence they affirm more than the general fact that God did once create, stretch out, spread forth, and give existence to vegetables and animals. They affirm that he is doing so still and continually. The strongest affirmation of a present activity which is possible in the Hebrew tenses is used throughout the verse, as well of creating and causing the productions of the earth to be as of giving breath and life to its people.—This need not be pressed to mean that God is still creating new worlds although even this may be true; but it manifestly must mean that as Creator, God is still impressing his hand upon his works, perpetuating their motions, keeping their laws in force; or as said (Hebrews 1:3) ‘upholding all things by his powerful mandate.’” ¶ Thus we have, as far as I have found, from only the two literal translations: “... creating the heavens and stretching them out; spreading out the earth and its offspring, giving breath to the people on it, and spirit to those walking in it. (LITV); and “Thus said God, Jehovah, preparing The heavens, and stretching them out, Spreading out the earth and its productions, Giving breath to the people on it, And spirit to those walking in it (YLT). Most, but not all, the Spanish translations also have the present continuing tense (see LBLA, NBLH, RV60, RV95, RV2009 SUD {LDS}. RVG, SRV, SSE). ¶ *He that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein:* The Targum (ܬ) has, “And hath given breath to its inhabitants, *even* to the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein.” The LXX (Θ) reads, “And who giveth vital air to the people on it, and breath to them who tread thereon.” The Douay-Rheims (Ϯ) has *tread* rather than *walk*. Rosenberg translates “gave a soul” instead of “giveth breath.” Rosenberg says: “*Rashi* apparently explains the entire latter half of the verse as a reference to the creation of man, with the word *soul* נִשְׁמָה, pointing to the expression *a soul*⁸ of life (*a breath of life*, AV), נִשְׁמַת חַיִּים in Genesis 2:7. *Rashi* also suggests that the *walking* (לִהְיוֹת) in the Spirit is a righteous walking, “and Enoch walked [with] the God,” וַיִּתְהַלֵּךְ תְּנוּכָה אֶת־יְהוָה (Genesis 5:22) and also see Genesis 6:9, wherein Noah walked with God.

⁸ As LDS we believe that the body and the spirit together compose the soul.

6 I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “I, the Lord, I will make Thee to grow in truth, and will hold Thine hand, and I will direct Thee, and give Thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles.” This is another of those places, however, where the word גוֹיִם, would be better translated as *nations*.⁹ Gladly, the Peshitta (Ⓢ), Nets as

⁹ President Joseph Fielding Smith, speaking of ISAIAH 42:6, taught: “By the name Gentile is meant all those who are not Israelites and who are outside of the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The name originally had reference to the descendants of Japheth (Genesis 10:5). It is used frequently in the scriptures in reference to the nations not of Israel. Since the covenant made with Abraham was to continue through Isaac and Jacob and the twelve tribes of Israel, the Gentile nations are under the necessity of receiving their blessings in the Gospel through that chosen lineage ... Let it not be forgotten, however, that in Asia others not of Israel held the Priesthood in early times, and after Israel became a nation. However, so far as we know none of these were pure Gentiles, but all were descendants of Abraham through some branch other than that of Jacob. We have had occasion to refer to Midian and the Midianites, to which people Jethro belonged. Jethro ordained Moses and there was close affiliation between Moses and his father-in-law while Israel was in the wilderness. We know nothing definite of Job and his nationality. All that has been written of Job partakes more or less of speculation and there are some who even suggest that he is only a character of fiction; but such a thought cannot be maintained. As time went on it seems clear that all vestige of Priesthood disappeared from other peoples, and even the Israelites proved unworthy of their blessings during a great part of the time. Nevertheless they were the chosen people of the Lord and while he was forced to punish them, he has never forgotten the covenants he made with their father. Israel was chosen by the Lord and it is through that lineage that the blessings of the Gospel come, yet we must not fall into the error which prevailed among the Jews at the time of the Savior in thinking that no other people can be blessed of the Lord. All men are his off-spring and therefore he is interested in all nations on the earth. It is logical to conclude that the Lord would have given Priesthood and the plan of salvation to the Gentiles even in the days of Abraham when the covenant of the Gospel was made with him, had they been willing to receive them. All of the descendants of Noah were directed in the light of the Gospel, but the majority of them rejected it. We can imagine them saying as the people said to Enoch and his predecessors ‘Who is the Lord that we should know him?’ For this reason they were left without divine guidance, and a chosen race was appointed to be the favored of the Lord. Even in the blessing given to Abraham we discover the truth that the Father had not forsaken him. He said to Abraham: ‘And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. For this purpose, which we see in the dispersion of Israel, many of the descendants of Jacob were led away from time to time to various parts of the earth. Because of transgression many went into captivity, and, at those early days, before they had become firmly impregnated with the teachings of their prophets, or fully understood that they were a people separate from the world, they saw no harm in mixing with other peoples. While much of this scattering was meted out to them as a punishment, yet the Lord turned it to the salvation of the Gentile nations. The

well as Ottley’s LXX (Ⓛ), Stenning’s Targum (Ⓣ), and Abegg, Flint and Ulrich’s DSSB (Ⓢ) translate it as *nations*. Also, it has been correctly translated by ABP {LXX (Ⓛ)}, BBE, CEV, Darby, ERV, ESV, FDB, FLS, GNB, HCSB, ISV, JPS, LBLA, LEB, LITV, MKJV, NASB, NBLH, NVI, Leeser, Rotherham, RV1865, RV60, RV2009 SUD (LDS), and YLT to name some. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “I the Lord God have called thee for saving mercy, and I will take hold of thy hand and strengthen thee; for I have given thee for the covenant of a race—for the light of nations.” Instead of *and will keep thee*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *and have strengthened thee*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓢ) has, for the first half, “I the Lord have called thee in justice, and taken thee by the hand, and preserved thee.” The DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⓢ) has *I (אני)*, while both the DSS 4QIsa^b (Ⓢ) (*אני יהוה*) and the Masoretic text (Ⓜ) (*אני יהוה*) have *I [the] LORD* (literally, *I Yahweh*). Also, the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⓢ) has *for a covenant [to the] people*, *לְבְרִית עַם*, as does the Masoretic text (Ⓜ), *לְבְרִית עַם*. The DSS 4QIsa^b (Ⓢ) has, instead, *for an everlasting covenant*, *לְבְרִית עוֹלָם*. ¶ Lowth prefers, where we have a covenant to the people, “the everlasting covenant.” Henderson suggests: “בְּרִית, Covenant, is used elliptically, for מְלָאךְ בְּרִית the Messenger, or Agent of the Covenant¹⁰ ... and is employed as a personal title of the Messiah, because he was sent to be the medium through which the blessings conveyed by it were to flow to mankind [just like He is also] אֹר גוֹיִם, *light of the nations* ...” ¶ Rawlinson explains: “The covenant

scattering of Israel among the nations began almost as early as their national existence ... The Savior in his ministry went only to the house of Israel. He said he was not sent to the Gentiles and therefore did not minister to them in any special manner. It was only occasionally when some individual Gentile showed great faith that the Lord gave attention to him. After his resurrection the Lord commissioned his apostles to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. There were to be no exceptions, all were to have the privilege of receiving it. At first the apostles failed to comprehend the significance of the meaning of the Lord. It took a special manifestation to Peter to convince him that Cornelius was entitled to the blessings of the Church. When others of the Gentiles came in, some among the Jews who belonged to the Church questioned the propriety of admitting them, and desired to make the Gentile converts conform to Jewish custom which had been ended in the mission of Jesus Christ. The Jewish Christians were within their rights in the beginning in taking the message first to the Jews, for so it had been promised. The Gospel was then taken to the Gentiles. In this present dispensation it is to go first to the Gentiles and then to the Jews. The first are now last, according to the prophecy in the scriptures (1 Nephi 13:42).” Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Way to Perfection: Short Discourses on Gospel Themes*. 9th ed. Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1951, pp. 136–141.

¹⁰ מְלָאךְ בְּרִית, *messenger of the covenant* (see Malachi 3:1; 3 Nephi 24:1).

between God and his people being in Christ, it is quite consistent with Hebrew usage to transfer the term to Christ himself, in whom the covenant was, as it were, embodied. So Christ is called ‘our Salvation’ and ‘our Peace,’ and again, ‘our Redemption’ and ‘our Life.’ This is the ordinary tone of Hebrew poetry, which rejoices in personification and embodiment.”

¶ Cheyne’s notes are of particular interest to LDS: “... the question remains, ‘Which covenant is referred to? The old covenant of Sinai, or the new and spiritual one described by Jeremiah (31:31–34)? Surely the latter ... Observe, too, that in ISAIAH 54:10 Jehovah expressly contrasts his present ‘covenant of peace,’ not indeed with the Sinaitic covenant of Moses, *but with that of Noah*; and in that in ISAIAH 55:3 an ‘everlasting covenant’ is spoken of, which is *at once new and old*” (*emphasis added*). So it is that we understand that the original covenant that Jehovah was to have with Israel was had in the early days of this earth, even beginning with Adam, and that the restored gospel is also *new and old*. President Russell M. Nelson has: “Indeed, the Lord has not forgotten us. And to ensure that we do not forget him, children of the covenant receive his doctrine and claim it by covenant. Brigham Young said: ‘All Latter-day Saints enter the new and everlasting covenant when they enter this Church. ... They enter the new and everlasting covenant to sustain the Kingdom of God and no other kingdom’ (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, p. 160.).”¹¹ ¶ Henderson has: “עַם, *people*, and גּוֹיִם, *nations*, are here used antithetically, as in ISAIAH 49:6, 8, to denote the Jews, as God’s peculiar people, and the other nations of the earth by which he had not been known or served. The benefits of redemption were not to be confined to the former, but were to be extended throughout the world ... Though the two epithets are used distinctively in the antithesis, it is not meant that the Jews alone were to enjoy the privileges of the New Covenant, nor that the heathen were to enjoy the light to the exclusion of the Jews.” Such blessings are being poured out unto all who *come unto Christ*. ¶ Alexander notes: “The meaning put upon עַם בְּרִית by Hitzig and Ewald, although not philologically accurate, is perfectly consistent with the teachings of the Old Testament respecting the mission and vocation of Israel, the ancient Church, as a covenant-race or middle-people between God and the apostate nations.” ¶ בְּצִדְקָה. Leaning on Lowth, rather than “called thee *in righteousness*” Horsley prefers “‘for a righteous purpose,’ or, ‘for the purposes of righteousness.’” ¶ Keith explains: “Instead of the Almighty speaking *of* Christ, as before, he is now

represented as speaking *to* him. The Father appears giving to the Son his high commission to carry redemption to a fallen world—to restore that lost jewel to the crown of the Eternal One. He prefaces his charge with a declaration of his own omnipotence ... assuring him [the Christ] that the cause he had undertaken was a righteous one; that he would ever experience the Father’s care and keeping, and that in him all nations, both Jew and Gentile, would be blessed, and light and liberty be given to the blind and captive sons of men.” Furthermore, Keith points out the difference in the tenses between the past and the future in: “I have called thee,” compared to “I will hold thine hand.” The principle of *Divine Investiture* is here fully manifested. As LDS we clearly see how Christ was called from the foundation of the earth to be our Savior and Redeemer and how the Father would support the Messiah in His earthly ministry—including those most difficult moments in the Garden of Gethsemane. Only for a brief moment on the cross, so that scripture might be fulfilled, did the Father have to leave His beloved Son. That moment, when the Savior had to be left alone and the Spirit withdrawn all the way to the moment when our Redeemer cried out “*It is finished*,” must have seemed eternal. ¶ ISAIAH 42:6, in terms of the *light* to the *nations* (even those in the Spirit World), is intimately related to ISAIAH 42:7, regarding the dead for whom vicarious work would be done.

7 To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, [and] them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.

The Targum (ܬ) has, “To open the eyes of the house of Israel, who are blind to the law, to bring back their captivity from among the nations, where they are like prisoners, and to redeem them from the servitude of the kingdoms being shut up as those that are bound in darkness.” The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “To open the eyes of the blind; to lead out from chains them who are bound, and out of prison, them who are sitting in darkness.” The Douay-Rheims (ϙ) has, for the first two clauses, “That thou mightest open the eyes of the blind, and bring forth the prisoner out of prison.” ¶ Nägelsbach observes: “Should not one think here of the Urim and Thummim of the High-Priest (Exodus 28:30), and consequently construe this offering of light and right as the priestly activity of the Servant of Jehovah?” Yes, in more ways than one, as the Book of Mormon was also brought forward by God’s help through the Urim and Thummim. That Book of books opens the eyes of the blind and softens hearts. Of the opening of the eyes of the blind, Lowth says, “In this verse the Prophet seems to set forth the spiritual redemption, under images borrowed from the temporal deliverance.” Birks says:

¹¹ Nelson, Elder Russell M. “Children of the Covenant,” May 1995 *Ensign*.

“To open the blind eyes.’ This renews the promise (ISAIAH 35:5) where it is equally joined with the coming of the Lord to save His people. This Servant of the Lord is Immanuel ... Our Lord’s outward miracles must be included in the promise. But the main reference is to the removal of spiritual blindness, and release from the prison-house of sin and the grave.” ¶ Govett, while not able to fully understand the significance of these scriptures, gladly makes the connection between ISAIAH 42:7 and that of 1 Peter 3:19 (regarding the Savior’s visit to the spirit world): “... whence we learn that Hades is, in a certain sense, a prison, though the souls of the righteous in Abraham’s bosom are in joy and felicity.” Shalom Paul also misses the sublime and exquisite point about freeing from spirit prison, yet gives the very scriptures associated with that topic: “‘*To rescue prisoners from confinement*’—The *hiph’il* verbal expression **הוֹצִיאָהוּ**, similar to its Akkadian etymological cognate *šūšū*, the *shaph’el* of the verb *wašū*, ‘to leave’ (CAD A/2:373ff.), denotes ‘setting free.’ God, who freed His nation from under the Egyptian yoke, will now release His loyal subjects from their servitude in Babylonia. For **אֲסוּר/אָסִיר**, ‘bound, imprisoned,’ see ISAIAH 49:9; 61:1. **מִסְכֵּר** is literally ‘a place of confinement,’ i.e., a prison; see ISAIAH 24:22: ‘They shall be gathered in a dungeon as captives (**אָסִיר**) are gathered, and shall be locked up in a prison (**מִסְכֵּר**)’; Psalm 142:7: ‘Free me from prison (**מִמִּסְכֵּר**) that I may praise your name.’” Cheyne (1880) has: “*The house of restraint*] The prosaic Knobel understands this literally, in the face of v. 22 | It is the prison-house of physical and spiritual trouble which is meant (comp. Psalm 107:10, Job 36:8).” ¶ The Prophet Joseph Smith spoke powerfully on the subject of the spirit prison, which we quoted extensively under ISAIAH 24:20–22 and which speaks of the falsehood of thinking that the “destiny of man is irretrievably fixed at his death, and that he is made either eternally happy, or eternally miserable; that if a man dies without a knowledge of God, he must be eternally damned, without any mitigation of his punishment, alleviation of his pain, or the most latent hope of a deliverance while endless ages shall roll along ... [In 1 Peter 3:19, 20] we have an account of our Savior preaching to the spirits in prison ... and what did He preach to them? That they were to stay there? Certainly not! [see Luke 4:18].”¹² President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “We have good reason to believe that the righteous spirits in paradise did not mingle with the unrighteous spirits before the visit of our Lord to the spirit world. He declared that there was

a gulf fixed that could not be crossed which separated the righteous from the unrighteous, therefore there was no sound of the voice of prophets and the Gospel was not declared among the wicked until Christ went into that world before his resurrection. He it was who opened the prison doors (ISAIAH 42:6–7; 61:1) ... Since the day when the Gospel was declared and the prison doors opened, this Gospel of the kingdom has been preached in power among the dead. We realize that there is no time to be idle among the members of the Church on the earth, if we are to accomplish the great work for the dead which the Lord has assigned to us. If we could see beyond the veil we would discover that there is great activity there. The dead have to have the Gospel preached to them, and in that world the righteous and repentant, those who died without a knowledge of the Gospel, who would have received it if that opportunity had come to them (D.H.C. 2:380), have to be prepared to receive the ordinances of the Gospel as they are administered by proxy in the temples on this earth. All of the spirits of the dead have to be taught and brought to repentance, so we see the work over there is of magnificent proportions.”¹³ President Joseph

¹³ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Way to Perfection: Short Discourses on Gospel Themes*. 9th ed. Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1951, pp. 315–320. This is a most powerful discourse of which I quote yet another portion here: “President Joseph F. Smith, in his vision of the dead, saw the spirits and thus he wrote of them: ‘I beheld that the faithful elders of this dispensation, when they depart from mortal life, continue their labors in the preaching of the Gospel of repentance and redemption, through the sacrifice of the Only Begotten Son of God, among those who are in darkness and under the bondage of sin in the great world of the spirits of the dead’ (*Gospel Doctrine*, p. 601) ... President Young also said: ‘The sisters who have made covenant with the Lord and who have received blessings and power in the temples will also have much to do in that work. This was made very clear by President Smith at the funeral of Sister Mary A. Freeze, when he said: ‘Now, among all these millions of spirits that have lived on the earth and have passed away, from generation to generation, since the beginning of the world, without the knowledge of the Gospel—among them you may count that at least one-half are women. Who is going to preach the Gospel to the women? Who is going to carry the testimony of Jesus Christ to the hearts of the women who have passed away without a knowledge of the Gospel? Well, to my mind, it is a simple thing. These good sisters who have been set apart, ordained to the work, called to it, authorized by the authority of the Holy Priesthood to minister for their sex, in the House of God for the living and for the dead, will be fully authorized and empowered to preach the Gospel and minister to the women while the elders and prophets are preaching it to the men. The things we experience here are typical of the things of God, and the life beyond us’ (*Gospel Doctrine*, pp. 581–2). The righteous dead look upon the long separation of their spirits from their bodies as a bondage (D.C. 45:17. Rev. 6:9–11), and are anxiously waiting for the resurrection. The wicked are looking forth to the day of judgment in fear and trembling. Yet the Lord in his mercy has prepared a place for all, according to their works. He will bless all men with all they are capable of and worthy to receive. The preaching of the Gospel is now going on with power among the spirits, while here on the earth the faithful saints are laboring industriously in the temples of the Lord to give to their kindred who are dead the blessings they require for their salvation.”

¹² Smith, Joseph. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*. Selected by Joseph Fielding Smith. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Press, 1938., p. 219.

Fielding Smith further taught: “If the veil could be parted and we could see the world of spirits, we would likely discover many among them anxiously praying and hoping that their day of deliverance would come. Their hearts are turned towards their children on whom their hopes rely for deliverance from the prison house.”¹⁴

8 I [am] the LORD: that [is] my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, beginning with the third clause, “And my glory in which I am revealed to you I will not give to another people; nor my praise to the worshippers of images.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “I am the Lord God¹⁵; this is my name: this glory of mine I will not give to another, nor these powers of mine to the graven idols.” ¶ Not “I the Lord,” but rather, **I Lord, אֲנִי יְהוָה** (see also, ISAIAH 41:4). There is a beautiful and powerful testimony in these words. In some scriptures we read of the Second David (e.g., Jeremiah 30:9). Some have incorrectly supposed that this will be someone other than the Christ. Yet, it represents the Savior himself, for, says He, “And my glory will I not give to another.” Nägelsbach suggests: “The words **אֲנִי יְהוָה**, that directly follow the pith of the strophe, seem to correspond to the words of similar meaning with which (ISAIAH 42:6) it immediately begins. They are therefore in apposition with **אֲנִי יְהוָה** at the beginning of ISAIAH 42:6, and to be translated ‘**I Jehovah.**’ Verily it must be something great which the LORD twice announces with the words, ‘I, Jehovah, do it.’ It must be something that only Jehovah can do; thus something far beyond the power of a man or of any other creature.” This something, of course, is the expiatory sacrifice of our Lord and our Savior Jesus Christ on behalf of the living and the dead.

9 Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.

The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “With regard to the former predictions, behold they are come to pass; and these are

¹⁴ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Way to Perfection: Short Discourses on Gospel Themes*. 9th ed. Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1951, pp. 176–178. See also James E. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, p.134, for further study on this most wonderful topic.

¹⁵ ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ θεός

new things which I now declare; and before their promulgation, they are revealed to you.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “The things that were first, behold they are come: and new things do I declare: before they spring forth, I will make you head them.” ¶ Regarding the new things, Birks explains: “This figure implies that he predicts events which have as yet foreshadowed no indications that human sagacity can discern—a declaration squarely opposed to the theories of those critics who maintain that these prophecies were written by some second Isaiah who lived near the restoration, after the events which he predicted had fairly germinated so that his sagacious eye could see the foretokens of their coming. One might almost suppose that (the divine Spirit foreshowing it) the true Isaiah foresaw the skepticism of these critics of our day and dropped this word as his rebuke and denial of their slander upon his prophetic unction!” ¶ *New thing*, explains Cheyne: “... not merely as being later, but as dimming the splendour of all previous achievements.” Probably referring to the salvation for the dead as well as the living made possible through the atonement of Jesus Christ, who died that we might live. Also, of the gathering of Israel from all the nations of the earth: “Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land” (Jeremiah 23:7–8).

vv. 10–17. Even though the paragraph mark dividing sections of scripture begins in v. 13, I agree with Cheyne’s comment that vv. 10–17 form a unit, and that verse 18 seems to pick up where verse 9 left off. Cheyne says, “The difficulties of the commentators arise from not observing that vv. 10–17 are parenthetical.” A new song of praise is to be sung by the whole world, even those least likely to do so at this time in history. In the Second Coming, the Savior will come as a lion rather than a lamb. The Lord will guide all who are willing to the fountains of truth; those who refuse will be ashamed.

10 Sing unto the LORD a new song, [and] his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof.

✓ the fulness thereof

Sing unto the LORD a new song, [And] his praise from the end of the earth. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Sing to the

Lord a new sung, ye, his government! praise his name, ye from the utmost border of the earth.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has *ends of the earth* (extrémis terræ, Vulgate, V). ¶ Alexander explains: “To sing a new song, according to Old Testament usage, is to praise God for some new manifestation of his power and goodness. It implies, therefore, not only fresh praise, but a fresh occasion for it.” According to Rabbi David Kimhi (Redak), “Nations all over the world will recite His praises, for the redemption will become known throughout the world, wherever the Jews are scattered, and the nations, upon seeing the wonders, will sing His praise” (in Rosenberg). Skinner says, regarding ISAIAH 42:10–12: “A lyrical outburst calling on the whole earth to rejoice in the God whose glory is about to be manifested in the great redemptive act which ushers in the final salvation of humanity.” Skinner notes: “*from the end of the earth*] means (as in Genesis 19:4; Jeremiah 51:31) ‘from end to end.’” ¶ *Ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof.* The LXX (G) reads, “Ye who go down on the sea and navigate it, ye islands, and ye who dwell therein.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “and ye inhabitants of them” instead of “and the inhabitants thereof.” ¶ It seems that “ye that go down to the sea” refers to the Saints of the Most High God who are sent forth from the “land shadowing with wings ... that sendeth ambassadors by the sea” (ISAIAH 18:1). Why are these ambassadors sent? They are sent to gather scattered Israel. Govett comes ever so close with his exegesis: “The command to those that ‘go down to the sea’ to declare the praises of the Lord, the fathers understood of the apostles, originally fishermen, whose business was at sea, but were called by Christ to preach his Gospel. But it has a yet future and universal reference to the times of the renovated earth [as LDS we would say to the times of the restored Gospel], which is called in the succeeding verses to rejoice.”

11 Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up [their voice], the villages [that] Kedar doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains.

Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up [their voice], the villages [that] Kedar doth inhabit: The Targum (T) has these things done in praise, and for Kedar, עֲרַבָּי, *Arvaei*, Arabians. The LXX (G) reads, “Let the desert be glad and the villages thereof; the folds for flocks and them who inhabit Kedar.” Instead of *Kedar doth inhabit*, the Peshitta (S) has *Kedar has become a meadow* (BPE) / *let Kedar be meadows* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Let the desert

and the cities thereof be exalted: Cedar shall dwell in houses.” ¶ Alexander explains: “The mention of cities as existing in the wilderness appears less strange in the original than in a modern version, because both the leading words (עֵיר and מִדְבָּר) have a greater latitude of meaning than their usual equivalents; the first denoting properly a pasture-ground, and being applicable, therefore, to any uncultivated region, whether uninhabited or not, the other answering to town in its widest English sense, inclusive of both villages and cities ... Kedar was the second son of Ishmael (Genesis 25:13). Here, as in ISAIAH 21:16, the name is put for his descendants, or by a natural metonymy for the Arabians in general. The rabbinical name for the Arabic language is *the tongue of Kedar*.” Jenour, along the same lines, says: “‘*Kedar*’ was the name given to one of the sons of Ishmael, whose posterity inherited what we now call the Arabian Desert, the inhabitants of which dwell in tents and go by the name of Bedouins, or wandering Arabs.” ¶ *Let the inhabitants of the rock [סֵלָע] sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains.* The Targum (T) has, “Let the dead praise Him, when they go forth from their long abodes (בֵּית עוֹלָם, in the Chaldee and in the Rabbinic language, ‘the grave.’ Literally, ‘the house of eternity,’ or, ‘the house of the world’); from the tops of the mountains let them lift up their voice.” The LXX (G) reads, “Let the inhabitants of Petra rejoice; let them shout from the top of the mountains.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Ye inhabitants of Petra, give praise, they shall cry from the top of the mountains.” ¶ In Slotki we read, “Let the inhabitants of Sela [סֵלָע]

exult.” Regarding סֵלָע, Slotki has: “Possibly Petra in Edom. Jewish exegetes, however, render it as a generic term, ‘the rock dwellers,’ those who dwell in towers built on rocks and mountains (Kimhi).” Ibn Ezra says, “*The inhabitants of the rock*, the nations that live in the rocks.” Rawlinson says: “*The inhabitants of the rock*] rather, *the inhabitants of Sela*, or *Petra*, the rock-city, which was the capital of Idumaea, or Edom. It is assumed that the return of the Israelites to their land ought to be a subject of rejoicing to all their neighbours.” Wordsworth explains why this is so significant: “Ishmael and Edom (see ISAIAH 21:11—17), formerly enemies of God’s Church, and here the representatives of her foes generally, are now represented as admitted into it, and reconciled to Israel (cp. ISAIAH 60:7¹⁶).” Birks contrasts the land of the rocks with that of the islands: “The sea and the islands

¹⁶ “All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory” (ISAIAH 60:7).

may represent the lands of the west; the wilderness, and the tent-villages of Kedar, those of the east.” Some, like Cowles, speak of the *Mohammedan delusion*¹⁷ but God, in His mercy, gave the Prophet Mohamed to the descendants of Ishmael, as a stepping stone or training ground, much like He gave the Law of Moses to the children of Israel. Happy memories come to me, of my trip to Jordan, where one could hear, as it were, one Mosque answering another one, with their prayers. And speaking of Muslims, some of them have very fond feelings for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The day will come, however, when *every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ*, “For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God” (ISAIAH 45:23, also see Romans 14:11; Philippians 2:10). This will be true of all peoples, even those in סֹלֶכָה. ¶ Hoyt W. Brewster, Jr. wrote: “In a poetic outburst, the Prophet invited the mountains to shout for joy (D&C 128:23). This expression is related to others which refer to the mountains or hills singing (ISAIAH 42:11; 44:23; 55:12; 1 Nephi 21:13). This appears to be an expression of the rejoicing of nature on occasions when God is praised by his creations or when he is particularly pleased because of the rolling forth of the work of righteousness and redemption.”¹⁸

12 Let them give glory unto the LORD, and declare his praise in the islands.

The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “To this God let them ascribe glory; let them proclaim his powers among the isles.” As we have said, these include the American Continent and the Isles of the Sea. I have had the opportunity to be in the Islands on the Sabbath day and sing praises to the Lord in such places as the Pacific Islands and New Zealand.

vv. 13–17. Please see above, vv. 10–17.

13 ¶ The LORD shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies.

✓ or, behave himself mightily

The LORD shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: The Targum (Ⲛ) has,

¹⁷ Exegetes not only deride Muslims, but their comments against the Jewish people are quite painful to me.

¹⁸ Hoyt W. Brewster, Jr., *Doctrine and Covenants Encyclopedia*, p.372.

“The Lord shall be seen to do mighty things: He shall reveal Himself in anger to do a mighty work by the word of His wrath.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “The Lord God of Hosts will come forth and tread down battle; he will rouse up his zeal.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, for the second half, “As a man of war shall he stir up zeal.” As also explained by Cowles, to stir up jealousy in Biblical language is to stir up zeal: “‘Stir up jealousy,’ refers to his own. Jealous for his own honor, he will arouse himself in earnest to vindicate his cause, to cast down opposing powers, and to build up his own kingdom. The word for ‘prevail’ means strictly, will *show Himself mighty against his foes*.” Keith has: “Jealousy. The original signifies zeal, ardour, then jealousy, also anger, indignation. It is in this last sense that it occurs in the text.” Wordsworth puts all this in its context: “*The LORD shall go forth*] ‘Conquering and to conquer.’ Christ is ‘the stronger’ One, overcoming ‘the strong man’ (see Matthew 12:29; John 12:31); and He is thus represented in the first seal of the Apocalypse, describing His victories in the first ages of the Gospel (Revelation 6:2¹⁹),—victories to be consummated in the latter days (see Revelation 19:11—16).” ¶ *He shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies*. The Targum (Ⲛ) has, “He shall reveal Himself to His enemies by His might in an earthquake.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And shout against his enemies with majesty.” Instead of *roar*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *become valiant* (Lamsa) / *act with power* (BPE); and instead of *prevail*, *slay* (Lamsa) / *give death* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, for the first clause, “He shall shout and cry.” Cowles says of these verses: “... the thing really predicted here is the triumph of truth, the diffusion of the gospel, and the substantial victory of King Messiah over sin and Satan throughout all the earth ... that the Messiah shall push onward the victories of truth and righteousness until true religion shall pervade the earth and bless all the nations.” In speaking about the meekness in the Savior’s teachings, Govett adds: “The Savior’s meekness and inoffensiveness are not for ever to last, but only ‘*till he send forth justice unto victory*.’” This is a time when ... he shall put off the meekness of his first appearance, and show that ‘the Lord is a *man of war*.’” Nägelsbach says about these verses: “OEHLER begins the article *Messias* (in HERZ., *R.-Enc.*), with these words: ‘According to the view of Old Testament prophecy, the completion of salvation is brought about by the *personal* coming of Jehovah in His glory. *He Himself* appears amid the rejoicing of the whole creation for the restoration of His kingdom on earth

¹⁹ Christ either directly or through His servants, here according to Elder Bruce R. McConkie, Enoch (see Parry & Parry, *Understanding the Book of Revelation*). The whole idea of Wordsworth is that the time will come when the words we read in the Book of Revelation that are yet future, will be fulfilled and evil will be conquered by righteousness.

(Psalm 96:10 ff.; 98:7 ff.,’ etc.) It is remarkable that OEHLER, in support of his thought, cites precisely those Psalms which, as above shown, have such resemblance to our passage. It is admitted by expositors that these Psalms have generally a near relation to ISAIAH 40–66v (comp. MOLL on Psalm 96 ff.). May we not have in Psalm 96, 98, the oldest commentary on our passage [as it] referred to the Messiah, therefore that the unity of the Messiah and Jehovah was recognized?” The point Nägelsbach is making is that at a very early date it was believed that Jehovah was the very Christ. It is He, as the Psalmist says, “cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity” (Psalm 98:9b). While this particular reference points to His Second Coming when He shall appear as a Lion rather than a Lamb, it is clear from other portions of ISAIAH 42 that His coming as the Messiah in the meridian of time is also implied.

14 I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, [and] refrained myself: [now] will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and devour[✓] at once.

✓ swallow, or, sup up

The Targum (T) has, “I have given them prolongation for a long time, if they would but return to my law; but they did not return. My judgment shall be revealed upon them, as pains on a woman in travail; they shall be destroyed, and come to an end together.” The LXX (G) reads, “I have been silent; but shall I always keep silence and forbear? Like a woman in travail I have endured suffering; I will strike with astonishment and wither at once.” The Peshitta (S) beginning with the second half, gives this a completely different meaning. The BPE (S) has, “I have waited like a woman in travail.” Lamsa (S) interprets this waiting as one of *patience*. But does a pregnant woman wait in patience or impatience to the joyful day of her delivery, when she can place her newborn child to her breast with untold anticipation? And further, a woman in travail, that is, in labor, goes through the anguish of the pain of the birth process. In México, instead of ‘giving light’ (*dar a luz*, the normal Spanish expression for giving birth, or sending forth the babe into the light from the dark womb), the term often used is to ‘get relief’ (*aliviarse*, from the weight of carrying the babe for all these months as well as the relief from the great pain associated with parturition). In the next clause, the Peshitta (S) translators give the complete opposite rendering one from another: “I have remained speechless and completely confounded” (Lamsa), and “I shall at once confound and astonish” (BPE). In this paragraph I suspect the BPE has the better rendition in

both of these clauses. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “I have always held my peace, I have kept silence, I have been patient, I will speak now as a woman in labour: I will destroy, and swallow up at once.” ¶ Whitehouse writes: “The term עולם, which here expresses in Hebrew ‘old time,’ may indeed denote an unlimited vista.” Indeed, as it can mean *forever*! ¶ Cheyne says, “Jehovah has been thus silent ‘for an age’ or aeon (עולם), a period stretching indefinitely backward. It is the exaggeration of strong emotion.” Ibn Ezra says, “*I have long time*, etc. The First person refers to God.” Rosenberg, leaning on Rabbi Shmu’el Laniado of Syria (K’li Paz) has: “God is likened to a pregnant woman, who, during her pregnancy is quiet. When she enters labor, she cries, feels desolation, and gasps for air. Thus, with the Jewish people, all during their exile, God was silent. He did not react to the oppressions by the gentiles. When the redemption approaches, however, He will react and destroy the oppressors of His people. He ventures to say that the various expressions allude to the various exiles. *I was silent* during the exile in Egypt. *I will be still* during the Babylonian exile. *I will restrain Myself* during the exile of Edom. And finally—*Like a travailing woman will I cry*. This alludes to the final redemption.” Kimhi (in Slotki) regards this to mean: “Against the injustice done to Israel. God will no longer tolerate the sufferings of His people and continued ruin of their country.” Horsley feels the word *forever* relates to being silent and would translate as: “I have holden my peace. Shall I forever be silent? Shall I contain myself? Like a woman in travail I will cry out &c.” Jenour suggests: “‘He will shout.’ Alluding to the general practice of soldiers in former times of shouting when they rushed upon the enemy. ‘Like a travailing woman.’ Sometimes a metaphor is applicable only in part. Here the *loudness* of the cry, not the pain attending it, is meant.” ¶ Wordsworth follows closer to the margin ¶: “—*I will destroy and devour at once*] Rather, *I will breathe forth, I will pant at once*, an in eager longing and haste for some great consumption (cp. Job 7:2; 36:20; Psalm 119:131; Ecclesiastes 1:5, where the same verb נשף is used.” So the ASV (and many others) gives us: “I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself: *now* will I cry out like a travailing woman; I will gasp and pant together.” ¶ Wade says in part: “... that in Divine, as in human, personality, feeling, as well as thought and will, must be an element; and is designed to represent the Lord’s sympathy with His people and His longing to help them.” Also see D&C 43:25; 88:88–91). In the last days there will be great commotions. The disciples of Christ are commanded to “stand in holy places” and “not be moved” (D&C 45:32).

15 I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools.

The LXX (6) reads, “I will lay waste mountains and hills, and dry up all the herbage on them. I will make rivers islands and dry up pools.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “I will lay waste the mountains and hills, and will make all their grass to wither: and I will turn rivers into islands, and will dry up the standing pools.” ¶ Birks says that in this verse “we read the effect of the Lord’s presence, when He comes in flaming fire.” Cowles says: “These figures signify extreme changes, yet are in somewhat frequent use by ISAIAH (see ISAIAH 35:6, 7). These changes must be destructive ... and therefore must be applied to the work and the defenses of sin; primarily perhaps to the idols, the temples, the graves, the idol priesthood, the idolatrous institutions, and all the corresponding social embodiments of sin among men ... The old things that are to pass away have long entrenched themselves in social institutions, in works of art, in pernicious literature—means and appliances for setting the basest passions of the human soul on fire.” Nägelsbach shows how this theme of rivers and islands also appears in the Psalms: “He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the watersprings into dry ground” (Psalm 107:33). [PLEASE NOTE President Joseph Fielding Smith’s exegetical comment in ISAIAH 40:4, about the continents being fused together as they were before they were divided. Also note the allusion to the preparations for the coming back of Christ in the Second Advent.]

16 And I will bring the blind by a way [that] they knew not; I will lead them in paths [that] they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. ~ These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.

✓ into straightness

And I will bring the blind by a way [that] they knew not; I will lead them in paths [that] they have not known: The Targum (8) has, “And I will lead the house of Israel, who are like the blind, in a way which they knew not, in paths they have not learned I will lead them.” The LXX (6) reads, “And lead the blind in a way which they know not, and cause them to walk in paths which they have not known.” ¶ Rashi (in Rosenberg) suggests that the blind represents Israel: “Israel, who were heretofore blind from looking to Me,

I will lead in the good way, upon which they did not know to walk.” Henderson applies this verse to the deliverance of Israel from the Babylonian captivity. This is especially so if we see it as mystical Babylon. Nägelsbach suggests spiritual blindness. ¶ *I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.* The LXX (6) reads, “For them I will make the darkness light, and the crooked ways a straight road. These things I will do, and I will not forsake them.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “And I will lead the blind into the way which they know not: and in the paths which they were ignorant of I will make them walk.” ¶ Rashi (in Rosenberg) explains: “Hebrew עָשִׂיתִּי, literally, I did them.²⁰ *I will do. So is the language of prophecy, to speak of the future as if it was already done.*” This is called the *prophetic perfect tense*.²¹ So we have, also, in the Book of Mormon: “And now if Christ had not come into the world, speaking of things to come as though they had already come, there could have been no redemption” (Mosiah 16:6). ¶ Birks says: “The close of this section answers to its opening. The true Lord, who had guided Abraham of old by a way that he knew not, so that he pursued his enemies, and passed safely, will also guide His people in the last generations of the world, and bring them, even through dark and rugged pathways, to a home of perfect rest. This beautiful promise completes and crowns the whole message. All the dark mysteries of Providence, which may seem now, even to God’s servants, utterly inscrutable, will find a blessed solution in the coming kingdom of Christ and of God.” Cowles says: “Truth is to the mind what light is to the body ... [those] long blind to the true God and to the way of salvation, are to be led in ways never known to them before; the way of holiness and heaven.” These things will take place not only on this earth, but in the *Spirt World* where all who have not had the privilege of hearing the Gospel will now be able to avail themselves of this opportunity.

17 They shall be turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven

²⁰ In AV, “Will I do unto them.”

²¹ Joüon explains: “In prophecies a future event is sometimes regarded as having already been accomplished ... This prophetic perfect is not a special grammatical perfect, but a rhetorical device.” Joüon, P., & Muraoka, T. (2006). *A grammar of biblical Hebrew* (p. 335). Roma: Pontificio Istituto Biblico. NET has: “... the tense of the Hebrew verb that views an action as though it were as good as done.” Biblical Studies Press. (2006). *The NET Bible First Edition Notes* (see Jeremiah 49:23). Rabbi Rosenberg calls it the *prophetic past*; Nägelsbach, in Latin, *praeterita prophetica*; Delitzsch, *perfect consecutive*. Rawlinson calls it the “*praesens historicum*.” For the Lord all things—past, present and future—are before His eyes in *one eternal round* (D&C 35:1).

images, that say to the molten images, Ye [are] our gods.

The LXX (6) reads, “But as for them they have turned backwards! be whelmed in shame, ye who trust in graven images—who say to the molten images, ye are our gods.” The Douay-Rheims (v) has, “They are turned back: let them be greatly confounded, that trust in a graven thing, that say to a molten thing: You are our god.” ¶ Nägelsbach observes: “Many will remain blind. Of these it is said: They shall be turned back, etc.” Wade suggests: “*turned back*. i.e. put to shame (Psalm 35:4; 40:14; Jeremiah 46:5), in consequence of the inferiority of their deities to the Lord, the champion of Israel.” To be turned back normally means to be shown the way back to repentance and to following the Lord. But it also can mean those who *turn their backs* away from the Lord. Those who will not heed the invitation to turn [בושׁ] to Christ and live, and who put their trust in the arm of man or idols, will suffer shame. Here, the expression *turned back* seems to mean to suffer the losses and consequences of sin. Certainly, there will be a day of reckoning after we pass from this mortal life, where we will be judged according to our works and the true desire of our hearts (Alma 41). To say to idols “ye are our gods” is accepting that which is worthless and rejecting the Lord’s offer: “[I] will be your God, and ye shall be my people.”

vv. 18–25. Come unto Christ. Only our Savior can deliver us from darkness.

18 ¶ Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see.

The Targum (t) has, “Ye wicked (who are like the deaf), have ye no ears? hear ye! and ye sinners (who are like the blind), have ye no eyes?” The LXX (6) reads, “Hear, ye deaf; and ye blind, look up that you may see.” The Peshitta (s) has, for the last clause, *understand and see*. The Douay-Rheims (v) has, “Hear, ye deaf, and, ye blind, behold that you may see.” This is an invitation to come unto Christ and partake of the plan of happiness. We seem to have a chiasmus here, with ISAIAH 42:6 and 7, where it is clear that the Lord has been sent to open the eyes of the nations.

19 Who [is] blind, but For I will send my servant? unto you who are blind; yea, a deaf, as my messenger to open the eyes of the [that] I sent? who [is] blind, and unstop the ears of the deaf; And they

shall be made as [he that is] perfect; notwithstanding their blindness, if they will hearken unto the messenger, and blind as the LORD’s servant?

For I will send my servant unto you who are blind; yea, a messenger to open the eyes of the blind, and unstop the ears of the deaf. The Targum (t) has, “Is it not so? if the wicked and the sinners, to whom I have sent my prophets, will repent, they shall be called my servants; but the wicked shall be paid with vengeance for their sins.” The LXX (6) reads, “Who indeed is blind but my servants? And deaf, but those who rule over them?” The Douay-Rheims (v) has, “Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, but he to whom I have sent my messengers?” ¶ That this verse makes *no sense* without the inspired corrections of the Prophet Joseph Smith is evident. Keith, in confusion, says: “The language, at least that of the 19th verse, is evidently ironical, else how could the blind be called the Lord’s servants? how could they be called perfect?” Henderson explains that the messenger (מַלְאָךְ) spoken of in this verse can be no other than the Messiah. Because of the corruption in the text, however, Henderson considers the language ironical. Henderson, who was working without the aid of the JST regarding the use of the word *perfect*, שָׁלֵם or²² מְשֻׁלָּם (from the root שָׁלַם) here, says: “To our Lord all the epithets here employed most aptly apply. He was the Father’s Servant; the Messenger whom he was to send; the Perfect One.” ¶ *And they shall be made perfect notwithstanding their blindness, if they will hearken unto the messenger, the LORD’s servant.* The Targum (t) has, “But if they will repent, they shall be called the servants of the Lord.” The LXX (6) reads, “Even the servants of God are become blind.” To the questions in the Masoretic text (m) as to who is blind, the Peshitta (s) adds yet another, “Who is blind as the ruler?” (BPE) / “Who is blind as the prince?” (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (v) has, “Who is blind, but he that is sold? or who is blind, but the servant of the Lord?” In 2 Corinthians 12:9 we read: “And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” Or, as we read in Ether: “Fools mock, but they shall mourn; and my grace is sufficient

²² Henderson explains that Muslims derive their name from the Arabic cognate of מְשֻׁלָּם (Meshulam, مسلم) and explains that *Muslim* “signifies one who is devoted to the service of God, who obeys him, and submits to his will.” Cheyne adds, “Apparently this word became a favourite among the pious Jews in later times. It appears as a proper name in Ezra 8:16; 10:15, 29, and the feminine Meshullemeth (מְשֻׁלְמֶת, 2 Kings 21:19). Compare also the frequent expression *lebh shalem*, ‘a perfect (=devoted) heart.’” For instance, on the latter, *and with a perfect heart*, 2 Kings 20:3 [וּבְלֵב שָׁלֵם].

for the meek, that they shall take no advantage of your weakness; And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them” (Ether 12:26–27). In the process of coming unto Christ we are sanctified through the Holy Ghost, “until the perfect day” (D&C 50:24b). Becoming perfect is associated with the process of exaltation. The Savior in Matthew 5:48, while still in his mortal ministry, called upon us to be perfect, even as the “Father who is in heaven is perfect.” Only after the Redeemer had conquered death, did He say, “Therefore I would that ye should be perfect even as I, or your Father who is in heaven is perfect” (3 Nephi 12:48). An invitation for the blind to be perfect is an encouragement to be sanctified and exalted in the *Kingdom of our God*.

20 Thou art a people, seeing many things, but thou observest not; opening the ears to hear, but he thou hearest not.

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Ye see many things, but ye observe not; having your ears opened, but ye receive not instruction.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “You have seen again and again but have not regarded: your ears have been opened, but you did not hear.” The BPE (Ⓢ) has, “You have seen many things but have not kept them; I have opened your ears but ye have not heeded.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “Thou that seest many things, wilt thou not observe them? thou that hast ears open, wilt thou not hear?” ¶ Nägelsbach observes: “The words of ISAIAH 42:20 are difficult.” Indeed, without the JST we would be scrambling for creative solutions. There seems to be an allusion to what we read in ISAIAH 6:9, “And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.” Even though we are imperfect and deaf and blind, we can be made perfect through Christ, Jesus.

21 The LORD is not well pleased with such a people, but for his righteousness' sake he will magnify the law and make [it] honourable.

✓ or, him

Nägelsbach’s translator speaks of these verses and ISAIAH 42 as being “full of paradoxes and contradictions.” Cowles explains that the AV as it stands is *not* correct and that God is not well pleased:

“This verse declares, not that God is ‘well pleased’ with their course ...” As we see in the JST, indeed, the Lord is *not* pleased with those who will refuse to hear and to see. ¶ The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “The Lord delights in justifying Israel; He will magnify those that obey (literally, ‘they that do’) His law, yea, He will strengthen them.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “The Lord God came to a determination, that he might be justified and might magnify praise.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “And the Lord was willing to sanctify him, and to magnify the law, and exalt it.” ¶ *Magnify [the] law*, תִּגְדִּיל תּוֹרָה, that is, *magnify [the] Torah and He will make [it] glorious*, וְיִגְדִּיל (from the root, גָּדַל).

¶ The Talmud tradition (Mishnah, Seder Nezikin, Makkoth 23a) has: “Rabbi Hananiah ben Akashia says: the Holy-One, blessed be He, desired to make Israel worthy, therefore gave He them the law [to study] and many commandments [to do]: for it is said: the Lord was pleased, for His righteousness’ sake to make the law great and glorious” (Talmud, Soncino). The Soncino editor adds this footnote regarding the controversy regarding works vs. grace, “One may see in the words of R. Hananiah b. ‘Akashia a polemic against the Pauline conception that puts the Law in opposition to innocence and spiritual law and considers it a source of sin and wrath. Here it is asserted that the Law was given, not as a mark of divine wrath in order to increase sin so as to make all the greater the need of divine mercy, but as a mark of divine love designed to train Israel in moral holiness in order to make them all the more worthy in the eyes of the Holy One, blessed be He.” ¶ As LDS, we believe that the Lord gave the Law as a schoolmaster.²³ Isaiah and Jeremiah constantly warned against abuses, hypocrisies and misunderstandings about the Law. Whitehouse well suggests that Torah (תּוֹרָה) can also mean: “... the instruction or ‘word of Yahweh’ delivered by the prophets.” תּוֹרָה stands for all of the Scriptures.

22 But this [is] Thou art a people robbed and spoiled; thine enemies, [they are] all of them, have snared thee in holes, and

²³ “The law of Moses consisted of many ceremonies, rituals, and symbols, to remind the people frequently of their duties and responsibilities. It included a law of carnal commandments and performances, added to the basic laws of the gospel. Faith, repentance, baptism in water, and remission of sins were part of the law, as were also the Ten Commandments. Although inferior to the fulness of the gospel, there were many provisions in the law of Moses of high ethical and moral value that were equal to the divine laws of any dispensation ... The law of carnal commandments and much of the ceremonial law were fulfilled at the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The law functioned under the Aaronic Priesthood and was a preparatory gospel to bring its adherents to Christ ... The law as given through Moses was a *good law*” LDS Bible Dictionary.

they are have hid thee in prison houses; they are have taken thee for a prey, and none delivereth; for a spoil, ✓ and none saith, Restore.

✓ or, in snaring all the young men of them

✓ ✓ a treading

Thou art a people robbed and spoiled; thine enemies, all of them, have snared thee in holes. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “But this is a people robbed, and spoiled, and all their young men are covered with confusion,” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Whereupon I beheld and the people were plundered and dispersed: for the snare was every where in the private chambers.” Instead of *all of them have been snared*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has the young men *caught in traps* (BPE) or *snared* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “But this is a people that is robbed and wasted: they are all the snare of young men.” ¶ According to Wade, *holes* here stand for *dungeons*. This verse speaks in part of ISAIAH 18, of a people spoiled (Israel) and that none can deliver. At least no human hand can deliver. But the Lord sends ambassadors to deliver in the name of Christ (ISAIAH 18). ¶ *And they have hid thee in prison houses; they have taken thee for a prey, and none delivereth; for a spoil, and none saith, Restore.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And shut up in prison houses: they are for a prey, and there is none who delivereth; for a spoil, and none saith, Restore.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And in the houses also where they had hidden themselves. They were for a prey and there was no rescuer—for a spoil; and there was none who said, restore.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “And they are hid in the houses of prisons: they are made a prey, and there is none to deliver them: a spoil, and there is none that saith: Restore.” ¶ Most translate **הָשִׁב** as “Restore” but sometimes it is also translated as return, give back, give it back, retribute, Rabbi David Kimhi (Redak) says: “No one says to the enemy, ‘Return the spoils.’” Keith interprets this verse as no nation having pity on Israel when she is under attack and quotes Jeremiah 15:5: “For who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem? or who shall bemoan thee? or who shall go aside to ask how thou doest?” This verse also seems to be a continuation of ISAIAH 42:7, with an allusion to the spirit world, and those in spirit prison. Cheyne is not alone in saying: “... it is very improbable than any large portion of the exiles suffered literal imprisonment.” Perhaps, this is because the verse is also speaking of those spirits in prison—as well as the imprisonment caused by the cords of sin (ISAIAH 5:18). Why could *no one* deliver? Because only the Christ could, through His expiatory sacrifice. No one could redeem, no one could save, except the Savior. *Hosanna*, **הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא**.

23 Who among you them will give ear unto this? [who] thee, or will hearken and hear thee for the time to come? ✓

✓ for the after time?

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Who is there among you that will listen to this? *who* will hearken, and consider for the time to come (Chaldee, ‘for the end’)?” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Who is there among you who will give ear to these things? Attend to those leading causes.” For the second half, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has, “Who will hearken to the other counsel?” (Lamsa) / “Who pays attention and finally heeds” (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, for the last clause, “That will attend and hearken for times to come?” ¶ The DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲙ) has *or hearken*, **וְיִשְׁמָע**. This is of particular interest to us as LDS. The grammarians²⁴ give us numerous possibilities for the translation of the **וְ** (besides *and*, for instance, we may have such words as *that*, *then*, *so*, *or*, and others). In this instance we know that the correct word is *or*, the expression used by the Prophet Joseph Smith in the *Inspired Version* (JST). For another example of the use of the word **וְ** translated as *or*, see Exodus 21:16,

וְנִמְצָא, *or be found*. Slotki, leaning on the Targum, Rashi and Kimhi, says, “So that in the future Israel may abandon his disobedience and rebellion and live up to the Divine ideal set before him.” Once again, we have an allusion to ISAIAH 6, about giving ear and hearkening (ISAIAH 6:9). But also a question reminiscent of ISAIAH 6:8b, “Whom (**מִי**) shall I send, and who (**וְיִמְ**) will go for us?” Here it is, “Who (**מִי**) among them will give ear unto thee [Christ and His ambassadors of truth]?” Who will open their ears and hear the gospel of Jesus Christ? Throughout the scriptures there are a series of very important *who questions*. These are intended for us to ask of ourselves and not to point fingers at others. Will we, can we, be included in the **יְיָ** that will follow after Christ?

24 And who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not the LORD, he against whom we they have sinned? For

²⁴ For instance, see HALOT **וְ**—15, the use of the word *or* in Exodus 21:16, but strangely there, HALOT gives us a different example, one not followed by *any* of the translators, **וְיִמְכְרֵהוּ**, *or sell him*. This is probably just a distraction, as probably the example they meant to give was the one I have given in the text above.

they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law;

And who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Who delivered Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers?” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “For which he hath given Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to them who plundered him.” ¶ The question is asked, as to who permitted Israel to be plundered and robbed. The answer is given right away, that the Lord removed His protection for a moment to chastise those whom He loves and who were in need of correction. We see the many sufferings that the children of Israel have had to endure through time.²⁵ ¶ *Did not the LORD, he against whom they have sinned?* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Was it not the Lord? Because they have sinned against Him.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “Hath not God, against whom they sinned.” The Targum (Ⓣ) and the LXX (Ⓟ) agree with the JST, that the proper rendering should be *they* in regards to *sinned*, rather than *we*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “Hath not the Lord himself, against whom we have sinned?” Rashi (in Rosenberg) says: “This is what caused the plunder and the spoiling, what we sinned against Him.” ¶ Because God loves us so much, He gives us consequences for disobedience. But He also uses the *Hosea principle*. Yes, He reproves us *with sharpness*, but *afterwards* shows us an *increase of love* (D&C 121:43). Birks looks at this from the most positive perspective: “But it is rather a wondering search for the small remnant, who will lay the message to heart amidst the general unbelief. These are invited to lay up the prophecy in their memories, until its truth shall be triumphantly revealed.” ¶ *For they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And they would not walk in His righteous paths before Him, neither would they receive the instruction of His law.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “And in whose ways they would not walk, and whose law they would not obey.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓢ) has, *we* instead of *they*. The BPE (Ⓢ) puts it as a question, “Have we not refused to walk in his ways and be obedient to the law?” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “And they would not walk in his ways, and they have not hearkened to his law.” ¶ Despite the invitation to walk in the way of the Lord, to follow after Christ, many would reject the message.

25 Therefore he hath poured upon ~~him~~ **them** the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle; and ~~it hath~~ **they have** set ~~him~~ **them** on fire round about, yet ~~he~~

they know not, and it burned ~~him~~ **them**, yet ~~he~~ **they** laid [it] not to heart.

Therefore he hath poured upon him them the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle. In this verse, the Targum (Ⓣ), LXX (Ⓟ), and Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓢ) *all* agree with the JST in rendering each of the he / him in this verse into *they / them*. *Therefore he hath poured upon them the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Therefore He hath poured upon them the fury of His anger, and hath brought upon them the strength of His warriors.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “Hath not he brought upon them his fierce anger? Though war prevailed over them.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “And he hath poured out upon him the indignation of his fury, and a strong battle.” The Lord will deal justly with all. In 3 Nephi 29 the Lord warns against those who reject the Book of Mormon in the last days—as well as those who turn against the Jews. This verse is related to ISAIAH 42:4. ¶ *And they have set them on fire round about, yet they know not, and it burned them, yet they laid it not to heart.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And hath slain them (literally, ‘among them’) round about, and they knew *it* not; and they ruled over them, and they did not lay His fear to heart.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “And they who were burning them up were all around, yet they did not, any of them know, nor lay it to heart.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “And hath burnt him round about, and he knew not: and set him on fire, and he understood not.” ¶ The translation “yet they know not” / “and it burned them, yet they laid it not to heart” given by the Prophet Joseph Smith, is almost exactly that given in the Jewish version (see Rosenberg), “and they did not know” / “and it burned among them and they did not take heed.” Rashi (in Rosenberg) says, “They actually did know, but they trod with their heels. They did not care to understand this and to repent of their wickedness.” Kimhi (in Slotki), regarding “laid it not to heart,” has, “To associate cause and effect.” Wordsworth suggests: “But see the promise which follows in the next chapter. Though their Temple and City have been burned, and though they have been scattered as exiles, yet His gracious words to them are, ‘Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee.’”

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²⁵ For instance, see “*The Historical Atlas of Judaism*” by Dr. Ian Barnes, 2009.

Isaiah 43

Even though Israel will face adversities she will be gathered and not abandoned. In the last days, Israel shall be converted. The legal or court scenes are resumed. Despite all that the Lord will do for His people, Israel shows ingratitude. The Lord will blot out the transgressions of those who return to Him.

vv. 1–7. The Lord wishes to comfort Israel, whom He has called to a special work. Israel will face adversities but shall not be forsaken. The Lord has loved Israel. The gathering of Israel will take place from every quarter of the earth.

1 ¶ BUT now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called [thee] by thy name; thou [art] mine.

BUT now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee. The LXX (6) reads, “Still however thus saith the Lord, the God who made thee Jacob, and who formed thee, Israel! fear not. Because I have redeemed thee.” ¶ Regarding יִצְרָאֵל Cowles says: “The introductory words, ‘**But now**,’ propose to enter more fully into the relations between God and his chosen yet inconstant and very imperfect people. God would not have Israel fear the final issue of those afflictions which will befall her. He created and formed her, which means that he has chosen the posterity of Abraham and has made the nation of Israel all that she is in the line of moral worth and of peculiar honor as his chosen people. Therefore she ought to trust her Lord to determine all her future ... ‘Redeemed,’ refers to the consecration of the first born to God and the special redemption required by the Mosaic Law in their case (see Exodus 13:13, and Numbers 3:11–13).” Such redemption is a type of the expiatory sacrifice offered by our Savior, Jesus Christ. Whitehouse explains that *redeemed* is written in the *prophetic* or *perfect* tense.¹

¶ Speaking of *created thee*, בָּרָאָךְ (root, בָּרָא), Whitehouse’s thoughts agree with the teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith: “‘Create’ (בָּרָא), however, which is employed in the first creation-story, is simply used to express *God’s* work in constructing the universe. The assumption that it signifies to create *out*

of nothing is wholly gratuitous, and has been the unfortunate cause of many difficulties, and is obviously an impossible meaning here. The word for ‘create’ no more expresses this than the word for ‘form.’ The latter verb is really the term used to describe the work of a *potter* in Hebrew (the word for ‘form’ in Hebrew is יָצַר, which means to fashion, to mold. A ‘potter’ is יֹצֵר {lit. molder—participle of the verb), the very term that occurs in this verse.” Keith notes: “Although punished as they have been ... yet Israel is here represented as being addressed in the language of encouragement and endearment, as, in their national character, the workmanship and people of God; and their deliverance from all their evils is described as accomplished.” ¶ Alexander points out, “*Fear not*, i.e. fear not that thou canst be utterly destroyed. It is not an assurance of immunity from suffering, the experience of which is implied and indeed expressly threatened in what follows.” Sister Elaine S. Dalton wrote: “Believe in the Savior. He loves you, and I testify that He will not leave you alone. He has promised: ‘*Fear not, I am with thee; oh, be not dismayed, / For I am thy God and will still give thee aid. / I’ll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand, ... / Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.*’ (How Firm a Foundation, *Hymns*, no. 85).” ¶ *I have called [thee] by thy name; thou [art] mine.* The Targum (7) has, “I have called thee who art mine by thy name.” The LXX (6) reads, “Have called thee by thy name—thou art mine.” Shalom Paul reminds us that Israel, in Genesis 48:5, calls Joseph’s two eldest sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, his. Henderson says, “... *to call a person by enouncing his name.*” God the Eternal Father called Joseph Smith *by name* as did Angel Moroni.² Cheyne says (emphasis added): “Israel was especially honored, for Jehovah combined his own

² “One of them spake unto me, calling me *by name* and said, pointing to the other—*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*” (JS—History 1:17); and “The first thing that I can recollect was a voice speaking unto me, calling me *by name*. I looked up, and beheld the same messenger standing over my head, surrounded by light as before.” (JS—History 1:49). See also Exodus 31:1–2a, “And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, see, I have called by name Bezaleel” (i.e., in the shadow of God, or under God’s protection), Exodus 33:12b, “Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight.” Here, Moses is reminding the Lord that he is known by name by the Lord.

¹ See ISAIAH 42:19.

name with Israel's, calling it 'my people.'" Spurgeon tenderly suggests: "There was a day and we can never forget it, when the Gospel of God came to us with a pointed and personal power such as we never felt before. Like as Mary Magdalene did not know the Savior until He said unto her, 'Mary³,' so we did not know the Lord until He called us by our name! Surely, no love-call with which our mother awakened us in the morning from the happy sleep of childhood was ever more distinct than the call of God's Grace to us when He spoke to us and said, 'Seek you My face.' Blessed was the day when our heart replied, 'Your face, Lord, will I seek.'" ¶ *Thou art mine* (לִי-אַתָּה). This is THE greatest promise God can give us. When we become His (see *Rain in Due Season*, Leviticus 26:12).

2 When thou passest through the waters, I [will be] with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

When thou passest through the waters, I [will be] with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: The Targum (ܬ) has, "For at first when ye did pass the Red sea my Word was your support (or, 'help')." The LXX (Ϛ) reads, "therefore when thou passest through water, I am with thee, and the streams shall not overwhelm thee." Instead of *waters*, the Peshitta (ܫ) has *sea*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, for the second half, "And the rivers shall not cover thee." Wordsworth has: "As I showed thee of old by carrying thee on dry land through the waters of the Red Sea, and in driving back the waters of the river of Jordan, that they might not overflow thee (Joshua 3:13).

¶ Wordsworth says: "These miracles of old are pledges to thee of greater mercies in Christ." Shalom Paul writes: "*When you pass through water, I will be with you* [אֲנִי-יְהִי-עִמָּךְ]—I shall save you from drowning, since you are Mine and I will protect you. This formula is a variant of *כִּי עִמָּךְ אֲנִי* (see ISAIAH 41:10)." ¶ Simeon says: "The man that is in the presence of his God, and has the light of his countenance lifted upon him, is inaccessible to his enemies, and may laugh at all their assaults. See Paul and Silas in prison, under circumstances as painful as could well inflicted on them; yet, behold, they are singing praises to God at midnight ... Such are the interpositions of God in behalf of all his faithful servants, that 'where their afflictions

have abounded, their consolations have much more abounded' (2 Corinthians 1:5). The very waves which desolated all the world besides, bore up the ark, and carried it to a place of safety. And so shall the sea itself afford a passage to all the 'ransomed of the Lord to pass over,' in the way to the land of promise (ISAIAH 51:10)." ¶ *When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.* The Targum (ܬ) has, "Pharaoh and the Egyptians, who were as many as the waters of the river, did not prevail against you. And again (literally, 'also a second time'), when ye came amongst nations, who were as mighty as fire, they did not prevail against you." The LXX (Ϛ) reads, "And when thou passest through fire, thou shalt not be burned up—the flame shall not quite consume thee." The Douay-Rheims (V) has, "When thou shalt walk in the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, and the flames shall not burn in thee." ¶ Keith says: "Water and fire are common scriptural symbols of trouble. In all the past calamities of the nation God has so far been with her as to have brought her through them, not unscathed certainly, but still undestroyed, although a tithe of her judgments would have swept other nations from the earth. Like the three men in the furnace who survived it [Daniel 3:21 ff.—GB], while those who cast them in were caught by the flame wafted aside by the breeze which was intended for others, and consumed, Israel still preserves her national existence, while the more ancient nations that oppressed her have almost or altogether disappeared. There may be allusion, however, to the period of universal national judgments in the promise made here, for similar assurances are given to Israel in connexion with the trials of the last days (see ISAIAH 66:12; Zechariah 13:9)." ¶ But why shall it not burn the righteous? See ISAIAH 33:14.

3 For I [am] the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt [for] thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.

The Targum (ܬ) has, for the last clause, "I gave Egypt in exchange for thee, Ethiopia, and Seba, in thy stead." The LXX (Ϛ) reads, "Because I the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel am thy Saviour, I have given Egypt for thy ransom and Ethiopia and Soena in thy stead." Instead of *ransom*, the Peshitta (ܫ) has *sake* (Lamsa) / *in exchange for you* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (V) has *atonement* instead of *ransom*. ¶ Barnes explains: "The word rendered 'ransom' here is **כֹּפֶר** . . . whence the Latin *cooperio*; the French *couvrir*; the English *cover*, and means literally to cover; to cover over; to overlay with anything, as pitch, as in Genesis 6:14. Hence, to cover over sins; to overlook; to forgive; and hence, to

³ "Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master" (John 20:16).

make an expiation for sins, or to atone for transgression so that it may be forgiven.” Alexander explains: “This is an amplification of the phrase *I have redeemed thee* in ISAIAH 43:1. As the Israelite under the Mosaic law was obliged to redeem his first-born by the payment of a price, or by the substitution of some other object, so Jehovah secured Israel as his own by giving up the other nations.” Cowles says: “Ethiopia and Seba are grouped with Egypt, perhaps as her allies; at least in the same general sense. Both genealogically and geographically, they were near. Cush and Egypt (Misraim) were brothers; Seba was a son of Cush [Genesis 10:5, 6].” Gill has: “*I gave Egypt for thy ransom*; he sacrificed the Egyptians instead of the Israelites; he destroyed the firstborn of Egypt, and saved Israel his firstborn; he drowned the Egyptians in the Red sea, when the Israelites passed safely through it; and the destruction of the former was to make way for the salvation of the latter, and so said to be a ransom for them ... and the Lord, by putting his people in mind of these instances, suggests hereby that he will sacrifice all their enemies, rather than they shall be destroyed, and therefore they need not fear.” ¶ And what did God the Father give as a ransom for you and for me? He gave His only begotten son, even Jesus Christ, as an expiation and ransom for our sins.

4 Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. ✓

✓ or, person

Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Because thou hast been precious in my sight—hast been honoured and I loved thee.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “Since thou becamest honourable in my eyes, thou art glorious: I have loved thee.” ¶ What a beautiful sentiment, **אֲנִי אֶהְבֵּתִיךָ**, and **I** have loved thee.

Indeed, “We love him, because he first loved us” (1 John 4:19). Birks says: “Israel had been precious, not from yesterday, but in God’s eternal counsel of love.” Cowles writes: “From the time when God set his heart on Israel, he had held her in honor and love, and therefore declares, ‘I will [on every occasion] give men and nations for thy life.’ This is to be taken in the same sense as ‘giving Egypt for thy ransom.’” ¶ *Therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And I gave nations instead of thee, and kingdoms for thy soul.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Therefore I will give men for thee and chiefs for thy life.” ¶ A number of exegetes have suggested that the term *men*, or *people*, here means *mankind*. Alexander

explains: “*Man* is here used collectively or indefinitely for *other men* or the rest of men (as in Judges 16:7; Psalm 73:5; Job 31:33; Jeremiah 32:20).”

5 Fear not: for I [am] with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west;

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Fear not, for my Word shall be thy support; I will bring thy children from the east, I will bring together thy captivity from the west.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Fear not. Because I am with thee, from the east I will bring thy seed, and gather thee together from the west.” Instead of *seed*, the Peshitta (Ⲯ) uses the synonym, *descendants*. Wade explains: “After the Fall of Jerusalem in 587 only a portion of its population was carried to Babylon; others dispersed to different parts of the world (see Jeremiah 43:7; 44:1).” ¶ The Lord speaks of the gathering of all of the tribes of Israel from every corner of the world under the heavens wherein they were scattered. Rabbi David Kimhi (in Rosenberg) explains that the Lord says: “... just as I delivered you from your oppressors in the past, so will I do to you in the future, when I will gather your exiles from all over the world.” Nägelsbach points out that the word *gather* (Ⲯⲓⲛ) in ISAIAH 43:5 is also used in *Rain in Due Season* (Deuteronomy 30:3, 4). ¶ Most associate the gathering with the return from the Babylonian captivity. Indeed, a small remnant was gathered after the exile. The return from Babylon was only a type of the latter-day gathering of Israel. This gathering was also predicted in 3 Nephi 29, wherein the Lord tells us that when the Book of Mormon comes forth, it will be a token that the latter-day gathering will begin to take place. ¶ The Prophet Joseph Smith quotes ISAIAH 43 and explains: “It is ... the concurrent testimony of all the prophets, that this gathering together of all the Saints, must take place before the Lord comes to ‘take vengeance upon the ungodly,’ and ‘to be glorified and admired by all those who obey the Gospel’ (DHC 4:272).”⁴

6 I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth;

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “I will say to the north, Bring; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from afar, and the captivity of my people from the ends of the earth.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “I will say to the north,

⁴ TPJS.

‘Give up’ and to the south, ‘Keep thou not back; bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth.’ The Talmud tradition (Seder Kodoshim, Menachoth 110a) makes the sons and daughters the *totality* of the matter⁵—regardless of where the children of Israel have been dispersed: “Bring My sons from far, and My daughters from the ends of the earth. ‘Bring My sons from far’: Rabbi Huna said, These are the exiles in Babylon, who are at ease like sons. ‘And My daughters from the ends of the earth’: These are the exiles in other lands, who are not at ease, like daughters” (Talmud, Soncino). ¶ The expression **מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ**, *from ends of the earth*, means exactly the same as the promise that: “If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven” (Deuteronomy 30:4a, *Rain in Due Season*) from there would the Lord gather His people. Alexander says: “This is a poetical amplification of the promise in the foregoing verse. As it was there declared that God would bring and gather the whole seed of Israel, so here he represents himself as calling on the north and the south to execute his purpose.” Govett says: “Their [The Jews]⁶ restoration, after being carried captive into all parts of the earth, is predicted in ISAIAH 43:5–6, for they will be the elect of God . . .” In 1850 Keith wrote: “The gathering of the nation to their own land will form another evidence of the love of the God of Israel. This language has never been fulfilled in their past history, and can refer only to what is future.” ¶ This future time has now become a prophecy fulfilled. Israel has begun to be gathered from every continent and today is a nation. Shortly before Keith’s book was published, in 1841, Elder Orson Hyde traveled to the Holy Land in the year 1841 and quietly dedicated the land of Israel for the return of her peoples. It is with great tenderness—besides the issue of totality—that the Lord speaks of the gathering of Israel, using such intimate terms as *my sons* (**בְּנֵי**) and *my daughters*

(**וּבָנוֹתֵי**). Rawlinson makes a few interesting observations regarding this verse, “—*Bring my sons*. The nations are called upon, not merely to ‘let Israel go,’ but to conduct and escort them from the places of their abode to their own country.” This will take place through missionary work, as we see in ISAIAH 18:7. ¶ Elder Orson Pratt explained—and note the gathering that takes place on both sides of the veil: “Paul saw this gathering, and he calls it a new dispensation that should come after his day. He says that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he would gather together in one all things in Christ, whether they be things in heaven or

things on the earth. The dispensation of the fullness of times, then, was to be characterized by the gathering of all persons that were in Christ. All the righteous dead that are in heaven, whose bodies are asleep in the grave, together with all the Christians on the earth, will be gathered in one in that dispensation. Fulfilling another prophecy in the 43rd chapter of Isaiah, where the Lord says— ‘I will say to the north give up, and to the south keep not back; bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by my name.’ ... The Lord says, ‘I will say to the north give up.’ The Lord is going to speak the Lord is going to utter something— ‘I will say to the south keep not back. I will say, Come ye, my sons and daughters, from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by my name.’”⁷ President Heber C. Kimball testified of that which had not, when the spoke, yet taken place: “We are informed in the Bible that in the last days the sons of God shall be brought from afar, and his daughters from the ends of the earth; and also that the elect will be gathered from the four quarters of the globe. Now, this will most assuredly be fulfilled, and this is the work which you and I have got to perform.”⁸ Is there anything more thrilling than to be involved in such a work? The Prophet Joseph Smith said: “After all that has been said, the greatest and most important duty is to preach the Gospel.”⁹

7 [Even] every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

The Targum (**ܬ**) has, “All these things *shall come to pass* for the sake of your righteous fathers, upon whom my name was called, yea, for my glory I have created them. I will restore their captivity, yea, I will work wonders for them.” The LXX (**ϥ**) reads, “All that are

⁷ Pratt, Elder Orson. *Journal of Discourses*, Orson Pratt, March 26, 1876. Restoration Of The Gospel Probable And Scriptural, pp. 185–186. Elder Orson Pratt also testified: “Did the Prophets in ancient times testify that when the kingdom of God should be organized, the Saints should be gathered from the four quarters of the earth, that all that were called by the name of the Lord should be brought out from the north and from the south, and from the east and from the west, even the sons and daughters of God should be brought from all nations? The Latter-day Saints teach that the same angel which brought the Gospel (Revelation 14:6–7) the same God that has set up his kingdom on the earth in the latter days has commanded his servants that go forth with these doctrines, to gather out his elect from the four winds of heaven.” The Setting up of God’s Kingdom in These Latter Days. 4 February 1872.

⁸ Kimball, President Heber C. Gathering of the People of God in The Last Days—Return to Jackson County, &c. Discourse given in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 17 February 1861. Reported By: J. V. Long.

⁹ *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith, p. 113.

⁵ For a similar Hebrew expression using the masculine and the feminine, meaning the totality of the matter, see ISAIAH 3:1,

מִשְׁעָן וּמִשְׁעָנָה.

⁶ Jews is correct, but should have also included all the tribes of Israel.

called by my name.’ For I have prepared him for my glory, I have fashioned him and made him.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, for the first clause, “And every one that calleth upon my name.” ¶ Birks says: “The people of Israel were called by the name of God, and His glory was involved in their deliverance. They were created, formed, and made, to be His witnesses ... Only not all who were of Israel would be gathered, but only those who were called by the Divine name; and not the natural seed only, but also those who were of the faith of Abraham, the Gentile proselytes, who were to be grafted in.” This speaks of all who would enter the waters of baptism—thus taking upon themselves the name of Christ—through the hand of an authorized priesthood holder.

vv. 8–13. In the following verses we have a renewal of the legal case. ISAIAH 43:8 speaks of the wonderful conversion of the children of Israel in the latter-days, as they are gathered from every corner of the world. This is now the topic of celebration; this is the new thing that the Lord will do: He will bring about the great gathering unto Himself. All these things are only possible because of the redeeming sacrifice of our Savior.

8 ¶ Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears.

The Targum (T) has, “When I brought forth my people from Egypt, they were like the blind, although they had eyes; and like the deaf, although they had ears.” The LXX (G) reads, “And have brought out a blind people: for their eyes are as if they were blind; and they are deaf, though they have ears.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Bring forth the people that are blind, and have eyes: that are deaf, and have ears.” ¶ Alexander writes: “*He hath brought out the blind people, and there are eyes (to them); and the deaf, and (there are) ears to them.*” The two clauses are so constructed as to supply one another’s ellipsis ... On the whole, the most satisfactory interpretation of the verse is that which understands it as descriptive of the change wrought or to be wrought in the condition of mankind by Jehovah, through the agency of his people, whether the latter be expressly mentioned here or not. *He* (i.e. God, or Israel as his messenger) *hath brought out a people* (once) *blind, and (now) they have eyes, and (once) deaf, and (now) they have ears, i.e.* of course, seeing eyes and hearing ears. This agrees perfectly with all that goes before and follows, with respect to the mission and vocation of God’s people.” Rawlinson suggests: “Israel is first summoned, as ‘a blind people that have eyes;’ i.e. a people long blind, who have now, to some extent, recovered their sight, and are ready to witness for God.” Hitzig (in Birks) thinks of this as relating to the

“promise of Jewish¹⁰ restoration.” ¶ This verse is the antithesis of ISAIAH 6:9–10, where the people refuse to see and to hear. Now, hearts have been softened and turned to the Lord so that eyes begin to see and ears begin to hear. ¶ Elder Bruce R. McConkie testified: “The gathering of Israel in the last days shall consist in bringing together ‘the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears,’ that is, the spiritually blind and deaf shall come to a knowledge of the things of God and they shall see and hear. In large part the opening of the eyes of the blind and the unstopping of the ears of the deaf shall take place by means of the Book of Mormon. ‘And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness’ (ISAIAH 29:18).”¹¹ My own change of heart began to take place as I read the Book of Mormon over a four day Christmas break in 1973. Seeing and hearing are lifetime efforts rather than a one-time event. “Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to ... stand before the Son of man” (Luke 31:36). Nägelsbach beautifully suggests that it would be the Servant of the Lord who would open the blind eyes and lead the captives out of prison, making it possible for the blind and the deaf to see and hear.

9 Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and shew us former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, [It is] truth.

Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: The Targum (T), for the second clause, has “Let the kingdoms be brought together.” The LXX (G) reads, “All the nations were assembled together; now let all the archons be assembled.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “All the nations are assembled together, and the tribes are gathered.” ¶ This is a command for the Lord’s missionaries to go forth and invite all to come onto Christ (see ISAIAH 18). Wade has: “Probably the prediction of Israel’s restoration, which the idols cannot parallel.” ¶ *Who among them can declare this, and shew us former things? Let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, [It is] truth.* The Targum (T) has, “Who among them can declare this, and give us the

¹⁰ Best to think of it regarding Judah and Ephraim, as representatives of all the tribes of Israel.

¹¹ Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed., p. 184. Similarly, see also, Bruce R. McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man*, p.173–174.

joyful tidings of old? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified; let them hear, and let them speak the truth.” The LXX (6) reads, “Can any among them announce these things? Or can any tell you these things before hand? Let them produce their witnesses and be justified, and let them hear and tell things true.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “Who among you can declare this, and shall make us hear the former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, let them be justified, and hear, and say: It is truth.” ¶ What is being declared? What does the word *this* (זאת) refer to? Who could have ever predicted the gathering of Israel from every corner of the globe in the latter days? Only God could declare it. It is a thrilling subject to meditate upon, and to see it evolving before our very eyes. This prophecy is being fulfilled now, two and a half millennia after it was made. Barnes says: “*That they may be justified*” – That it may be demonstrated that they are what they pretend to be, and that they are worthy of the confidence of people. The word ‘justified’ here, is used in the sense of being right, or true; – let them in this manner show that their claims are just, and well founded.”

10 Ye [are] my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I [am] he: before me there was no God formed,[✓] neither shall there be after me.

✓ or, nothing formed of God

Ye [are] my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: The LXX (6) reads, “Be you witnesses for me: and as for me I myself am a witness saith the Lord God; and this servant of mine whom I have chosen.” Instead of *servant*, the Peshitta (5) has the plural, *servants*. Skinner well says: “To bear witness to Jehovah’s divinity is one of the functions of Israel as the Servant of the Lord.” And in regards to the Savior of mankind, He always bore witness of His Father, with tenderness and love. The Targum (7) has, “**יְעֲבֹדֵי מְשִׁיחָא**” *and my servant Messiah*, “Ye are my witnesses (literally, ‘before me’), saith the Lord, and my servant, the Messiah, in whom is my delight.” In the first line of the beautiful Hebrew prayer, based on Deuteronomy, **שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל**, *Shema Yisrael*, (Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: — Deuteronomy 6:4, *also see* 6:4–9), the first letter and the last letter are written in larger type and together they spell out the word *witness*, **עֵד**:

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד :

Gill points out: “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness” (Revelation 1:5a); and “These things saith the Amen,¹² the faithful and true witness” (Revelation 3:14b). Jesus the Christ is the chosen servant spoken of in this verse. ¶ Ibn Ezra (in Rosenberg/Judaica Press) explains: “The intention is that there is, indeed, no time before God or after God, since He has no beginning and no end.” The Prophet Joseph Smith explained: “The elements are eternal. That which has a beginning will surely have an end; take a ring, it is without beginning or end—cut it for a beginning place and at the same time you have an ending place ... So it is with God.”¹³ Nägelsbach, a Gentile author, writing in 1884 (40 years after the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith), proceeds to add a second intellectual witness that what Brother Joseph taught was true: “And since whatever is made must have a beginning, and necessarily, too, must have an end, so must all these fictitious gods cease to be.” ¶ The verb to *know* (יָדַע) is the expression used for a husband and wife’s intimacy. The Lord is inviting us to *know* Him—more than just casually—and to believe and put our trust in Him. Baltzer says, “... it becomes clear that this is not merely a question of knowing in the intellectual sense.” ¶ Elder Dallin H. Oaks spoke about the importance of witnesses: “Witnesses and witnessing are vital in God’s plan for the salvation of His children. In the Godhead, the function of the Holy Ghost is to bear witness of the Father and the Son (see 2 Nephi 31:18). The Father has borne witness of the Son (see Matthew 3:17; 17:5; John 5:31–39), and the Son has borne witness of the Father (see John 17). The Lord has commanded His servants to testify of Him (see ISAIAH 43:10; Mosiah 18:9; D&C 84:62), and all of the prophets have borne witness of Jesus Christ (see Acts

¹² Fausset explains: “The saints used *Amen* at the end of prayer, or in assenting to the word of God; but none, save the Son of God, ever said, ‘Amen, I say unto you,’ for it is the language peculiar to God, who avers *by Himself*. The New Testament formula, ‘Amen. I say unto you,’ is equivalent to the Old Testament formula, ‘as I live, saith Jehovah.’” ACCS has: “**Christ is the Amen**. Primasius: ‘He who is the Amen says these words, the faithful and true witness.’ We must consider the meaning here of ‘is’ and ‘Amen.’ The term *amen* is certainly said to mean ‘true’ or ‘faithful.’ And so, in this passage without question it refers to that essence of the divinity of which God spoke when he said to Moses, ‘Thus you shall say to the Israelites, “He who has sent me to you.”’ [Exodus 3:14.] For he truly is, who is always the same. Commentary on the Apocalypse 3.14. [CCL 92:42].” Robertson’s Word Pictures has: “**The Amen** (אָמֵן). Personal (masculine article) name here alone, though in ISAIAH 65:16 we have ‘the God of Amen’ understood in the LXX as ‘the God of truth’ (τὸν θεὸν τὸν ἀληθινόν). Here applied to Christ. See Revelation 1:5 for ο μαρτυρὸς ο πιστος (the faithful witness) and Revelation 3:7 for ο ἀληθινός (the genuine), ‘whose testimony never falls short of the truth’ (Swete).”

¹³ TPJS

10:43; Revelation 19:10).¹⁴ ¶ With an allusion to *Rain in Due Season*, Ironside notes: “It is to Israel the Lord says, ‘*Ye are my witnesses*,’ and this is true of them whether they are obedient to Him or disobedient ... because God has given His testimony through Moses and other prophets showing just how He was going to deal with His people down through the centuries, the blessings that would be theirs, if they walked in obedience; the curses and judgments that would come upon them if they were disobedient ... Frederick the Great who had been listening to Voltaire’s agnostic ideas once asked one of his court chaplains, ‘If the Bible is true it ought to be capable of very clear and succinct witness. Generally when I ask if the Bible is true, I am handed some long scholarly volume which I have neither the time nor the patience to read. If your Bible is true, give me the proof of it in one word.’ The chaplain answered, ‘Sire, Israel.’ And Frederick acknowledged that this indeed is a proof that the Bible is true, the Word of the living God.” ¶ *That ye may know and believe me, and understand that I [am] he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “In order that ye may know, and that ye may believe in me, and understand that I am He who was from the beginning; yea, ages after ages are mine, and beside me there is no god.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, ““That you may know and believe and understand that with respect to me, The I am (Brenton, ‘and understand that I am he’), There is no other God before me; and after me none will exist.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “And understand that I myself am” instead of, “And understand that I [am] he.” ¶ Barnes has: “This expression is equivalent to that which occurs in the Book of Revelation, ‘I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last’ Revelation 1:11; and it is remarkable that this language, which obviously implies eternity, and which in Isaiah is used expressly to prove the divinity of Yahweh, is, in the passage referred to in the Book of Revelation, applied no less unequivocally to the Lord Jesus Christ.” ¶ Elder Orson Pratt explains the apparent contradiction between LDS doctrine and this passage, by focusing on the principle of *one in purpose* or of *one in knowledge*: “But,” inquires one, ‘how are you going to get along with the passage, in Isaiah, where the Lord declared that, ‘There is no God before me, nor shall there be any after me?’ How can we believe this, when we believe in the revelation given through Joseph Smith, which says there are many Gods, and that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are Gods, and that all good men in this Church shall become Gods? Paul also speaks of the only wise God. Perhaps some may suppose that it is translated improperly. But you will find the same thing in the Book of Mormon (Mosiah

12:35) translated by the Urim and Thummim; the same things are also contained in the new translation of the book of Genesis, given to Moses, where the Lord declares that, ‘There is no God besides me.’ In these expressions, God has reference to the great principles of light and truth, or knowledge, and not to the tabernacles in which this knowledge may dwell; the tabernacles are many and without number, but the truth or knowledge which is often personified and called God, is one, being the same in all; God is one, being a unity, when represented by light, truth, wisdom, or knowledge; but when reference is made to the temples in which this knowledge dwells (1 Corinthians 3:16), the number of Gods is infinite.”¹⁵ Elder Bruce R. McConkie testified: “There is one everlasting gospel, one Mediator between God and men, one alone who came to reconcile fallen men to their Maker. All men in all ages are saved by the same power, the same laws, the same Savior. And that Savior is Christ.”¹⁶

11 I, [even] I, [am] the LORD; and beside me [there is] no saviour.

The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “I am God and there is no Saviour besides me.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “I am, I am the Lord: and there is no saviour besides me.” ¶ I, I, Jehovah, אֲנִי יְהוָה. The word אֲנִי is the full or longer version of the more common word used for I, or אֲנִי (Gesenius) and is sometimes used in introductory formulas (אֲנִי יְהוָה) as in Exodus 20:2; Deuteronomy 5:6; or Hosea 12:10) and sometimes for emphasis (HAL). Cowles says: “The repetition of ‘I’ is emphatic; I, and none but myself, am the one only Jehovah, the changeless, the ever truthful and faithful one. There is no Savior besides me. None else has power to save. But this implies in the strongest manner that God *has* such power, and is a perfect Savior for all who accept him as such.” *Jesus*, from Ἰησοῦς, is the Greek equivalent name of the Hebrew *Joshua*, יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, meaning *savior*. Indeed, Jesus Ἰησοῦς is the very Christ Χριστός.

12 I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when [there was] no strange [god] among you: therefore ye [are] my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I [am] God.

¹⁴ Elder Dallin H. Oaks, The Witness: Martin Harris, *Ensign* (CR), May 1999, p. 35

¹⁵ Pratt, Elder Orson. The Holy Spirit and the Godhead. A Discourse delivered in the open air, on the Temple Block, Great Salt Lake City, 18 February, 1855. Reported By: G. D. Watt.

¹⁶ McConkie, Elder Bruce R. *The Seven Christs* (or, rather, of the one Christ whose works and words are shown forth in seven ways). 1982.

I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when [there was] no strange [god] among you: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “I, I have declared to Abraham your father what would come to pass; I, I redeemed you out of Egypt, as I swore to him between the pieces¹⁷; and I, I have made you to hear the doctrine of my law from Sinai, and ye are still alive, when there was no strange god among you.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “I have announced and saved; I reproached when there was no strange god among you.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) renders it that there was no strange god among the people. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “I have declared, and have saved. I have made it heard, and there was no strange one among you.” ¶ Wordsworth says: “And therefore ye [Israel] would not have learnt anything of the future from any other god but Me. Then Israel said, ‘The Lord alone did lead me, and there was no strange god with me’ (Deuteronomy 32:12).” Rashi, in Rosenberg/Slotki explains: “The word *god* is not in the text, but is to be understood.” In other words, it is an elliptical expression. ¶ *Therefore ye [are] my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I [am] God.* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “You are witnesses for me; and I the Lord am still the same God from the beginning.” Shalom Paul has: “The rabbis based a very daring midrash on this verse: “When you are My witnesses, I am God. When you are not My witnesses, it is as if I am not God” (*Sifre Deuteronomy* 144 [ed. Finkelstein], 403–4).” ¶ Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught of the importance of a testimony derived of the Spirit: “Now I do not minimize in any degree or to any extent the obligation that rests upon us to be gospel scholars, to search the revelations, to learn how to reason and analyze, to present the message of salvation among ourselves and to the world with all the power and ability we have; but that standing alone does not suffice. When that is all over, we have to comply with the command the Lord gave for us in this day: ‘... ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God.’ (ISAIAH 43:12.) We have to put an approving, divine seal on the doctrine that we teach and that seal is the seal of testimony, the seal of a personal knowledge borne of the Holy Ghost ... after you have reasoned and after you have analyzed, you have got to *stand as a personal witness* who knows what he is saying. You have to ... *speak and teach by the spirit of prophecy and the spirit of revelation*; and the result is that you *speak as one having authority*. This is the great thing that separates us from the world, and thanks be to God we have this knowledge. We have received this revelation, and we are in a position to *speak as those*

¹⁷ *Between the pieces*, this is an allusion to Genesis 15:9–10.

having authority. (Bruce R. McConkie, Conference Report, Apr. 1973, pp. 36–37.)”¹⁸

13 Yea, before the day [was] I [am] he; and [there is] none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it? ✓

✓ turn it back?

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Yea, from eternity I am He; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will do it, and who shall turn it back?” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And there is none who can rescue out of my hands. I will act; and who can prevent it.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲫ) has, “Yea, from the first day I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hands; what I will do, who can stop it?” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “And from the beginning I am the same, and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall turn it away?” ¶ “And who shall let it?” is the equivalent of saying, “and who shall stop it?” Keith says: “The word ‘let’ is here used, as in other parts of Scripture, in the old English. but now obsolete, sense of hinder. The marginal || reading [i.e., and who shall *turn it back*, וְיָשִׁיבָהּ, וְיָמִי—GB] expresses better the Hebrew original.” Kimhi (in Rosenberg) has: “... he continues to tell us that God was God even before the Creation of the world.” Yes, before *day one*, before the first day, יוֹם אֶחָד. We have literally, “*Even* (yeah, also), *from the day, I He,*” הוּא אֲנִי הוּא.

vv. 14–21. Babylon will be punished. The Lord opened the Red Sea for Israel to pass. Waters will now pass through the desert. The Lord will give waters to His people. Israel shall praise the Lord.

14 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their nobles, ✓ and the Chaldeans, whose cry [is] in the ships.

✓ bars

Thus saith the LORD, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; For your sake I have sent to Babylon. The Targum (Ⲯ) has the last clause as, “Because of your sins I led you captive to Babylon.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Thus saith the Lord, the God who redeemed you, the Holy One of Israel; For your sakes I will send to Babylon.” The Talmud tradition (Seder Mo’ed, Megilah

¹⁸ *Testimony*. Compiled by H. Stephen Stoker and Joseph C. Muren. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1980. 165–166. Emphasis added.

29a) renders this somewhat differently and speaks of the love of the Lord for His people Israel: “It has been taught: Rabbi Simon ben Yohai said: Come and see how beloved are Israel in the sight of God, in that to every place to which they were exiled the Shechinah went with them. They were exiled to Egypt and the Shechinah was with them, as it says, Did I reveal myself unto the house of thy father when they were in Egypt. They were exiled to Babylon, and the Shechinah was with them, as it says, for your sake I was sent to Babylon. And when they will be redeemed in the future, the Shechinah will be with them, as it says, Then the Lord thy God will return [with] thy captivity. It does not say here we-heshib [and he shall bring back] but we-shab [and he shall return]. This teaches us that the Holy One, blessed be He, will return with them from the places of exile” (Talmud, Soncino). ¶ Henderson explains that *I have sent*, שְׁלַחְתִּי, is the “prophetic future, indicating the absolute certainty.” ¶ *I have sent to Babylon*. Poole says, “I have sent Cyrus, and the Medes and Persians with him, to war against Babylon, to this very end and purpose, that he might deliver you out of captivity, and restore you to your land according to promise.” So also, now in the last days, has the Lord sent His ambassadors—His witnesses—to gather scattered Israel from mystical Babylon into Zion. So also Govett: “. . . our blessed Lord speaks as the Deliverer of Israel and their King, and thence continues his address to the end of the chapter. For his people’s sakes he declares that he smote the mystic Babylon and its inhabitants.” ¶ *And have brought down all their nobles, and the Chaldeans, whose cry [is] in the ships*. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “But I will prostrate all of them with their oars, yea, the Chaldeans in the ships of which they boast.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And rouse up all who are fleeing; and the Chaldeans shall be bound in ships.” The BPE (Ⓢ) has, “And made the fugitives return, even the Chaldeans who pride themselves in their ships.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, following the margin || in part, “And have brought down all their bars, and the Chaldeans glorying in their ships.” ¶ Rawlinson has: “The Chaldeans, flying from the Persian attack, betake themselves to their ships with cries of grief, the ships thereby becoming ‘ships of wailing.’” Wade instead offers: “*The ships of their rejoicing* is literally *the ships of their ringing cry*, the cry being usually understood of the loud vaunts with which the Babylonians expressed their pride in their vessels ...” Cheyne proposes: “*The ships of their shouting*] is one of those *équivoques* in which the prophets delight. It suggests that the very ships, which formerly resounded with shouts of exultation, now only echo with the cries of despair, and thus forms a condensed elegy on the strange περιπέτεια in the fortunes of the Chaldeans.” Skinner says: “... the idea must be that they shall all be sent down the

Euphrates as fugitives in ships, which was precisely the manner in which Merodach-baladan made his escape from Sennacherib (see Schrader, *Cuneiform Inscriptions*, E. T. vol. II. p. 36). A description of the ships on the Euphrates is to be found in Herod. I. 194; they are here called ‘ships of rejoicing’ as having formerly been used for pleasure.” Rawlinson suggests: “The Chaldeans are not in Isaiah, as in Daniel, a special class of Babylonians, but, as elsewhere commonly in Scripture, the Babylonians generally.” Most translations retain the word *ships*. The idea seems to be that the Chaldeans were very proud of their ships and leaned upon them for their strength, yet their joy would be short-lived. ISV, instead, has “Now as for the Babylonians, their ringing cry will become lamentation.” GNB has, “I will break down the city gates, and the shouts of her people will turn into crying.” CEV has, “I will send an army against Babylon to drag its people away, crying as they go.” Because so many of the exegetes and Biblical versions speak of the margin ||, *bars*, and also *fugitives*, as another possible translation. Barnes opines: “The word used (כְּרִיחַ), means sometimes bar, cross-bar, that which passed from one side of the tabernacle to the other through rings, in order to carry it; thou a harbor bolt of any kind Judges 16:3; Nehemiah 3:3. But the word may also denote one who flies; a fugitive; and is properly used in that sense here. The verb כָּרַח, from which the word is derived, means often to break away, to flee Genesis 16:8; 35:1; 35:7; 1 Samuel 19:12; Job 27:22; Jonas 1:3. Here it means those who endeavored to escape from the impending calamity and destruction ... Jerome, however, understands it of removing the strong bars with which the prisoners of the exile Jews were protected, so that they would be permitted to go forth in peace and safety.” Gill says: “*and have brought down all their nobles*] from their seats of honour and glory, stripped them of all their grandeur and dignity, and reduced them to a low and mean estate. This is to be understood of the princes and nobles of Babylon ...” Wordsworth suggests: “In the Apocalypse, they who had once traded, in spiritual commerce, with the mystical Babylon, are represented as fleeing from her (see Revelation 18:15—18, ‘In one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every *shipmaster*, and all the company in *ships*, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning.’”

15 I [am] the LORD, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your King.

The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “I am the Lord God, your Holy One, who pointed out Israel your king.” ¶ The Lord is

our King, despite our having rejected Him when we asked for a human king at the time of the Prophet Samuel. Ezekiel 37:22 in the 1611 AV has "... one King shall be king to them all," testifying precisely that this King would be our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

16 Thus saith the LORD, which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters;

The Targum (ܬ) has, "Thus saith the Lord, I am He who prepared a way in the sea, and a path in mighty waters." The LXX (ϸ) reads, "Thus saith the Lord who made a highway in a sea, and a path in the mighty water."

¶ Regarding ISAIAH 43:16–19 Birks points out: "... the Israelites are now reminded of the mighty power of God at the Exodus, where chariot and horse, army and power, fell under the stroke of His hand. Those earlier acts of judgment are to be followed by new things, works of mercy more excellent than 'the former things ...' The 'new thing' most moderns apply to the Return, but the Christian Fathers and Jewish Talmudists to the times of Messiah (Kimhi, Abarb., Rashi, Vitringa, Stier, &c.). The event predicted is some greater antitype of the desert journey in the days of Moses. But the Return from Babylon ... fell very greatly short of the wonders of the Exodus, however striking as a fulfilment of express prophecies. This seems a strong proof of the Messianic reference." This verse begins with the prophetic formula, *Thus sayeth the LORD*,

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה, making sure the reader pays more careful attention. Keith writes: "What formed the path of the Israelites was made the grave of the Egyptians. As the flame of tow is extinguished by water, so were they quenched by the waters of the Red Sea. The scriptural allusions to that disaster furnish some of the most sublime descriptions to be found in any language: 'Thou didst blow with the wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters' (Exodus 15:10)." Cowles says: "The whole description is graphic and terse, full of fire and withal of most impressive truth for the comfort of God's people in every age."

17 Which bringeth forth the chariot and horse, the army and the power; they shall lie down together, they shall not rise: they are extinct, they are quenched as tow.

The Targum (ܬ) has, "I who brought out the chariots, and horses, and a great host, yea, much people; they were swallowed up together, they did not rise, they were extinguished, they are extinct like glimmering

wick is extinguished." The LXX (ϸ) reads, "Who brought out chariots and horses and a mighty host, but they lay down to sleep and shall rise no more: they were extinguished like an extinguished taper." The Peshitta (ܣ) uses the plural, *chariots* and *horses*. Furthermore, instead of "the army and the power," the Peshitta (ܣ) has "mighty army." The Douay-Rheims (ܕ) has, "Who brought forth the chariot and the horse, the army and the strong: they lay down to sleep together, and they shall not rise again: they are broken as flax, and are extinct."

¶ Of the Egyptian army, Orelli says: "As a firebrand thrown into the water hisses and smokes, so their barbarous might was smothered and quenched in the waves." Poole has: "As the wick of a candle when it is put into the water is wholly extinguished, and not the least spark of fire left, so were they utterly destroyed, and not one of them remained." This *extinguish* (כָּבַדָּה), this quenched as tow or *smoking flax* representing Pharaoh's army being put out by the Red Sea (כִּפְשֻׁתָּה כָּבוֹ), is a play on words from ISAIAH 42:3, wherein we hear the Messiah would *not extinguish* or *quench* the *faltering wick* (וּפְשֻׁתָּה כִּהְיֶה לֹא יִכְבֶּנָה), representing the most spiritually fragile.

18 Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old.

The LXX (ϸ) reads, "Mention not these former things, nor reason from the things of old." The Douay-Rheims (ܕ) has, "Remember not former things, and look not on things of old." ¶ Cowles explains that the former things would be *eclipsed* by the new things. As Jeremiah says: "Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land" (Jeremiah 23:7–8).

19 Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, [and] rivers in the desert.

The Targum (ܬ) has, "Behold, I make a new thing, and now it shall be revealed: and will ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert." The LXX (ϸ) reads, "Behold I am in act to do new things, which shall now spring up and you shall know them—I will make a way in the wilderness, and streams of water in the desert." The Douay-Rheims (ܕ)

has, “Verily you shall know them,” instead of “Shall ye not know it?” ¶ Kimhi (in Rosenberg/Slotki) says that *rivers in the desert* is “a greater miracle than turning the Red Sea to dry land.” Regarding *a new thing*, Poole well says: “such a work as was never yet done in the world, even the redemption of the world by the Messiah.” Then Bishop LeGrand Richards quoted ISAIAH 43:19–20 and shared: “The Prophet Joseph had declared that the Saints would continue to suffer persecution and be driven, and many would apostatize, and some would be put to death, and that they should ultimately be driven to the Rocky Mountains, and here they should become a mighty people in the Rocky Mountains ... I want to read to you ... from Isaiah with respect to what the Lord promised to do in the redemption of this wilderness, to make it blossom as the rose, and I want to say to you it is a miracle in my mind the part ‘water’ was to play in the redemption of latter-day Zion. Isaiah said: ‘Behold, I will do a new thing,’ and as far as my understanding of this scripture is concerned, that new thing was the great principle of irrigation. It is true the Saints had to make the canals, they had to make the ditches, they had to put in the dams, but the land might have remained arid had not the Lord put into their minds the inspiration to do this very thing, and that is what Isaiah saw that the Lord would do.”¹⁹

20 The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls: ✓ because I give waters in the wilderness, [and] rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen.

✓ or, ostriches, HEB. daughters of the owl

The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “They shall honour me, when I make habitable provinces at the desert, and the places where the dragons and the daughters of the ostrich dwell.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “The wild beasts of the field will bless me—the Seirens (NETS, ‘sirens’) and the daughters of the ostrich.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) uses the plural, *beasts*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has *glorify* instead of *honour*. I wonder if ISAIAH 34:14–17 is associated with these verses, in terms of the creatures that there represent the disciples of Jesus Christ and will leave to have an increase. ¶ Skinner suggests: “Even the wild beasts shall honour Jehovah, unconsciously, through their joy at the abundant supply of water.” And surely, not so unconsciously. ¶ *Because I give waters in the wilderness, [and] rivers in the desert, to give drink*

to my people, my chosen. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Because I will give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to the captives of my people (the Royal Polyglot omits נְלִיָּיָהּ, ‘captivity’), in whom I delight (or, ‘I have chosen’).” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Because I have given water in the wilderness, and flowing streams in the desert, to give drink to this race of mine which I have chosen.” Lowth similarly has: “The image is elegant and highly poetical. God will give such an abundant miraculous supply of water to his people traversing the dry desert, in their return to their country, that even the wild beasts, the serpents, the ostriches, and other animals that haunt those adust regions, shall be sensible of the blessing; and shall break forth into thanksgiving and praises to him for the unusual refreshment, which they receive from his so plentifully watering the sandy wastes of Arabia Deserta, for the benefit of his people passing through them.” Both of these deserts would be blessed, that of the Holy Land and that of the Rocky Mountains. See Elder LeGrand Richards testimony above. And then we have the desert of apostasy and the refreshing waters of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In Jeremiah we read: “For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me *the fountain of living waters*, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water” (emphasis added, Jeremiah 2:13). But all of that would change with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, the establishment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the gathering of Israel.

21 This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “This people have I prepared for my service, they shall declare my praise.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “My people whom I have preserved to recount my praises.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) renders it something like, drink.” ¶ Birks says: “God must without fail be glorified in those whom He has formed for Himself, to shew forth His praise.” Cowles says: “ISAIAH 43:21 contains obvious allusions to ISAIAH 43:7. ‘This people that I have formed for myself’ are the same whom he has ‘created, formed and made for his glory.’ And yet, further, ISAIAH 44:3–5, doubtless refers to this and heightens the proof that this describes spiritual blessings upon the whole church ...”

vv. 22–27. As Cowles well says, “From such glorious views of the distant future, the prophet falls back upon the present state of the chosen people.” Govett says: “After these signal instances of his mercy, the Saviour beautifully contrasts with it their ingratitude towards him. Yet in spite of all, he ‘would blot out their

¹⁹ Bishop LeGrand Richards, General Conference, October 1948, pp. 44–45.

transgressions for his own sake, and not remember their sins.”

22 ¶ But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “It hath been said by the prophets, that ye of the house of Jacob have not met together for my worship; but that ye were weary of the doctrine of my law, O Israel.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “I had not now called upon thee, Jacob, nor caused thee Israel.” For the second clause, the Peshitta (ⲩ) does not say that Israel has been weary of Him, but instead simply has, “I called thee, O Israel.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, for the second half, “Neither hast thou laboured about me, O Israel.” ¶ McFadyen says: “Jehovah had called Israel (ISAIAH 43:1), but Israel had not called upon Jehovah, *nor hast thou wearied thyself about me.*” Cheyne suggests: “thou hast not called upon me,” is that Israel had forsaken her prayers. Spurgeon says: “Alas, some of my hearers have never spoken with God in all their lives! They are not on speaking terms with Him—they do not know Him!” Skinner has: “*Yet thou hast not called upon me*] To call upon Jehovah ‘in the day of trouble’²⁰ was the first and most obvious duty of Israel (Psalm 50:15), but this duty Israel has neglected. The statement is of course general; it does not exclude the existence of a believing minority which poured out its heart in prayer to God. The position of the word ‘me’ is emphatic in the original; but the emphasis on the object throws a corresponding emphasis on the subject: ‘But not upon *me* hast *thou* called, Jacob’; it is I who have called thee (ISAIAH 41:9, ISAIAH 42:6, ISAIAH 43:1 &c.).” Note the similarity with ISAIAH 1:3 “The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.” Here a contrast is made with those who praise the Lord (ISAIAH 43:20). הַלְלֵנוּ יְיָ.

23 Thou hast not brought me the small cattle ✓ of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacrifices. I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense.

✓ lambs, or, kids

Thou hast not brought me the small cattle of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacrifices. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Thou hast not brought unto me the lambs of thy burnt offerings, and with thy

holy sacrifices thou hast not honoured me.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “To weary thyself: thou hadst not brought me thy sheep of thy whole burnt offering; nor honoured me with thine incense offerings.” The Peshitta (ⲩ) uses the margin ||, *lambs*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “Thou hast not offered me the ram of thy holocaust, nor hast thou glorified me with thy victims.” ¶ Barnes explains: “*The small cattle* – Margin ||, ‘Lambs,’ or ‘kids.’ The Hebrew word (שׁוֹר) denotes properly one of a flock – a sheep or a goat.” Wordsworth writes: “The emphasis is on *Me*: thou hast given to strange gods the honour due to *Me alone*. See on Amos 5:25, ‘Have ye offered—unto *Me* sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?’ No—not to *Me*, but to idols. Cp. on Acts 7:42–43.” Nägelsbach says: “[This does] not mean that Israel has *never* fulfilled the duties of divine service therein mentioned, but only that they have not *fulfilled* them i.e., not fully satisfied the requirements.” Alexander explains: “The whole Mosaic ritual is here represented by an enumeration of some of the principal offerings: the עֹלֹת, or general expiation; the זִבְחֵי, or animal sacrifices in general; the *minhah*, or meal-offering; and the *lebonah*, or aromatic fumigation.” ¶ *I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “I have not caused thee to multiply offerings, neither did I burden thee with frankincense.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “I had not burdened thee with sacrifices of flour; nor wearied thee with demands of frankincense.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has *oblations* instead of *offering*. ¶ Wordsworth suggests: “I have not burdened thee with service; but thou hast burdened Me by sin.” Barnes explains: “*I have not caused thee to serve with an offering* – ‘I have not made a slave of thee; I have not exacted such a service as would be oppressive and intolerable – such as is imposed on a slave.’ The word used here (עֲבַד), is often used in such a sense, and with such a reference Leviticus 25:39; ‘Thou shalt not compel him to serve the service of a bondman’ Exodus 1:14; Jeremiah 22:13; 25:14; 30:8. The sense is, that the laws of God on the subject, were not grievous and oppressive.” So also Faussett: “*I have not caused thee to serve*—that is, to render the service of a *slave* (Matthew 11:30; Romans 8:15; 1John 4:18; 5:3).” Spurgeon, speaking about our sacrifices, says: “Often we have the posture of devotion without devotion; the words of praise without the praise.” Jeremiah 7:23 (emphasis added) has: “But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and **I will be your God, and ye shall be my people**: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.”

²⁰ See D&C 101:7–9.

24 Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me[✓] with the fat of thy sacrifices: but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities.

✓ made me drunk, or, abundantly moistened

Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Thou hast not bought for me the aromatic reed with silver; with the fat of thy holy sacrifices thou hast not anointed (literally, ‘made fat’) mine altar.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Nor hadst thou purchased with silver perfumes for me; nor had I desired the suet of thy sacrifices.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has *victims* instead of *sacrifices*. ¶ Rosenberg/Slotki point out the paronomasia between *thou has bought* (ⲡⲓⲛⲁ) and *sweet cane* (ⲡⲓⲛⲁ). Birks says: “The sweet cane, *calamus aromaticus*, is in high esteem in India, Western Asia, and Africa. It was an article of traffic often brought from a distance (Jeremiah 6:20), and a main ingredient in the holy anointing oil (Exodus 30:23).” Regarding the *fat*, Wade suggests, “This, in peace-offerings (which were for the most part consumed by the priest or the worshippers), was appropriated to the Lord (see Leviticus 3:4, 10, and cf. on ISAIAH 34:6). ¶ *But thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “But thou hast multiplied thy sins before me; thou hast burdened me with thine iniquities.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “But thou stoodest before me in thy sins and in thine iniquities.” Instead of *made me to serve with thy sins*, the Peshitta (Ⲯ) has “burdened me with your sins.” ¶ Regarding ⲙⲉⲛⲉⲃⲣⲉⲛⲓ (thou hast made me to serve OR burdened) and ⲙⲉⲛⲉⲃⲣⲉⲛⲓ (thou hast wearied me), Henderson explains: “The verbs ⲙⲉⲛⲉⲃⲣⲉⲛⲓ and ⲙⲉⲛⲉⲃⲣⲉⲛⲓ are repeated with great effect from the preceding verse; and, as here used, are strongly anthropopathical.²¹” Kay has, speaking of the servitude of our Lord as He paid for our sins: “He had not made them to toil for His good; but *they* had reduced Him to the necessity of servitude. Verily, *thou* hast caused Me to labour (as a servant) *by thy sins*; *thou* hast made Me to toil *by thine iniquities*.—The next verse informs us of the nature of the work here spoken of: it was for the blotting out of Israel’s sins.—So that here we have an explanation of the mystery respecting the ‘Servant of the Lord.’ He who ‘bore our iniquities’ (ISAIAH 53:11) was none other than Jehovah Himself.”

²¹ Anthropopathic here means ascribing human feelings to God.

25 I, [even] I, [am] he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “I, *even* I, *am* He who forgiveth thy sins (Chaldee, ‘debt’), for the sake of my name, and thy sins shall not be remembered.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “I even I, THE I AM, am (Brenton, ‘I, even I, am he,’ NETS, ‘I am, I am the one’) he who blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake; and of thy sins I will no more make mention.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, for the first half, “I am, I am he that blot out thy iniquities for my own sake.” ¶ I have loved the Septuagint translation here. Nägelsbach has, “For if before the LORD there was no god, and there will be none after Him, then He is the One *that was and shall be the eternally Existent*, i. e., Jehovah (comp. Exodus 3:14). And, because this entire part of Isaiah deals with the deliverance of Israel and the ground and consequences of it, it is added: and beside Me there is no Saviour. Therefore Israel must take care not to look for its salvation from any other” (emphasis added). Skinner says: “In accordance with O.T. analogies, the act of forgiveness is described simply as ‘not remembering’ sin; but the actual working out of forgiveness in history calls into exercise the resources of Omnipotence; it includes all Jehovah’s dealings with His people, His handing them over to the dominion of the heathen (ISAIAH 43:28), and saving them again in His marvellous providence. The verse, moreover, contains only one half of the prophet’s teaching about forgiveness; the other half is the process by which the people are brought to repentance, and this is the work of the Servant of the Lord, as described in ISAIAH 53.” Gill has: “[Sin] which is here expressed by a ‘blotting’ them out, in allusion to the blotting of a debt book: sins are debts, and these are many, and which cannot be paid by the sinner; Christ has made full payment; as the surety of his people: upon this the debt book is crossed; these debts are remitted for his sake: or as a cloud is blotted out, dispelled by the wind, or scattered by the sun.” ¶ We read in Alma: “But few understood the meaning of those things, and this because of the hardness of their hearts. But there were many who were so hardened that they would not look, therefore they perished. Now the reason they would not look is because they did not believe that it would heal them. O my brethren, if ye could be healed by merely casting about your eyes that ye might be healed, would ye not behold quickly, or would ye rather harden your hearts in unbelief, and be slothful, that ye would not cast about your eyes, that ye might perish? If so, wo shall come upon you; but if not so, then cast about your eyes and begin to believe in the Son of God, that he will come to redeem his people, and

that he shall suffer and die to atone for their sins; and that he shall rise again from the dead, which shall bring to pass the resurrection, that all men shall stand before him, to be judged at the last and judgment day, according to their works” (Alma 33:20–22). ¶ There is an eternal principle at play here, to include repentance or turning unto Christ, an effort to forsake our sins, restitution where possible, the forgiving of others who have sinned against us and above all, the expiatory sacrifice and grace of our Lord—without which none of this would be possible. Elder Boyd K. Packard made this power statement, “Those who make one serious mistake tend to add another by assuming that it is then too late for them. It is never too late! Never! ... The discouraging idea that a mistake (or even a series of them) makes it everlastingly too late does not come from the Lord.”²² As a son of Israel, it is comforting to me, **נְחַמְנִי נְחַמְנִי**, to read: (1) “For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet I will not make a full end of thee: *but I will correct thee in measure*, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished” (Jeremiah 30:11, emphasis added); (2) “And they also of the tribe of Judah, *after their pain*, shall be sanctified in holiness before the Lord, to dwell in his presence day and night, forever and ever” (D&C 133:35, emphasis added). In ISAIAH 44:22, we will continue this conversation and speak particularly of the *gift of grace* that is so strongly involved in God’s forgetting our transgressions and in permitting us to forgive others and ourselves.

26 Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.

The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Speak now, we will plead together, declare thou for the purpose, that thou mayest justify thyself, if thou art able to do so.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “But do thou mention them and let us be judged; do thou first state thy transgressions, that thou mayest be acquitted.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, for the second half, “Tell if thou hast anything to justify thyself.” ¶ Jennings says: “ISAIAH 43:26 is a gracious parallel to ISAIAH 1:18: ‘Come now, and let us reason together.’” ¶ Elder Bruce R. McConkie explains how the Savior will join us in pleading with the Father, much as in the intercessory prayer: “‘Let us plead together.’ That is, I, Jehovah, will join with you in a plea for forgiveness from our Father, if you will keep my

commandments.”²³ The Savior can be our advocate with the Father. We can be made clean so long as the Lord acknowledges us before the Father and does not bid us depart (see Matthew 7:21–23).

27 Thy first father hath sinned, and thy teachers[✓] have transgressed against me.

✓ interpreters

The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Thy first father hath sinned, and thy teachers have rebelled against my Word.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Your fathers first, then your chiefs transgressed against me.” Instead of *teachers*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *rulers* (Lamsa) / *governors* (BPE). ¶ There is a question as to what *first father* or **אֲבִיךָ הָרִאשׁוֹן** really means. Henderson suggests: “The parallelism requires us to understand a person in office, and none is so likely to be intended as the *High Priest*. **רִאשׁוֹן**, *first*, is used not only of time, but also of *dignity*, as 1 Chronicles 18:17; and **כֹּהֵן הָרִאשׁוֹן**, *the lead* or *chief priest*, and simply **הָרִאשׁוֹן**, *the chief* ... At the same time, there is no reason to conclude that only one High Priest is meant.” ¶ Regarding interpreters (see margin ¶), Birks suggests: “... *thine interpreters*, i.e. the professed expounders of the Divine will (cf. Job 33:23), especially the prophets: for the unfaithfulness of such.” So also Whitehouse, “The interpreters or ‘intermediaries’ are here the prophets, who are the interpreters of God’s will to men. The reference is to the false prophets such as Isaiah denounced (29:9–10) and whom Micaiah confronted (1 Kings 22), in the ninth century (853 BC), and in more recent times Jeremiah 23:11–18; 26:8–15; 27:9–18; 28:10–17, &c.). No doubt priests are also included.” Gill has: “*and thy teachers have transgressed against me*; or ‘interpreters’; of the law to the people, the Priests and Levites, Scribes and Pharisees; such who should have taught the people, and instructed them in the knowledge of divine things, and interceded with God for them; these were transgressors of the law themselves, as well as despisers of the Gospel ...” ¶ Cheyne makes a particularly beautiful contribution here, explaining that these passages “prepare us for the announcement of a Higher Mediator,” one in whom the Lord is “so ‘well pleased’ that he cannot refuse to accept his intercession.” So we see a contrast between the unconverted deceitful priests, high priests and false prophets with the perfect “merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people” (Hebrews 2:17b), even Jesus Christ our Lord.

²² Packer, Boyd K. *Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1991.

²³ Bruce R. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ*, p. 332.

28 Therefore I have profaned the princes[✓] of the sanctuary, and have given Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches.

✓ or, holy princes

The Targum (ܬ) has, “Therefore I have profaned the princes of the sanctuary, and I have delivered Jacob to the slaughter, and Israel to reproaches.” The LXX (Ϝ) reads, “When the chiefs polluted my sanctuary, then I gave up Jacob to be destroyed, and Israel to reproach.” For the first clause, likewise, instead of the Masoretic text (מ) rendering, the Peshitta (ܫ) has, “Thy princes have profaned the sanctuary.” The Douay-Rheims (ϥ) has, as in the margin ||, *principes sanctos* (Vulgate, ϥ), “And I have profaned the holy princes, I have given Jacob to slaughter, and Israel to reproach.” ¶ Regarding אֶתְּחַלֵּל, *and profaned* (root, חָלַל), Cowles has: “The Hebrew word means etymologically to pierce, to mutilate, to treat as worthless and not as sacred. Speaking of those who were by their office, sacred, holy men, God says, I will strip them of everything sacred and treat them as having no sanctity, but as being worthless ... blighting judgments that must come on a recreantly apostate people for their rebellion against God.” Barnes explains: “*Therefore I have profaned* –

The princes of the sanctuary, that is, the priests, were by their office regarded as sacred, or set apart to the service of God. To depose them from that office, to subject them to punishment, and to send them into captivity, was, therefore, regarded as profaning them. They were stripped of their office, and robes, and honors, and reduced to the same condition, and compelled to meet with the same treatment, as the common people. The sense is, that he had made them common (for so the word חָלַל is used in Exodus 31:14; 19:22; Leviticus 19:8; 21:9; Malachi 1:12; 2:2); he did not regard their office; he used them all alike.” Henderson suggests that “שָׂרֵי קֹדֶשׁ, *princes of the sanctuary*,²⁴ are the priests (1 Chronicles 24:5).” Barnes explains: “*The princes of the sanctuary* – Margin ||, ‘Holy princes.’ It means, either those who presided over and directed the services of the sanctuary, called in 1 Chronicles 24:5, ‘governors of the sanctuary;’ or those who were holy in office. The Septuagint renders it, Οἱ ἄρχοντες τὰ ἅγια μου – ‘Who preside over my holy things,’ or my sanctuary.”

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²⁴ Or, *holy princess* (see margin).

Isaiah 44

The Lord's tender mercies and love for Israel are manifested as He reiterates the glorious promises made in *Rain in Due Season*. Israel would be converted and forgiven of her sins. The atonement is declared as well as an invitation to come unto Christ and take full advantage of His expiatory sacrifice. Anything that retards our efforts to keep the commandments is a form of idolatry. President Brigham Young challenged: "... you dare not quite give up all your hearts to God, and become sanctified throughout, and be led by the Holy Ghost from morning until evening, and from one year's end to another ... If I were to ask you individually, if you wished to be sanctified throughout, and become as pure and holy as you possibly could live, every person would say yes; yet if the Lord Almighty should give a revelation instructing you to be given wholly up to Him, and to His cause, you would shrink, saying, 'I am afraid he will take away some of my darlings.' (*Journal of Discourses*, 2:134)." Cyrus is named by name before he was born.

vv. 1–8. Keith says of the first five verses: "The first verses are fully explained only by referring them to the *final conversion of Israel*" (emphasis added). There is a witness-redemption motif in these verses and chapters. Baltzer has: "The prophet Jeremiah 'redeems' a field during the siege of Jerusalem. His uncle's son sums up the nature of the legal act in a single sentence: 'Buy my field that is at Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, for the right of possession by inheritance and the "redemption" (הִנְאָלָה) is yours.' But in what detail the act is described, with the drawing up of the double document, the weighing up of the price—all of it in the presence of witnesses!" Baltzer then goes on to point out a similar situation in the case of Ruth the Moabite (Ruth 4:1–22). "As far as the text is concerned," Baltzer continues, "this means that Yahweh took advantage of the opportunity to buy back, or redeem." Israel, then, has been chosen by the Lord. The spirit, symbolized by water, is poured upon the converts. They, in turn, manifest their love for the Lord. Only those who receive revelation from God have the prophetic gift.

1 ¶ YET now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen:

The Targum (ܬ) has, "or, I delight in" as another translation of *chosen*. The LXX (Ϯ) reads, "But now, hear, Jacob my servant, and thou Israel, whom I have chosen." The Peshitta (ܫ) adds *to me* after *hear*. The Lord uses the command, "Hear, O Israel" (שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל), or "Hear, O Jacob" (שְׁמַע יַעֲקֹב), to announce that He is about to say something very important. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: "It is a great thing to inquire at the hands of God, or to come into His presence." For that is precisely what happens, we come into His presence, as we pray and as we receive answers to our prayers. ¶ *My servant Israel*.

With these words the Lord is acknowledging his relationship with Israel as if He had said *my people*. Calvin suggests: "In this passage I consider the particle (י)¹ to mean *But* or *Yet*, as in many other passages. As if he had said, 'Though grievous afflictions are about to overtake thee, yet now hear what I will do for thy sake.' The verse must be viewed in connection with the former argument, because the Lord declares that he will never permit his people to perish altogether, though they be grievously afflicted." ¶ *Whom I have chosen*. A number of exegetes mistakenly confuse *election* as *predestination*: that is, the deceitful notion that men were chosen before the foundation of the earth *to either be damned or to be saved* so it matters not what man *does* during mortality. It proposes that there is no moral agency with the attendant consequences. Such a false notion of *predestination* is the satanic imitation of the concept of *foreordination*.² It negates the very purpose of mankind's coming upon the earth: to gain a body *and* to be tested. Regarding the use of the word *predestinate* in Romans 8:29–30, the Prophet Joseph Smith explained that an "unconditional election of individuals to eternal life was not taught by the Apostles" (DHC 4:358–360).³ ¶ Simeon has: "It is of great importance to notice the tender and affectionate manner in which God

¹ Often י is translated as *and*, but can also mean *but*, *yet*, and so on.

² "In the premortal spirit world, God appointed certain spirits to fulfill specific missions during their mortal lives. This is called foreordination. Foreordination does not guarantee that individuals will receive certain callings or responsibilities. Such opportunities come in this life as a result of the righteous exercise of agency, just as foreordination came as a result of righteousness in the premortal existence ... The doctrine of foreordination applies to all members of the Church, not just to the Savior and His prophets. Before the creation of the earth, faithful women were given certain responsibilities and faithful men were foreordained to certain priesthood duties. As people prove themselves worthy, they will be given opportunities to fulfill the assignments they then received." (<https://www.lds.org/topics/foreordination>). Also see notes associated with ISAIAH 44:2.

³ Teaching of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

addresses his people; because it is from thence that we collect the most just conceptions of his condescension and grace, and derive the richest encouragement to wait upon him.”

2 Thus saith the LORD that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, [which] will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen.

Thus saith the LORD that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, [which] will help thee. The LXX (6) reads, “Thus saith the Lord, the God who made thee, and who formed thee from the womb, still thou shalt be helped.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “Thus saith the Lord that made and formed thee, thy helper from the womb.” ¶ *Formed from the womb.* As members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints we believe that we are the literal spirit children of loving heavenly parents. We are known of God, the Eternal Father, “*that made thee from before the womb,*” which is what the expression (יְצַרְךָ מִבֶּטֶן) means, with the ellipses. The idea is more explicitly communicated in Jeremiah 1:5a: “*Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee,*” בְּטֶרֶם אֶצְוֶרְךָ בֶּבֶטֶן יָדַעְתִּיךָ. We here find out, that each one of us was known of the Father from the pre-existence. In the Book of Abraham we learn that like Jeremiah, there were others who were chosen before birth: “Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones; And God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers; for he stood among those that were spirits, and he saw that they were good; and he said unto me: Abraham, thou art one of them; thou wast chosen before thou wast born” (Abraham 3:21–22). We further learn from the Prophet Joseph Smith: “Every man who has a calling to minister to the inhabitants of the world was ordained to that very purpose in the Grand Council of heaven before this world was ... I suppose I was ordained to this very office in that Grand Council.”⁴ Israel was also so called and chosen in the most beautiful sense of the word. Once we return to the presence of God, after we die, we will know who we were before we were born. Will we be filled with joy or regret? I am so grateful for latter-day prophets who make these matters perfectly clear to us. President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “Every soul

⁴ *History of the Church*, 6:364; *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 365. Also see notes associated with ISAIAH 44:1, regarding foreordination.

coming into this world came here with the promise that through obedience he would receive the blessings of salvation. No person was foreordained or appointed to sin or to perform a mission of evil.”⁵ ¶ *Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen.* The Targum (7) has in some instances יֵשׁוּרוּן, “Jesurun,” (or, *Ishurun*) and others יִשְׂרָאֵל, “Israel” while the Masoretic text (8) has יֵשׁוּרוּן, *Jesurun* (or, *Ishurun*). The LXX (6) reads, “Fear not, thou my servant Jacob, and thou, beloved Israel, whom I have chosen.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “Fear not, O my servant Jacob, and thou most righteous whom I have chosen.” ¶ Regarding יֵשׁוּרוּן, Cowles explains: “‘Jesurun,’ another name for Jacob, occurs elsewhere only in Deuteronomy 32:15, and 33:5, 26. Etymologically it means the *upright one*; but whether it be a diminutive expressing the additional idea of endearment (my dear little one), is yet in dispute⁶ among learned critics.” Jenour likewise has: “[Jesurun means] “*the upright, or holy one* ... Thus the Jewish church is called *Jeshurun*: Deuteronomy 32:15. And St. Paul addresses the whole church at Corinth as ‘*Sanctified in Christ Jesus.*’” ¶ Many exegetes suggest that יַעֲקֹב *Jacob* was not a good person in his youth. It has been proposed that his name is associated with עֶקֶב, *heel*, or *taking hold of the heel*. To this last point I have no qualms with. But I have always resented the insinuations that Jacob’s true name was also linked with *deceit*, such as the word *supplanter* and others associated with this great prophet who undoubtedly was among *the great and noble* in the pre-existence. Of course there have been great prophets who have repented of their immoral youthful ways as was Alma the younger. But I have always felt that Jacob is unfairly judged. In one of my lexicons I find that עֶקֶב also means “‘*may (God) protect*’ or ‘(God) *protected*’” (HAL). The voice against Jacob is a voice of calumny—the same voice we so often hear against Abraham in the matter of Sarai—by those who do not see the hand of God in it. ¶ Elder Erastus Snow explains: “Now we will pass by the places in the Bible

⁵ Smith, Joseph Fielding, *Doctrines of Salvation*.

⁶ Nägelsbach in his “Textual and Grammatical” section does an excellent job in not only admitting the possibility of the diminutive in יֵשׁוּרוּן, but also of exploring the possibility that the word Zion has a similar root, and also means “firmly set up, firmly founded” and even explains that “Mt. Zion [is] called Zehjun in Syriac and Arabic.” I highly recommend the whole section of Nägelsbach’s thorough and logical discussion on יֵשׁוּרוּן (see pages 473–474). Plus, to his credit, Nägelsbach does not fall into the silliness of making a false contrast between יִשְׂרָאֵל and יֵשׁוּרוּן, using the negative tack of so many exegetes.

which speak of this birthright until we come to Isaac, the son of Abraham, and to Jacob, the son of Isaac, who bought the birthright of his brother Esau. From the story that is told of Rebekah helping her son Jacob to get the first blessing from his father Isaac, on purpose to secure the birthright from his brother Esau, many would be inclined to think that deceit, dishonesty and unrighteous means were employed to secure it, and they perhaps wonder why it should be so. This was really not the case; it is only made to appear so in the eyes of those who do not understand the dealings of God with man, and the workings of the Holy Spirit to bring about His purposes. There was neither unrighteousness in Rebekah nor in Jacob in this matter; but on the contrary, there was the wisdom of the Almighty, showing forth his providences in guiding them in such a manner as to bring about his purposes, in influencing Esau to transfer his birthright to Jacob, that He might ratify and confirm it upon the head of Jacob; knowing as He did that Jacob and his seed were, and would be, more deserving of the birthright, and would magnify it in its true spirit. While Esau did not sense nor appreciate his condition and birthright; he did not respect it as he should have done, neither did he hearken to the counsels of his father and mother. On the contrary, he went his own way with a stubborn will, and followed his own passions and inclinations and took to wife one of the daughters of the Canaanites whom the Lord had not blessed; and he therefore rendered himself unacceptable to God and to his father and mother. He gave himself to wild pursuits—to hunting, and to following the ways of the Canaanites, and displeased the Lord and his parents, and was not worthy of this right of seniority. The Lord therefore saw fit to take it from him, and the mother was moved upon to help the younger son to bring about the purpose of the Lord, in securing to himself the blessing through the legitimate channel of the Priesthood. And as you know, his father was induced to bless him and confirm this blessing upon him.”⁷ God also has a wonderful plan to bless Esau and his descendants.

3 For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:

⁷ Snow, Elder Erastus. “The Order and Duties of the Priesthood, Etc.” Discourse by President John Taylor and Elder Erastus Snow, delivered at Paris, Bear Lake, Sunday Morning, August 8, 1880. *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 21, No. 40, pp. 358–372. This portion of the talk was given by Elder Erastus Snow, in the presence of President Taylor.

The Targum (ⴚ) has, “For as waters are discharged upon the thirsty land, and are set flowing upon the dry land, so will I give my Holy Spirit unto thy children, and my blessing unto thy children’s children.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For I will give water in their thirst to them who are travelling in a desert. I will put my spirit on thy seed, and my blessings on thy children.” The Douay-Rheims (ⵔ) has, “For I will pour out waters upon the thirsty ground, and streams upon the dry land: I will pour out my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thy stock.” ¶ Ibn Ezra writes: “As I pour water over the place that is thirsty, so will I pour out the spirit of my holiness, or of my salvation, etc.” Nägelsbach says: “[Israel is called to] proclaim the praise of Jehovah (ISAIAH 43:21). It is enabled to do so by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The Prophet here returns to the sphere of thought of ISAIAH 43:20.” Israel is now being gathered again from every continent and every clime. ¶ Simon states: “‘I will pour (not merely sprinkle, but pour) water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground;’ even such abundance, as shall be sure to reach the roots, and produce, not a transient change, like that of grass upon the house-top, but a radical and permanent change, both of heart and life.” Rawlinson says: “We may note here that the ‘water’ is only poured on him who is athirst for it.” Rabbi Rosenberg informs us that both “*Redak* and *Abarbanel* equate this prophecy with that of Joel (as do Ironside, Cowles, and others).” In Joel 2:28–29 we see: “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.” Cowles remarks: “The pouring forth of water, in showers or otherwise, is a frequent and pertinent figure for the bestowment of copious blessings. Thus Malachi 3:10; ‘I will pour you out a blessing till there is not enough;’ and Ezekiel 34: 26; ‘I will make the places round about my hill a blessing, and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessings.’ It is an interesting fact that the Lord uses precisely this figure in prophecy to represent the copious effusions of his Spirit in the gospel age and especially in its latter days. That this passage refers to the Spirit is shown by the parallelism: ‘I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed; my blessing upon thine offspring.’ ... The words of Christ (as in John 7, etc.) seem to refer to this passage. The prophet says, ‘I will pour water on him that is thirsty;’ corresponding to which, Jesus cries, ‘If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink.’ ... Let it be further observed that Isaiah manifestly has the same great blessings in mind in the passage (43:18–21); ‘I will give waters in the wilderness and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen.’” ¶ Regarding Joel, in

1961, Elder Franklin D. Richards said: “When the Angel Moroni first visited the Prophet Joseph, he quoted from the second chapter of Joel: ‘And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh’ (see Joel 2:28; JS—H 1:41). Moroni told the Prophet that this was not yet fulfilled but would be soon. I am confident, my brothers and sisters, that this prophecy is now being fulfilled.” President Gordon B. Hinckley likewise said: “I think we are living in the day of the fulfillment of the word of the Lord given through the Prophet Joel, and repeated by Moroni in his first visitation to the Prophet Joseph. ‘And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh’ (Joel 2:28). I believe, my brethren, that we are living in the day when the Spirit of the Lord is being poured out upon all flesh.” ¶ Spiritual outpourings and blessings on the land often go hand in hand. We read in the Book of Mormon, “... inasmuch as ye shall keep the commandments of God ye shall prosper in the land; and inasmuch as ye will not keep the commandments of God ye shall be cut off from his presence” (Alma 38:1, also see 2 Nephi 4:4). Whitehouse observes that “a land that is cursed is devoid of rain (2 Samuel 1:21),” and that the pouring forth of rain [usually] “betokens ... the removal of the ban” through “God’s forgiving mercy.” I believe this is true and that when we follow God’s commandments He will pour rain (literal) as well as rain (blessings) upon us, to give us *Rain in Due Season* (see Leviticus 26:3–4a). And lest some think that these promises and warnings were only intended of people of old, the Lord says: “And they [these blessings and cursing] shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed **for ever** [עַד-עוֹלָם]” (Deuteronomy 28:46).

4 And they shall spring up [as] among the grass, as willows by the water courses.

The Targum (ܬ) has, “The righteous shall grow, and tender and delicate as the flowers of the grass, as a tree that sends forth its roots by the streams of water.” The LXX (ϸ) reads, “; and they shall spring up like grass among water, and like a willow by the side of a flowing stream.” The Douay-Rheims (Ϲ) has, “And they shall spring up among the herbs, as willows beside the running waters.” ¶ About the willows, Wordsworth says: “A joyful contrast to the melancholy willows by the waters of Babylon, on which the exiles of Judah hung their harps in sorrow (Psalm 137:2). These *willows*, of which the Prophet now speaks, are like the festive *willows* of the joyful solemnity of Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:40).” ¶ Lowth strongly suggests the LXX (ϸ) reading (see above). Regarding בְּבִינִי, Alexander has: “the true explanation has been long since given by

Vitringa, namely, that בִּינִי has here its primitive and proper use, as a noun corresponding to the English *midst*.” So also the correct translation of Zechariah 13:6, rather than the usual *between*. ¶ Barnes says: “A similar figure [as is found in ISAIAH 44:4] to denote the prosperity and happiness of the righteous occurs in Psalm 1:3: ‘And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water ...’”

5 One shall say, I [am] the LORD'S; and another shall call [himself] by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe [with] his hand unto the LORD, and surname [himself] by the name of Israel.

The Targum (ܬ) has, “This one shall say, I am of them that fear the Lord, and another shall pray in the name of the God of Jacob; this one shall offer his oblation before the Lord, and draw near in the name of Israel.” The LXX (ϸ) reads, “One will say, ‘I belong to God;’ and another will call himself by the name of Jacob; and another will write on his hand, ‘I belong to God;’ and will surname himself by the name of Israel.” These three different examples of showing love for the Lord—or entering into a covenant relationship with Him—are each preceded by a בִּינִי (this one): “**This one** shall say, I am Jehovah’s; and **this one** will call *himself* by the name of Jacob; and **this one** shall write with his hand, For Jehovah, and be surnamed by the name of Israel” (LITV). This verse speaks of the *seed* of Israel (ISAIAH 44:3)—granted, most of whom do not *know*⁸ they are Jacob’s seed—and who now are converted and are represented as entering into a covenant with the Lord. Some have confused **writing** or subscribing *with* the hand with *on* the hand. Delitzsch well says in rejecting the latter: “But apart from the fact that כָּתַב, with an accusative of the writing materials, would be unprecedented (the construction required would be **עַל-יָדוֹ**)⁹, this view is overthrown by the fact that tattooing was prohibited by the Israelitish law (Leviticus 19:28; compare the mark of the beast in

⁸ Generally, it is mostly those of Judah who know of their literal descent from Israel. I watched a documentary that showed how a substantial portion of Jews, especially those who lived in 19th century Russia and were not able to emigrate, tried to hide their heritage. This sort of thing has probably been happening for centuries. I have two Hispanic friends, one from Argentina, and one from Mexico, both of whom were declared of the house of Judah by their patriarch, and neither of them knew it before their blessing. In the case of my Argentinean friend, he is probably a descendant of Jews who recently (perhaps last hundred years or so) emigrated to escape persecution. Perhaps my Mexican friend inherited her blood from the natives of the American continent who are descendants of Zedekiah through Mulek.

⁹ Upon the hand.

Revelation 13:16).” Regarding this verse Calvin says: “He describes something new and uncommon, for he who formerly had nothing to do with God shall boast that God hath adopted him.” My father has spoken to me about a book called *God in Search for Man*, by Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, which title has a similar sentiment. I certainly feel as if I am that man who had nothing to do with God, yet have been invited by the Holy One of Israel to follow Him. And I feel to glory in the Father and the Son and praise them forever. ¶ Jenour explains, “*Shall sign himself as Jehovah’s*. That is, shall solemnly bind himself to become the servant of Jehovah. There seems to be an allusion to the manner making contracts among the Jews, when probably, as with us, the parties signed their names to the conditions mutually agreed upon.” ¶ “Your *endowment* is,” President Brigham Young explained, “to receive all those ordinances in the House of the Lord, which are necessary for you, after you have departed this life, to enable you to walk back to the presence of the Father, passing the angels who stand as sentinels, being enabled to give them the key words, the signs and tokens, pertaining to the Holy Priesthood, and gain your eternal exaltation . . .”¹⁰ Ibn Ezra suggests: “*And another shall subscribe* unto the Lord, that he is willing to go to the sanctuary of the Lord.” Barnes suggests: “It is enrolled by the voluntary desire of him who makes the profession among his friends. It is done, after the manner of solemn compacts among men, *in the presence of witnesses*” (emphasis added). Isaiah was seeing a future time when there would be many who would spring up throughout the world and *dedicate* themselves to be servants or disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. ¶ In regards to **יָכַתְבּ יְדוֹ** (*write with his hand*) I wonder if it is symbolic of the law written deeply in the hearts of the disciples of Christ, “But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people” (Jeremiah 31:33). Note then, that if there is a writing to be done, it is the Lord who writes in our hearts. Part of our covenant, is it not, that we “turn away [our] foot [and also our hand] ... not doing [our] own ways, nor finding [our] own pleasure, nor speaking [our] own words [but rather, instead] honour Him” (see ISAIAH 58:13) and speak by the Spirit and live by the Spirit? Is it not also when we raise our hands to sustain the Brethren? Are not all of these things what it means to *subscribe with [our] hand* unto the Lord? Gill says, “... shall give his hand and seal to serve the Lord; shall esteem it his high and great privilege to be written among the living in Jerusalem and to have his name registered among the

saints, and in their church book.” Better, I say, in the *Lamb’s Book of Life*.¹¹

6 Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I [am] the first, and I [am] the last; and beside me [there is] no God.

The Targum (T) has, beginning with the third clause, “I am He who was from the beginning, yea, eternities of eternities are mine; and beside me there is no God.” The LXX (G) reads, “THUS saith God, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the God of Hosts, I am the first and I am the last: besides me there is no God.” Instead of *redeemer*, the Peshitta (S) has *savior*. ¶ Once again we have an allusion to the Shema Yisrael: “*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God the LORD is one* — Deuteronomy 6:4):

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד :

See ISAIAH 43:10 for important additional comments—*one in purpose*. Horsley says: “... God here appeals as a proof of his sole Godhead, is the general redemption of mankind by a descendant of Abraham [Christ]. The deliverance of the Jews by Cyrus is mentioned afterwards only as an earnest of that greater mercy.” In other words, if God could make good what He said about Cyrus, He also would make good the promises made about the promised Messiah. ¶ *I first and I last*, **אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן וְאֲנִי אַחֲרִיִן**. Govett reminds us that in Revelation 1:11, the Savior takes upon Himself this same title or name (τὸ Ἀλφα καὶ τὸ Ω, *the Alpha and the Omega*, also see Revelation 1:8; 22:13 and in the latter days, throughout the D&C). ¶ Keith says: “The Lord, as if to meet the weakness of Israel’s faith in his word, reminds them who had given the promise, and what was the relation in which he stood to them. While he was the Lord he was also the King of Israel; while he was the Lord of hosts he was also the Redeemer of Israel.” Nägelsbach explains what it means for the Lord to be the Alpha and Omega or the Beginning and the End: “To Him everything, beginning and end, is absolutely present.” Nägelsbach then adds: “Therefore, too, He can *prophesy*, and therefore prophesying by means of a decree is proof of His eternity, *i.e.*, of His divinity.” ¶ When the Lord says that beside Him there are no Gods, He is speaking, on the one hand, *of the unity of the Godhead*; and on the other hand, related to that which *pertains to us*. “For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one

¹⁰ Young, President Brigham. *Journal of Discourses* 2:31, 1854.

¹¹ Gill does mention the *Lamb’s book of life*, but does so in ISAIAH 44:7.

God, the Father” (1Corinthians 8:5–6a). There are a number of interesting scriptures that also give us a hint on the very same matter: “God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgment” (ESV). And in Genesis, of course, we have such scriptures as: “And God said, *Let us* make man in *our image*, after *our likeness*” (Genesis 1:26a, *emphasis added*) and “And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become *as one of us*, to know good and evil” (Genesis 3:22a, *emphasis added*). We continue this conversation in ISAIAH 44:8.

7 And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them.

The Targum (T) has, “Who like me shall proclaim this, shall declare it, and set it in order before me, from the time that I appointed the ancient people? and let them declare unto us the things that are coming, and shall come.” The LXX (S) reads, “Who is like me? Let him stand up and call and announce, and make ready for me: In as much as I have made a man for this age, let them now tell you the train of events before they come to pass.” The Lamsa Peshitta (S) has, “And who is like me? Let him announce it and set it in order and declare it, since I placed the people on the earth for ever. And let them show the wonders that are coming.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Who is like to me? let him call and declare: and let him set before me the order, since I appointed the ancient people: and the things to come, and that shall be hereafter, let them shew unto them.” ¶ Jenour has: “*Since I appointed the people of an eternal duration.*¹² That is, since I called Abraham and his posterity to be to me a peculiar people, that should never be destroyed. Vitranga refers to Genesis 17:7, and Jeremiah 31:36, as confirming this interpretation.” Wordsworth says: “*The ancient people*. Rather, the *eternal* people; literally, the *people of eternity* (Heb. עַם-עוֹלָם: cp. LXX (S) here), the visible Church of God, existing in Adam, Abel, Seth, Noah, Abraham, David, with whom God made an *everlasting covenant* (2 Samuel 23:5), *berith olam* [בְּרִית עוֹלָם], as He did with Noah (Genesis 9:16), and Abraham (Genesis 17:7), and to whom He promised eternal continuance, and an eternal kingdom in Christ, in Whom all who believe are admitted into an *evesrlasting covenant* (ISAIAH 55:3) [בְּרִית עוֹלָם], and are loved with *everlasting kindness*

(ISAIAH 54:8) [תְּסֵד עוֹלָם], and have a sure title to *everlasting salvation*. Cp. ISAIAH 45:17 [תְּשׁוּעַת עוֹלָמִים]. In all these passages the word *olam* [עוֹלָם] is used.” Delitzsch also believes that the *people of eternity* or עַם-עוֹלָם refers to “humanity as existing from the very earliest times” even to the Garden of Eden. Calvin believes it of Israel: “The antiquity of Israel, therefore, ought not to be estimated from the number of years, or from the outward condition of things, but from the election of God; and hence also the foundations of Jerusalem are called eternal (Psalm 78:69).” ¶ It is similar, to say that “I appoint the people of eternity,” because God is Eternal and *Endless is His name* (D&C 19:10). Because of the *eternal* nature of the expression עוֹלָם, perhaps it goes back to the pre-existence. ¶ Skinner summarizes as: “There is no God but Jehovah and Israel is His Witness.” This reminds me of the Muslim refrain, “There is no god but God, Muhammad is the messenger of God,” or in Arabic, “لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله.” The previous owner of my book by Skinner had thought the *same thing* and penciled in, “of Islam.” Muslims deny the divinity of Christ and believe that Muhammad was the last prophet and that there will be no more prophets. I testify that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; I testify of the divinity of our Lord and Savior, that He is God the Son; I testify that we have a living prophet today and that there has been a line of Prophets of God called in the last days beginning with the Prophet Joseph Smith up to this day (these men have been called to preside on earth over The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and have been given the priesthood keys to do so). I testify that we will continue to have living prophets upon the earth to guide His Church on this side of the veil—as directed by the Savior who is the Head of the Church—until the Second Coming of Christ in glory. I was given a personal witness by the Spirit of the divinity of Jesus Christ when I was thirteen, before I was a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I also testify that I received two very strong personal witnesses of the authenticity of the Book of Mormon before I was baptized. ¶ Cowles has: “The thought is, Who of all the heathen gods can foretell the future as I have and call events into existence and arrange them in their order ever since man was placed on the earth.” Keith beautifully says: “The importance of prophecy, as at least one principal evidence of the being of God, is apparent from the use which is made of it in this case. It is an evidence which was manifested through Israel, which was deposited with them, and of which they uniformly have been the subjects; for there is scarcely an event in their history, not only since their first captivity, but before it, from the first hour of their national existence, and even before that, from the time

¹² עַם-עוֹלָם

when Abraham left his father's house, which has not been the subject of prophecy. Hence, in every sense, they are the witnesses of God, The fulfilment of the long series of predictions, in the prophetic register, of all the remarkable events of Jewish history, has furnished, from the days of Abraham, proof of the divinity of the God of Israel. ¶ *Let them declare.* Slotki/Rosenberg give Rashi's explanation: "Just as I am predicting the return from exile, although the Temple has not yet been destroyed, you have not yet been exiled, nor has Cyrus even been born."¹³

8 Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared [it]? ye [are] even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, [there is] no God; [✓] I know not [any].

✓ rock

Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared [it]? ye [are] even my witnesses. The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, "Hide not yourselves nor be led astray. Have you not heard from the beginning? And have I not told you?" Instead of *that time*, the Peshitta (ܣ) has *former time* (Lamsa) / *beforehand* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, "Fear ye not, neither be ye troubled, from that time I have made thee to hear, and have declared: you are my witnesses." ¶ Barnes writes: "*Fear ye not, neither be afraid.* The word here rendered 'be afraid,' occurs nowhere else in the Bible. There can be no doubt, however, in regard to its meaning. The LXX render it μηδε πλανασθε,¹⁴ 'neither be deceived.' All the other ancient versions express the sense to fear, to be afraid." ¶ *Is there a God beside me? yea, [there is] no God; I know not [any].* An ellipsis is used to try and make sense of a Hebrew expression where some words are implied, but not stated. But sometimes the philosophy of the translators gets in the way, and we end up with the expression: "I know not any." Instead, let us be totally certain that the Hebrew does not say anything about the word "any." What the Hebrew Masoretic text (ⲙ) really says is much closer to the Peshitta (ܣ) and the Vulgate (ⲫ) who make it clear that whatever other Gods there maybe, that the Lord knows them. And furthermore, in the case of the Targum (Ⲯ), that whoever has acted in strength to help in this work, that

such strength has been delegated to them from God. There are Gods many but in relation to this work, only God the Eternal Father and His Son Jesus Christ; and those to whom they delegated power to act. ¶ The Masoretic text (ⲙ) upon which the KJV is based, has been better rendered in this instance by many versions (emphasis added in each): "Is there any God but me, or a Rock of whom I have no knowledge?" (BBE); "is there any God *except me, or any maker, that I should not know hym?*" (Bishops); "whether there be a God beside me, *and that there is no God that I knowe not*" (Geneva); "*there is no Strong One that I do not know*" (JUB); "yea, there is no rock, whom I know not" (Leeser); "que no haya Dios si no yo; y *que no haya fuerte, que yo no conozca*" (Reina Valera 1865); "que no *hay* Dios sino yo; y que *no hay Fuerte, que yo no conozca*" (SSE). There are also plenty of translations that agree with the AV, of course. If I may suggest a translation it might be something like: "*In the formation of this earth, was there a Rock (God) beside me? Or, a helper that did not receive strength from me as I received it from the Father?*" ¶ The Targum (Ⲯ), once again, has, "That there is no God beside me, and there is none strong, except he to whom strength is given from me." The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, "You are witnesses whether there be any God besides me. And have not then the fashioners and engravers heard?" The Peshitta (ܣ) renders it something like, "You are my witnesses, that beside me there is no God, nor powerful one whom I do not know." The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, "Is there a God besides me, a maker, whom I have not known?" The margin || has **rock**, as the literal text **צֹרֶךְ אֵינִי**. HAL says that **צֹרֶךְ** can mean God, also, especially used for Jehovah (see ASV, ESV). To repeat, then, "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him" (1 Corinthians 8:5–6).

vv. 9–20. Baltzer, leaning on Elliger, says, "The text has been defined as a 'taunt song.'" Jenour suggests: "These verses contain indisputably the finest exposition on the absurdity of idolatry that ever was written. They beauty and force of the passage are however considerably diminished by the manner in which it is translated into our Bibles. The prophet does not describe, first, the manufacture of idols of metal by the smith, and then of wood by the carpenter, as represented in the authorized version; but, his object being to set the folly of idolatry in the most striking light, he traces the production of idols from the very first, and shews that they are from first to last entirely the work of men's hands. He begins therefore with the manufacture of the

¹³ See ISAIAH 44:28.

¹⁴ Note that this is an alternate rendering of the Greek LXX (Ⲫ) text, Codex QSyh, Syrohexaplanische Übers., also known as Syro-Hexaplaric or Syro-Hexapla and refers to the Syriac translation of the LXX (Ⲫ), or the fifth column of Origen's Hexapla. For these alternate texts, see, for instance, Apparatus II, Ziegler, J. (Ed.). (1983). *Isaias* (Vol. XIV, p. 286). Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

instruments, with which the idol is to be formed, and describes the labour and exhaustion accompanying the work of the smith, in hammering and shaping the axe. He then proceeds to speak of the second part of the operation, which belongs to the worker in wood, or the carpenter, and gives a lively picture of his share in the formation of the image. Lastly, he shows how the wood itself is produced which is destined, at a future period, to become a god; and to make the absurdity of the practice still more glaring, he finely opposes the different uses for which the same tree is employed; with part the deluded idolater dresses [i.e., cooks—GB] his food, and warms himself, the remainder he forms into an object of divine worship.” This theory is backed up by multiple translations including the Bishop’s Bible (1568). ¶ Keith, representing the opposite view suggests: “But may not the description embrace the making of two images, the one of metal, the other of wood; or rather, does not the smith’s part of the work refer to the metallic covering with which wooden idols were often adorned?” ¶ Orelli says: “... nowhere is idol manufacture described so elaborately and idolatry reduced *ad absurdum* with such cutting irony as here.” Bishop Lowth notes: “[T]his passage of Isaiah far exceeds anything that ever was written upon the subject, in force of argument, energy of expression, and elegance of composition.” ¶ While we may be prone to scoff idolaters, have we ever considered whether we fall into that same category? Ironside writes: “Idolatry seems inherent in the heart of man. Today, men do not worship idols of gold and silver, and brass and iron, but every man who turns away from God sets up some kind of an idol in his heart. He either worships himself or some folly, pleasure, or fame. An esteemed servant of Christ spoke aptly when introduced on one occasion as a ‘self-made man.’ He said he regretted he had been so termed, though he appreciated the kindly thought, ‘for,’ he said, ‘I’ve noticed that these self-made men always worship their own creation.’ He knew that if men do not know the one living and true God, they set up the great god self, and worship him.” We may also add philosophical idolatry to this list. ¶ In summary, Isaiah ridicules idol makers as they use the same tree to warm themselves, to eat, and then to make an idol with the residue. But let us permit Isaiah to tell the story.

9 ¶ They that make a graven image [are] all of them vanity; and their delectable[✓] things shall not profit; and they [are] their own witnesses; they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed.

✓ desirable

They that make a graven image [are] all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit. The Targum (Ⲯ) has for the second clause, “And worship what does not profit them.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “They are all fools making things to please their fancies—things which cannot profit them.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “The makers of idols are all of them nothing, and their best beloved things shall not profit them.” ¶ Regarding *vanity*, וָהָרִי, it is the same expression that appears in Genesis 1:2, and is there translated as, “*without form*.” In Genesis the words rhyme, *tohu* and *bohu*, *without form* and *void*, וָהָרִי וְכֵהָרִי. Vanity is this, indeed, just hot air, just unorganized materials. ¶ Barnes explains: “A graven image is one that is cut, or sculptured out of wood or stone, in contradistinction from one that is molten, which is made by being cast. Here it is used to denote an image, or an idol god in general.” Cowles has: “The makers of graven images should be honest enough to witness against idols as worthless things; but alas, they have not the good sense to be ashamed of their folly. Or possibly the last clause may mean. They are morally blinded (‘see not, nor know’)—do not know enough to be ashamed—the result of which must be their utter confusion and shame.” ¶ *And they [are] their own witnesses; they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And they shall be witnesses against themselves, that they do not see, nor know, that they may be ashamed.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “But shame shall cover these god makers, and all the engravers of these useless things.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has the craftsmen being witnesses *for they* (Lamsa) / *that they* (BPE) see not, nor hear, nor know. The meaning of these Peshitta (Ⲫ) translations are quite divergent. The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “They are their witnesses, that they do not see, nor understand, that they may be ashamed.” They put their trust in themselves rather than in God.

10 Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image [that] is profitable for nothing?

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Whoever maketh a god or a molten image, *it is* for no purpose (Chaldee, ‘that it should not profit’). The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “When all by whom they were made are dried up.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has those who have graven images *confounded* (BPE) / *ashamed* (Lamsa). Alexander says: “Here as elsewhere there is pungent sarcasm in the application of the name אֱלֹהִים (*mighty God*) to idols.” ¶ Cowles similarly writes: “A especially sarcastic force is given to this question in the original by the use of the name ‘El’ for God. Who made this *mighty* God? ... The emphatic word is ‘Who,’

Who has done the labor of forming such gods? How came they into existence?” Whitehouse warns, “... the Hebrew interrogative **מִי**, ‘who,’ means also ‘whoever.’ We might therefore render (with Duhm and Marti) : ‘Whoever fashions a god, hath cast a profitless image.’ (Gesenius-Kautzsch, Heb. Grammar § 143 d). The LXX apparently support this interpretation.”

11 Behold, all his fellows shall be ashamed: and the workmen, they [are] of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; [yet] they shall fear, [and] they shall be ashamed together.

Behold, all his fellows shall be ashamed: and the workmen, they [are] of men: The Targum (**ܬ**) has, “worshippers” instead of *fellows*. The LXX (**Ϛ**) reads, “Then let all the stupid among men be collected and stand together.” The Peshitta (**ܣ**) has “Behold, all their craftsmen are dumb men (BPE, *dumb among men*).” The Douay-Rheims (**ⲅ**) has, “Behold, all the partakers thereof shall be confounded: for the makers are men.” Nägelsbach explains: “By **חֲבֵרִים** many understand the companions, helpers of the idol-makers ... It is better to understand that the companions or followers of the idols are intended (compare, **תְּבוֹרַ עֲצָבִים אֶפְרַיִם**, Hosea 4:17¹⁵).” Rawlinson suggests: “The worshippers of a particular idol, or sometimes of a particular god, formed a sort of guild or company, bound together by common participation in certain rites, and under an obligation to defend each other.” ¶ *Let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; [yet] they shall fear, [and] they shall be ashamed together.* The LXX (**Ϛ**) reads, “And let them be confounded and ashamed together.” The Peshitta (**ܣ**) has “Let them gather and stand up and they shall at once be ashamed and confounded together.” The Douay-Rheims (**ⲅ**) has, “They shall all assemble together, they shall stand and fear, and shall be confounded together.” Agreement among them amounts to nothing.

12 The smith with the tongs[✓] both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms: yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth: he drinketh no water, and is faint.

✓ or, with an axe

The smith with the tongs both worketh in the coals. The Targum (**ܬ**) has, “The smith maketh an axe out of iron, and bloweth the coals in the fire.” The LXX (**Ϛ**) reads, “For the carpenter sharpened an axe, with a hatchet he modelled it.” The Peshitta (**ܣ**) reads something like, “The carpenter sharpens the axe.” The Douay-Rheims (**ⲅ**) has, “The smith hath wrought with his file, with coals.” ¶ Several translations make it clear that the blacksmith is shaping metal tools, such as an axe or other metal tools with which to work the wood: ASV has “The smith *maketh* an axe, and worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with his strong arm: yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth; he drinketh no water, and is faint.” GW has: “Blacksmiths shape iron into tools. They work them over the coals and shape them with hammers, working them with their strong arms. They get hungry, and their strength fails. If they don’t drink water, they will faint.” The Bishop’s Bible (1568) has: “The smith maketh an axe, and tempereth it with hotte coales, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with all the strength of his armes, yea sometime he is fainte for very hunger, and so thirstie that he hath no more power.”

¶ Alexander says: “Gesenius and the other modern writers draw from the Talmudical and Arabic analogy the sense of a sharp tool or graving instrument.” A number of tools have been suggested. ¶ *And fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms:* The Targum (**ܬ**) has, “And maketh it firm with the hammer, and worketh it with the power of his strength.” The LXX (**Ϛ**) reads, “Then he put it into a lathe and with his strong arm fashioned it.” The Peshitta (**ܣ**) reads something like, “He fashions the image with a plane and outlines the design with a chisel and works it with the strength of his arm.” The Douay-Rheims (**ⲅ**) has, “And with hammers he hath formed it, and hath wrought with the strength of his arm.” ¶ *Yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth: he drinketh no water, and is faint.* The Targum (**ܬ**) has, “But when he that worketh it is hungry, and does not eat bread, he hath no strength (Chaldee, ‘no strength in him’); and if he is thirsty, and drinketh no water, he fainteth.” The LXX (**Ϛ**) reads, “Though he be hungry and faint, he must not drink water.” The Peshitta (**ܣ**) reads something like, “Then he feels hunger and thirst; he does not drink water and is faint.” The Douay-Rheims (**ⲅ**) has, “He shall hunger and faint, he shall drink no water, and shall be weary.” ¶ Barnes says: “The Rev. J. Williams states that when the South Sea Islanders made an idol, they strictly abstained from food; and although they might be, and were sometimes, three days about the work, no water, and he believes no food passed their lips all the time.” ¶ Cowles has: “You are introduced into the blacksmith’s shop; you see the worker in iron getting a red heat upon it in his coals, giving shape to it with his hammer, working it with his strong right arm; but these

¹⁵ “Ephraim is **joined** to **idols**” (Hosea 14:17a).

makers of gods have their human weaknesses. This smith becomes hungry and his strength fails him; having no water to drink, he becomes faint. The poor man has worked hard to make a god; but the god ministers nothing to his help and strength in his time of need! Would not he, if he were a sensible, decent idol, and had any power to befriend his worshipers?" Baltzer cleverly notices: "The point ... is the ironical contrast between 'his strong arm' (בְּזִרְעוֹ כָּחַ) and 'no strength' (וְאֵין כָּח)."

13 The carpenter stretcheth out [his] rule; he marketh it out with a line; he fitteth it with planes, and he marketh it out with the compass, and maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man; that it may remain in the house.

The carpenter stretcheth out [his] rule. The Targum (ܬ) has, "line" rather than "rule." The LXX (Ϯ) reads, "The carpenters having chosen a piece of wood framed it by rule." The Peshitta (ܣ) also explains that the carpenter selects a piece of wood. ¶ Horsley believes the carpenter uses a pencil rather than a line to mark and commends us to look up בִּשְׂרָד (שָׂרָד) in Parkhurst's Lexicon. Also see AMP, ASV, ESV, JPS, Rotherham, and RV, who use a pencil. Gesenius has: "שָׂרָד m., ISAIAH 44:13; according to Kimchi, *red chalk*; but more correctly, *an awl*, or rather *stylus*; with which the artist sketches out the figure to be sculptured." Some translations use a stylus, chalk or red mark. HAL suggests either a red pencil or "a sharp object, a stylus or the like, with which the woodworker marked out the line along which the wood was to be cut." From the Arab regarding something that pierces through (HAL). ¶ Cowles has: "Next we have the carpenter's shop where the wood-work is done. He uses his rule and line. His 'planes' are rather *chisels*, since his work consists mainly in carving. He gives it the human form, and finally makes a very pretty ornament for the parlor. You see the process step by step, and are shown some of the tools which he uses to make a wooden god." ¶ *He marketh it out with a line.* The Targum (ܬ) has, "He applieth the plummet to it." The LXX (Ϯ) reads, "And glued the parts together." The Lamsa Peshitta (ܣ) has, "And stretches out his rule; he marks it out with a line," while PPE has, "he measures it." ¶ *He fitteth it with planes.* The Targum (ܬ) has, "He carveth it with a knife." The Lamsa Peshitta (ܣ) has, "He fashions it with planes," while BPE (ܣ) fits it together with glue. The Douay-Rheims (ܝ) has, "He hath formed it with a plane." ¶ *And he marketh it out with the compass.* The

Targum (ܬ) has, "And he dove-tailth it together." The Douay-Rheims (ܝ) has, "He hath made it with corners, and hath fashioned it round with the compass." ¶ *And maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man; that it may remain in the house.* The Targum (ܬ) has, "And he maketh it after the likeness of a man, according to the beauty of a woman, that it may remain in the house." The LXX (Ϯ) reads, "And made it in the form of a man and with the comeliness of a man, to set it in a house." The Douay-Rheims (ܝ) has, "And he hath made the image of a man as it were a beautiful man dwelling in a house." ¶ Rabbi Rosenberg tells us that "Rashi and Kara after Jonathan" explain that the *beauty of a man* "is a woman [for she is] the beauty of her husband." And indeed, numerous idol figures are figures of women. Ibn Ezra explains, rather, that it is the repetition of the idea (see Hebrew below) that has led some to speculate that the beauty of a woman is meant, "According to the beauty of a man, that is, the female, according to the opinion of some; but I think that it is in reality only a repetition of the preceding idea." I have purposely rendered the translation more literal to make the point, which may be lost in the more poetical English translations:

כְּתַבְנִית אִישׁ כְּתַפְאֶרֶת אָדָם
as the figure of a man, as the beauty of a man¹⁶

"Rabbi Joseph Kimchi, remarks that the idol is of no use," explains R. Rosenberg, "but 'to sit in the house.'" Or, as some suggest, perhaps in an idolatrous temple.

14 He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he strengthened ~ for himself among the trees of the forest: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish [it].

✓ or, taketh courage

The Targum (ܬ) has, "and seasons them (or, 'makes strong') instead of *strengthened for himself*." The LXX (Ϯ) reads, "He cut wood from the forest which the Lord planted—a pine tree." The Peshitta (ܣ) then explains that this piece of wood, cut from a forest that was nourished by the rain is put in the house. The Douay-Rheims (ܝ) has, "He hath cut down cedars, taken the holm, and the oak that stood among the trees of the forest: he hath planted the pine tree, which the rain hath nourished." Perhaps, I thought, the idol maker finds and transplants a tree to a location where he can keep an eye on it. Rashi, according to Rabbi Rosenberg, has

¹⁶ Ish (אִישׁ) and adam (אָדָם) are both synonyms for man.

precisely this idea: after finding a *sapling* (יָרֵא) he then transplants it. Delitzsch is alone in suggesting that the tree planted was a *fig tree*. Horace¹⁷ was quoted by Greenfield as saying: “*Olim truncus eram ficulnus, inutile lignum, Cum faber incertus faceretne, scamnum faceretne Priapum, Maluit esse deum: deus inde ego, furum avinumque Maxima formido*” that is, “Formerly I was the stump of a fig-tree, a useless log; when the carpenter, hesitating whether to make me a Priapus¹⁸ [god] or a stool, at last determined to make me a god; thus I became a god, and a great terror to thieves and birds!”¹⁹ ¶ Wade suggests that instead of he “strengthened for himself” we should understand he “secureth for himself.” So Rotherham, “When one was cutting him down cedars, Then took he a holm-tree and an oak, And secured them for himself, among the trees of the forest,—He planted a fir-tree and the pouring rain made it grow.” Leeser has: “He felleth for himself cedars, and taketh cypress and oak, and he chooseth for himself the strongest among the trees of the forest; he planteth an ash, and the rain causeth it to grow.” A completely different translation is offered by the Spanish Reina Valera 1865, in which the idea is that the idol maker strengthens himself against the task of felling the trees that he finds: “Cortarse ha cedros, y tomará encina y alcornoque, y esforzarse ha contra los árboles del bosque [strengthens himself *against* the trees of the forest]: plantará pino, que se crie con la lluvia.” Alexander defends the AV, “as אֲמִץ, in every other case where it occurs, admits of the translation *strengthened*, it cannot be consistently abandoned here without necessity; and this necessity cannot exist, because the strict sense of *making strong* is not only relevant in this connection, but corresponds exactly to that of *making great* expressed by יָבִיל, both meaning here ‘o cause to grow.’ Thus understood, the word helps to bring out with more strength and clearness the main idea of the verse, viz. that the idolater not only chooses suitable trees, but plants and raises them for the purpose.” Cowles writes: “Note the underlying questions upon which the prophet would throw light, viz.. Is there any *god* at all in this image of metal or wood? If so, *how* did he get in, and when? Observe all

the processes in the smith’s shop; did you see the god *there*? Go into the carpenter’s shop; mark carefully all he does in his department. Was the real god made there? And now lest some may still imagine that there was some antecedent sacredness in the wood before it came into the shop, the prophet takes you a step farther back. This idolater means to have first-rate timber; so he goes into the forest and selects some of the best varieties—cedar or cypress, oak or pine [‘ash’]; he transplants it; cultivates it well: the rains water it as they do other trees. That is, it is a mere tree, growing under the common laws of vegetation. Is the idol-god made and brought into existence *so*?” The idolater, for all his pretended self-sufficiency, still needs to use the trees given by God to man, as well as the nutrients and rain and plant nutrients that also come from God. Faussett points us to Jeremiah 14:22: “Are there any among the vanities²⁰ of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? art not thou he, O LORD our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these things.” Gill offers yet a different proposition: “The word for ‘rain’ signifies a body in the Syriac [*corpus*, Luke 3:22. 2 Corinthians 10:10. Castel (*Lex. Polyglott.* col. 627. So in the Chaldee language). So, according to Schindler, signifies a body, *Lex. Pentaglott.* col. 347, 348] language, as Kimhi observes, and for which he produces (Daniel 4:33), and so Aben Ezra says it signifies in the Arabic language; and the sense is, ‘the body’ of the tree ‘grew up.’ and being grown up, was cut down . . .”

15 Then shall it be for a man to burn: for he will take thereof, and warm himself; yea, he kindleth [it], and baketh bread; yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth [it]; he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto.

Then shall it be for a man to burn: for he will take thereof, and warm himself. The Targum (ܬ) has, “That it may *serve* a man to burn: and he taketh thereof, and warmeth himself.” The LXX (ϸ) reads, “Which the rain had nourished, that it might be fuel for the use of man: and having taken some of it he warmed himself.” The Douay-Rheims (Ϸ) has, “And it hath served men for fuel: he took thereof, and warmed himself.” ¶ *Yea, he kindleth [it], and baketh bread.* The LXX (ϸ) reads, “And with other pieces they made a fire and baked cakes.” Gill has: “*for he will take thereof, and warm himself*; with some part of it he makes a fire in his parlour, and warms himself when it is cold weather:

¹⁷ Horace wrote his book of satires about 35 BC. Satyr, lib. 1. sat. viii.

¹⁸ Πρίαπος, of all things!, a god protector of viticulture and horticulture and also a god of fertility. See *Greek Mythology Link*, Carlos Parada and Maicar Förlag. I say of *all things* because my undergraduate degree at UC Davis was in plant science with a specialty in viticulture and horticulture (pomology). I was baptized half-way through my studies but ended up working in agricultural labor management, instead.

¹⁹ Greenfield, William, *The Genuineness, Authenticity and Inspiration of the Word of God*. Robert Carter and Brothers: New York, 1853, p. 192.

²⁰ Idols are sometimes called *vanities*. See also Jeremiah 10:14–15 (Geneva Bible translation notes).

yea, he kindleth it, and baketh bread; he heats his oven with another part of it, and bakes the bread he has made for himself and family to live on, and which is putting it to a good use.” ¶ *Yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth [it]; he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Yea, he maketh it a god, and worshippeth it, he formeth it an image, and prayeth to it.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And of the residue they made gods and worshipped them.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “But of the rest he made a god, and adored it: he made a graven thing, and bowed down before it.” ¶ Skinner explains: “The word rendered ‘falleth down (ⲡⲓⲛ)’ is an Aramaic verb meaning ‘worship,’ recurring in the O.T. only ISAIAH 44:17; 19; and ISAIAH 46:6. It is the root of the Arabic word *mosque* (musḡid).”

16 He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth [himself], and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire:

He burneth part thereof in the fire. The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Did he not burn half of it in the fire.” Instead of *part*, the Peshitta (Ⲯ) has *half*. The word *חצי* is often translated as *half* in the Scriptures, but this is somewhat artificial. Rawlinson suggests: “He burneth *part* thereof; rather, *half* thereof; ‘With *half* thereof’—not the other *half*, but the same—‘he eateth flesh.’ One fire serves for the two purposes of warming him and cooking his victuals.” So also Delitzsch who has: “The repeated *חצי* (the *half* of it) in ISAIAH 44:16 refers to the first *half*, which furnishes not only fuel for burning, but shavings and coals for roasting and baking as well. And as a fire made for cooking warms quite as much as one made expressly for the purpose, the prophet dwells upon this benefit which the wood of the idol does confer.” After reading Gill’s suggestion (ISAIAH 44:15) that all of this warming and cooking may be taking place indoors, I thought of the wood stoves that are used in Chile, that have a dual purpose as they function to both warm up a room and to cook therein. It is even clearer, then, how the one ‘*half*’ or *portion* of wood serves for giving warmth and for cooking; and the other *portion* used for making an idol. ¶ *With part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied:* The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And, with the coals of that half, bake cakes; and having roasted meat with it did he not eat and was satisfied.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “And with part of it he dressed his meat: he boiled pottage, and was filled.” ¶ *Yea, he warmeth [himself], and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire:* The LXX (Ⲯ)

reads, “And when warmed say, ‘Aha! I am warmed, I have enjoyed the fire?’” In modern Hebrew it seems the word used for *Aha!* is the same as the English and Spanish: “*אָהָה*.”²¹ In Biblical Hebrew, the word sometimes used was *הָאָהָה*, Heaj (Spanish j). This is closer to the Spanish *¡Ea!* which has a number of meanings, including something like “look at that!” There also is, of course, the Spanish expression *¡ajá!* with its multiple meanings. Young says: “There is no need of taking the word ‘see’ in any other than its ordinary sense. Luther brought out the true meaning when he said that man has a desire to look into the fire. He sees and feels the fire and expresses his joy and satisfaction in its possession. In becoming fuel for fire, the wood truly serves man; in becoming an idol it does not serve him, but becomes an occasion for his stumbling.” ¶ When one lights up a fire and does not take for granted that he will be able to get it going, it is not unusual to say *אָהָה* in gratitude. So it was with me this morning, that I said *אָהָה* out loud when the fire caught on. I then remembered ISAIAH 44:16 and thought of this scripture with new understanding. These are *אָהָה* of gratitude and amazement at God’s wonders, of not taking things for granted. At this moment I am bursting with thankfulness that the Spirit of God reminded me of ISAIAH 44:16 when I had this experience. These tender mercies are easy to forget, so I mailed myself a reminder to add these words here today.²²

17 And the residue thereof he maketh a god, [even] his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth [it], and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou [art] my god.

And the residue thereof he maketh a god, [even] his graven image: The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Yet of the residue he made a carved god.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “But the residue thereof he made a god, and a graven thing for himself.” The DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲯ) has *to his Baal*²³ or *block*²⁴ {meaning uncertain, see DSSB, Accordance DSS–C), *לְבַלְלִי*, while the Masoretic text (Ⲯ) has *to his graven image*, *לְפָסְלוֹ*. ¶ *He falleth*

²¹ Oxford English-Hebrew Dictionary, 1998.

²² 23 September 2017.

²³ The god of the Babylonians, “*בַּל*” contr. from *בַּעַל* i.q. *בַּעַל* *Bel* (ⲡⲓⲗ)—Gesenius). Also see *בַּעַל*, ruler, or Phoenician god or idol (TWOT, Gesenius).

²⁴ *בּוֹל עֵץ*, *block [off] wood* (Gesenius, HALOT).

down unto it, and worshippeth [it], and prayeth unto it. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “he boweth down,” or Stenning (ⲧ) “paid homage to it,” rather than “falleth down.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And worshippeth it, and prayeth to it.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “He boweth down before it, and adoreth it, and prayeth unto it.” ¶ *And saith, Deliver me; for thou [art] my god.* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Saying, ‘Deliver me, for thou art my God.’” Instead of *my god*, the Peshitta (Ⲥ) has *our god*. ¶ The absurdity, then, comes to its culmination. An individual has used the same tree to warm himself and cook and then falls down before a piece of wood to pray and ask for deliverance.

18 They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut[✓] their eyes, that they cannot see; [and] their hearts, that they cannot understand.

✓ daubed

The Targum (ⲧ) has, “They know not, neither do they understand; for their eyes are closely shut up, so that they cannot see, and their heart, that they cannot understand.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “They had not sense to think; for they were so involved in darkness that they could not see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “They have not known, nor understood: for their eyes are covered that they may not see, and that they may not understand with their heart.” And, “Their eyes are besmeared, and they see not” (Tanakh). ¶ See the parallel verse in ISAIAH 6:11. Jenour has: “*Their eyes hath he restrained from seeing* [טַח מִרְאֵת]. The best commentary upon these words will be found in Romans 1:19–25. The apostle there shows that the *unwillingness* of men to retain in their minds the knowledge of the glory and perfections of the [incorruptible²⁵—GB] God, is the reason why he gives them up to the delusion and folly of idolatry.” Wordsworth has: “*he hath shut their eyes*. Literally, hath *smeared* them over, as with clay. See the use of this verb (טַח)²⁶ in Leviticus 14:42–43; Ezekiel 13:10–15. Hence the act of our Blessed Lord, in opening the eyes of the blind by means of clay *smeared*²⁷ on his eyes, is more remarkable (see John 9:6).” Kay has, “Or, ‘One hath plastered their eyes, that they see not, and their hearts, that they discern not’ (cp. 2 Corinthians 4:4, ‘In whom the god of this world [i.e., Satan—GB] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of

²⁵ Romans 1:23.

²⁶ To cover over or smear with plaster or mortar or other material.

²⁷ ἀλείφω (anointed with or *smeared*)

Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.’).”

19 And none considereth in his heart,[✓] neither [is there] knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten [it]: and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree?[✓]

✓ setteth to his heart

✓ ✓ that which comes from a tree?

And none considereth in his heart, neither [is there] knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Nor did any reason in his mind, nor by his understanding recollect, that he had burned half of it in the fire.” Instead of *part*, the Peshitta (Ⲥ) translators have *half*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “They do not consider in their mind, nor know, nor have the thought to say: I have burnt part of it in the fire.” ¶ The expression here is similar to Deuteronomy 4:39b, “and *consider* it in thine *heart*”; or in 1 Kings 8:47, “*bethink* [*consider*] themselves [literally, *in their heart* (אֶל-לִבָּם)], in that in each case both שׁוּב (to turn, but here more as in to *reconsider*, to *really think something through*) and לֵב (heart) are used. So it means something along the lines of really thinking something through in the *heart*:

וְלֹא-יָשִׁיב אֶל-לִבּוֹ

(*And none considereth to/in his heart*)

Rawlinson says: “It is implied that the idolaters had once had it in their power to think and reason justly upon the absurdity of such conduct as that which was now habitual to them. But they had lost the power. They had suffered themselves little by little to be deluded.” And that is how Satan works, little by little getting us to veer off a little here and a little there until we get to think everyone else is lost and going the wrong direction and do not consider that we might have gone astray. ¶ *Yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten [it]:* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And on the coals thereof baked cakes, and had roasted flesh and eaten.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has *broiled* instead of *roasted*. ¶ *And shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree?* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And of the residue had made an abomination; so they bow themselves down to it.” Instead of *fall down*, the Peshitta (Ⲥ) has the synonym, *worshipped*. The Douay-

Rheims (V) has, “And of the residue thereof shall I make an idol? shall I fall down before the stock of a tree?” The Douay-Rheims (V) has *broiled* instead of *roasted*. ¶ This is the culmination of the satire.

20 He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, [Is there] not a lie in my right hand?

He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul. The Targum (T) has, “Behold his god, part of it is in ashes,²⁸ his undiscerning (literally, ‘fat’) heart has caused him to err, so he cannot deliver his soul.” The LXX (G) reads, “Know thou that their heart is ashes, and they are led astray and none can deliver his soul.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Part thereof is ashes: his foolish heart adoth it, and he will not save his soul.” The DSS 4QIsa^b (Q), וְלֹא יִצִּיל, and the Masoretic text (M), וְלֹא-יִצִּיל, both have *and not saved*, while the 1QIsa^a (Q) has *and not able [to save]*, וְלֹא יוֹכִיל. ¶ Cowles says: “The prophet’s thought is that the man has not the sense to look over the process he has himself gone through and think a moment of its significance. He *lives* out the absurdity, but will not let it come into his mind—will not give it a moment’s thought. ‘He feedeth on ashes,’ bitter and caustic, with sorrow in the end. The phrase is analogous to that of Hosea (Hosea 12:1²⁹) ‘He feedeth on wind.’ The phrase, ‘A deceived heart

hath turned him aside,’ i.e., from truth and reason, assumes that the intellect is blinded by a wicked heart, perverted and misled by the strong love of sin. Hence he seems to have no power to say, Is not my whole system of religion a delusion? Is not this idol that I worship a *lie* in act, a mere falsehood, a vanity?” ¶ *Nor say, [Is there] not a lie in my right hand?* The Targum (T) has, “Nor say, Is it not a lie which I have made with my right hand?” The LXX (G) reads, “Take a view of it, will you not say, ‘There is indeed a lie in my right hand?’” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Nor say: Perhaps there is a lie in my right hand.” ¶ Jenour writes: “*He hath turned aside*. That is, he hath turned away from the true God, and is consequently become devoid of understanding, and has not power to deliver his soul from the bondage of superstitious folly; nor to discern, that whilst he is worshiping and idol, he is, as it were, holding a *lie* in his right hand; or, in other words that he is paying divine honour to a thing which cannot but disappoint all his expectations. Nor let the proud free-thinker of our times, who has also turned away from Jehovah, suppose that he is really any wiser than the poor idolater, whose folly he derides. He may have more *intellect*; but his idol which *he* worships will leave him as destitute and helpless in the time of trouble and in the hour of death, as the lifeless image of the idolater leaves its deluded votary.” ¶ It is selling our birthright for a mess of potage—actually, not even that, it is selling it for *deception*, for *ashes*. This holding the idol in his right hand is rejecting the *right hand of the Lord* with all of the attendant promises for strength, security, peace, and eternal life (ISAIAH 41:10, 13–14).

²⁸ As I am working on this chapter of Isaiah, for over a week now *Volcán Calbuco* has been erupting and spewing out ashes, here in the south of Chile. We have had a devastating amount of ashes come out of the volcano and we fear that this damage will be even greater if it rains tomorrow, as predicted. Cattle have had to be moved out of the whole affected area and thousands of people have been displaced from their homes by the ashes. We may well say that the ashes, in these sorts of quantities, *kill life* (30 April 2015). By April 24, two days after the eruption, (Eruption of Volcán Calbuco began 22 April 2015, at about 17:50. I took my first photo at 18:11. At 17:14, I took a pre-eruption panoramic video of Lake Llanquihue. It was a beautiful clear day. Today, 30 April 2015, we had our third eruption.) Rodrigo Álvarez Seguel, director of *El Servicio Nacional de Geología y Minería*, reported “that over 210 million cubic meters of ashes had been released from the volcano and that each cubic meter roughly corresponded to almost a ton of volcanic mater.” (Government of Chile, Ministry of Mines, URL accessed 30 April 2015, <http://www.sernageomin.cl/detalle-noticia.php?idNoticia=213>). Ashes have completely covered beautiful *Volcán Osorno*, so that it looks as a volcano might look in the moon, with hardly any snow visible on it (and none at all visible about a week ago). I am now putting the final touches on this chapter before posting it for the first time, and gladly there have been several snow falls over *Volcán Osorno* so it no longer has that eerie look (19 May 2015).

²⁹ “Ephraim feedeth on wind, and followeth after the east wind: he daily increaseth lies and desolation; and they do make a covenant with the Assyrians, and oil is carried into Egypt” (Hosea 12:1).

vv. 21–28. The Lord will not forget Israel. Her sins will be blotted out. The Savior has paid the price for redemption but now it is our duty to repent and come unto Him if we wish to take full advantage of the same. Understanding the plan of happiness and the atoning sacrifice of our Savior gives us reason to sing and to shout for joy. The Savior directed the work of forming the heavens and the earth. Those who lean on false gods will be disappointed. God confirms the word of His Servant, Christ, and of each one of us as we are moved to act by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost—which was poured out on our dry souls. Cyrus comes into the scene. A promise is given that Jerusalem will be rebuilt along with the foundation of the temple.

21 ¶ Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou [art] my servant; I have formed thee; thou [art] my servant; O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me.

Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant; I have formed thee; thou art my servant. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Remember these things,” and for the last clause, “I have formed thee that thou shouldest serve me.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Remember these things, Jacob, even thou Israel, for thou art my servant.”

¶ In contrast to those who form idols, the Lord can deliver and reassures us that He has formed Israel. ¶ *O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “O Israel, shouldest not forget my fear.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “I have made thee my servant; therefore O Israel do not thou forget me.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲫ) has what might seem a pleading cry, “O Israel, from henceforth forget me not.” Very different in meaning, BPE (Ⲫ) has, “O Israel, thou shalt not forget me.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “O Israel, forget me not.” ¶ What a reassuring promise is here given, that the Lord will not forget Israel.

22 I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.

I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: The Targum (ⲧ) has for the last clause, “as a cloud vanisheth away,” and Stenning (ⲧ) has “as a passing cloud.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “For, lo! I have made thy transgressions vanish like a cloud—and thy sins like the murky vapour.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “I have blotted out thy iniquities as a cloud, and thy sins as a mist.” ¶ Delitzsch would translate the first expression of cloud as *dark mist*; Leoser as a *vapor*. Barnes has: “The true idea would be expressed by rendering it, ‘I have made them to vanish as a thick cloud;’ and the sense is, as the wind drives away a thick cloud, however dark and frowning it may be, so that the sky is clear and serene, so God had caused their *sins* to disappear, and had removed the storm of his anger. Nothing can more strikingly represent sin in its nature and consequences, than a dense, dark, frowning cloud—that comes over the heavens, and shuts out the sun, and fills the air with gloom; and nothing can more beautifully represent the nature and effect of pardon than the idea of removing such a cloud, and leaving the sky pure, the air calm and serene, and the sun pouring down his beams of warmth and light on the earth.”³⁰ ¶ *Return unto me; for I have*

redeemed thee. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Return to my worship, for I have redeemed thee.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Return to me and I will redeem thee.”

¶ Rawlinson says: “This is an underlying condition, both of restoration and of forgiveness.” So also the Rabbis: according to Rabbi Rosenberg, *Ibn Ezra* and *Malbin* explain that we must return or turn unto God before sins will be blotted out: “Israel’s sins, too, will vanish likewise as soon as he will return wholeheartedly to his God.” The Prophet Jeremiah prayed that Israel would someday be converted: “Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned” (Lamentations 5:21a). Young says: “As in Jeremiah 31:18, 34, it refers to redemption from sin; it implies that a price has been paid in order that the people *may be brought back from their sins* and upon the basis of which God may forgive those sins” (emphasis added). One of the greatest miracles is that of redemption. The Lord is saying, speaking to each of us, I have *already paid the price for your redemption* through my atoning sacrifice, so, now, come back, *return unto me*. Make full use of the redemption. It is already paid for if only you will hold on to it.

23 Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done [it]: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.

Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done [it]: The Targum (ⲧ) has for the second clause, “for the Lord hath wrought redemption for His people.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Rejoice, O heavens! because God hath compassionated Israel.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “Give praise, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath shewn mercy.” ¶ Young well says, “... the entirety of what God has created, are to burst forth into exultation, shouting and singing because of the great triumph their Creator has wrought.” ¶ *Shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein:* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Let the foundations of the earth rejoice; rejoice (or, ‘skip, dance’), O mountains, in praise, O forest, and all the trees therein.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Utter sounds of joy, ye foundations of the earth! Burst forth into songs, ye mountains and hills, and all ye trees which are thereon!” Instead of *lower parts*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *foundations*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “Shout with joy, ye ends of the earth: ye mountains, resound with

³⁰ I love the sweet sentiment behind Barnes’ words. However, I should add to say that when one lives in the South of Chile, one better also find beauty in the clouds and not be so blind as to only find joy in a sunny day. Right now, as I write, there are glorious clouds before me, tossed about by the wind. I am grateful that I am just as happy for a classical beautiful sunny day, as I am for a cloudy day full of personality. The scenery before me is constantly changing and it is never boring. During my Sabbatical here in Llanquihue, I took over

18 thousand photos and videos. I am in awe to the wonderful beauty. If you are willing to love the clouds and a cloudy day, you will never be bored. These are also part of God’s magnificent creations.

praise, thou, O forest, and every tree therein.” ¶ Govett explains: “By ‘the lower parts of the earth’ is signified the souls of the righteous dead. Thus we find in Revelations 5:13, ‘And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and *under the earth* ... heard saying, Blessing and honour ... be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and the Lamb forever.’ So Psalm 71:20 and Psalm 63:9.” I can just imagine the shout of joy coming from the Spirit World when the Savior fulfilled His work. President Joseph F. Smith received this wonderful open vision on 3 October 1918, regarding the *righteous dead* or the Savior’s visit to the Spirit World: “As I pondered over these things which are written, the eyes of my understanding were opened, and the Spirit of the Lord rested upon me, and I saw the hosts of the dead, both small and great. And there were gathered together in one place an innumerable company of the spirits of the just, who had been faithful in the testimony of Jesus while they lived in mortality; And who had offered sacrifice in the similitude of the great sacrifice of the Son of God, and had suffered tribulation in their Redeemer’s name. All these had departed the mortal life, firm in the hope of a glorious resurrection, through the grace of God the Father and his Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ. I beheld that they were filled with joy and gladness, and were rejoicing together because the day of their deliverance was at hand. They were assembled awaiting the advent of the Son of God into the spirit world, to declare their redemption from the bands of death. Their sleeping dust was to be restored unto its perfect frame, bone to his bone, and the sinews and the flesh upon them, the spirit and the body to be united never again to be divided, that they might receive a fulness of joy. While this vast multitude waited and conversed, *rejoicing in the hour of their deliverance* from the chains of death, the Son of God appeared, declaring liberty to the captives who had been faithful; And there he preached to them the everlasting gospel, the doctrine of the resurrection and the redemption of mankind from the fall, and from individual sins on conditions of repentance” (D&C 138:11–19, *emphasis added*). ¶ All of nature sings. Baltzer has: “Here we must assume that the intention is to forge a link with the preceding scene. For there the most important trees in the forest were named. But now they need no longer fear that their wood will be misused for idols.” ¶ *For the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has for the last clause, “and will glorify himself in Israel.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Because God hath redeemed Jacob and Israel shall be glorified.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and Israel shall be glorified.” The *prophetic perfect* (see ISAIAH 30:7) is used throughout, declaring the redemption as completed, “for the LORD hath redeemed,” hundreds of

years before the Savior paid the expiatory redemptive price for all.

24 Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I [am] the LORD that maketh all [things]; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself;

Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I [am] the LORD that maketh all [things]. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “who prepared thee from the womb,” instead of *formed thee from the womb*. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “THUS saith the Lord, who redeemed thee — even He who formed thee from the womb; I am the Lord the Maker of all things.” Instead of *redeemer*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *savior*, and also adds *helper* (BPE) / *and helped you* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “And thy maker, from the womb” instead of “Thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb.” That is, from the beginning. ¶ *That stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “I have suspended the heavens by my Word, I have laid the foundations of the earth by my strength.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “I alone stretched out the heavens and firmly established the earth.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “I am the Lord, that make all things, that alone stretch out the heavens, that establish the earth, and there is none with me.” ¶ Orelli explains the *written* (Ketib, כְּתִיב) vs. *read* (Qere, קִרְיָ) text: “מֵאֲתִי, with Keri: *from me*, out of my own means . . .; Kethib, more graphically, מִי אֲתִי, who was with me, who was there? Compare ISAIAH 40:12 ff.” So AMP has: “Who alone stretched out the heavens, Who spread out the earth by Myself [*who was with Me*]?” To me it is very interesting that Gill says that *alone* does not mean: “... to the exclusion of the Father and the Holy Spirit.” The definition of *alone* is important here, after all. Redak, in Rabbi Rosenberg, explains: “... the Rabbis (Genesis Rabbah 1:2) state: All agree the angels were not created on the first day, lest it be said that Michael was stretching at the southern end of the firmament, Gabriel at the northern end, and the Holy One, blessed be He, was measuring from the middle.” Yet, we do believe, as LDS, that indeed Michael and others—yes, probably Gabriel, too—were involved—at some point—in the work of the earth’s formation. ¶ Then Elder Joseph Fielding Smith said: “It is true that Adam [Michael] helped to form this earth. He labored with our Savior Jesus Christ. I have a strong view or conviction that there were others also who assisted them.” Elder Bruce R. McConkie likewise taught: “... from other sacred sources we know that Jehovah-Christ,

assisted by ‘many of the noble and great ones’ (Abraham 3:22), of whom Michael is but the illustration, did in fact create the earth and all forms of plant and animal life on the face thereof.”³¹ But, according to Elder McConkie, the formation of man was an exception and a role taken solely by the Father (see notes on ISAIAH 45:12). ¶ I was on the phone with our friends, Howard and Karleen Hamilton—the previous owners of *Vista Tres Volcanes* where we live. Because someone had tried to break into the home while Linda & I spent our Sabbatical here, they asked if there had been any further attempts to break in. I explained that I had fixed the section of the fence where the intruders had come in, and began to parenthetically explain that I had someone do this for me. They interrupted me with a “Yeah, yeah, of course, no need to explain that.” So, it is well possible that Jehovah is here saying that He directed the work of others as we mentioned in ISAIAH 44:8 (as He Himself was directed by the Father in all things) in the process of forming the earth. There were no idols or false gods there to help with the work. It is also possible that there were portions of either the spirit pre-creation or the creation process where the Savior was indeed working alone (but under the delegation of the Father). Christ has done nothing save what He has seen the Father do or what the Father commanded. ¶ We just quoted President Brigham Young explaining that after we die we will need to “[pass] the angels who stand as sentinels, being enabled to give them the key words, the signs and tokens, pertaining to the Holy Priesthood.”³² Yet we know that there is no contradiction between this and our knowledge from the Book of Mormon that after we die: “... the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there; and there is none other way save it be by the gate; for he cannot be deceived, for the Lord God is his name” (2 Nephi 9:41). This will become clear to all at some future date.

25 That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise [men] backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish;

That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad. The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “Who else can dispel from the heart the signs of belly speakers and divinations?” The Peshitta (ܣ) has the Lord making the efforts of diviners fail. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “That make void the tokens of diviners, and make the soothsayers mad.” ¶ Above we spoke of the *signs* and

tokens of the Priesthood and we must be attentive to the counterfeits offered by Satan. Alexander has: “*Signs* are properly the pledges and accompaniments of predictions, but may here be regarded as equivalent to prophecy itself.” Horsley suggests that “the tokens of liars” should be translated as “the signs of astrologers.” JUB has, “that undoes the signs of the fortune tellers and makes the diviners mad; that turns the wise *men* backward and makes their wisdom fade away.” ¶ It has been my personal experience that those who accuse us of using Christ as a crutch are often the very people who give themselves to superstitious beliefs. Cowles says: “The ‘liars’ and the ‘diviners’ are false prophets and prognosticators whose pretended ‘signs’ it was God’s delight to frustrate ...” Jenour further explains: “It was customary for the false prophets, as well as the true ones, to give some sign or token that the predictions they uttered would be fulfilled. Thus we read, 1 Kings 22:11, that Zedekiah, the son of Chenaanah, made horns of iron, and put them upon his head, in token that Ahab would defeat and destroy the Syrians. But this was a *lying token*, for the Syrians were victorious, and Ahab was slain, according to the prediction of Micaiah, the prophet of Jehovah, who thus frustrated the lying token of the false prophet. The allusion here, however, is rather to the impotence and folly of the Chaldean astrologers and soothsayers, which were especially manifested on that memorable night when Belshazzar was suddenly arrested in his sinful mirth by the appearance of a man’s hand writing upon the wall the decree of Jehovah, meaning of which they were unable to explain (Daniel 5:5).” ¶ *That turneth wise [men] backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish.* The Targum (ܬ) has the last clause as, “and bringeth their knowledge into contempt.” The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “I am he who turneth sages backwards and maketh their counsel foolish.” ¶ Young reminds us of the expression used in 2 Samuel 15:31: “And one told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O LORD, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness [סָכַל].” This verse about putting the self-asserting wise in their place: *that turneth the wise backwards*, מְשִׁיב חֲכָמִים אָחוּר, is a common theme in Scripture. It goes along well with such declarations as: “O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish” (2 Nephi 9:28); “For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent”

³¹ McConkie, Elder Bruce R. *The Promised Messiah*, p. 62.

³² Young, President Brigham. *Journal of Discourses* 2:31, 1854.

(1 Corinthians 1:19, see also ISAIAH 29:14); and also see Jeremiah 9:23–24 and Proverbs 3:5–7.

26 That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed[✓] places thereof:

✓ wastes

That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers. The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “But establisheth the word of his servant, and verifieth the counsel of his messengers.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “That raise up the word of my servant and perform the counsel of my messengers.” ¶ Regarding the word *establish* or *stand* (קום), Young makes a brilliant observation: “Earlier (ISAIAH 40:8) Isaiah had stated that the word of [our] God would stand forever; and now, employing the same verb, he points out that God causes His servant’s word to stand.” So it is that in ISAIAH 40:8 we saw: “וְדָבַר אֱלֹהֵינוּ יָקוּם לְעוֹלָם” and here we have: “מִקֵּים דָּבַר עֲבָדִי.” ¶ Horsley testifies that “his servant” is here none other than Messiah. ¶ Each priesthood holder seeks to give blessings such as that they are the word of the Lord, and as such, that *these words will be confirmed*, or come to pass, because they are indeed *His words*. Furthermore, not a few times have I prayed to God that I might be able to teach by the spirit or testify by the spirit in such a way that *those words are also confirmed* to those who hear them.³³ One of my favorite scriptures of all time is found in Samuel: “And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground” (1Samuel 3:19). I believe that this verse has a double meaning. That all the words that Samuel spoke as a prophet of God came to pass and none fell to the ground unaccomplished; and also, just as important, that Samuel did not permit the Lord’s words to fall to the ground but was obedient in all things. This was a type of Christ and His relationship with the Father. It is the privilege of every man, woman and child to live in this manner, so that our words will be confirmed as we

³³ We read about such teaching and testifying by the spirit in D&C 100:5–8: “Therefore, verily I say unto you, lift up your voices unto this people; speak the thoughts that I shall put into your hearts, and you shall not be confounded before men; For it shall be given you in the very hour, yea, in the very moment, what ye shall say. But a commandment I give unto you, that ye shall declare whatsoever thing ye declare in my name, in solemnity of heart, in the spirit of meekness, in all things. And I give unto you this promise, that inasmuch as ye do this the Holy Ghost shall be shed forth in bearing record unto all things whatsoever ye shall say.”

follow the dictates of the Spirit. Can there be anything more wonderful? ¶ *That saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited.* The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Who saith to Jerusalem, ‘Thou shalt be inhabited.’” Cyrus had a huge part in the re-building of Jerusalem in the early days (see ISAIAH 44:27–28). And now in the latter-days Jerusalem is once again being re-built. It is the Holy One of Israel who makes these things possible. ¶ *And to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof:* The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And to the cities of Idumea, ‘Ye shall be rebuilt, and in its deserts vegetation shall spring up.’” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has *wastes* instead of *decayed places*. ¶ This is just another witness that Jerusalem and other cities in the Holy Land would indeed be *destroyed* and have to be *re-built*.

27 That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers:

The Targum (Ⲛ) has, “Babylon” rather than the *deep*. The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Who saith to the deep, Thou shalt be wasted, and I will dry up the rivers.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) seems to make these commands. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has *Be thou desolate* instead of *be dry*. ¶ Gill says: “... most interpreters, Jewish and Christian, understand it of Babylon, which was situated in a watery place, by rivers of water, particularly the river Euphrates, and in a low valley.” Keith writes: “This may be understood as a general truth, or—and this appears to be the allusion here—as referring to the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt when a path was opened through the waters of the Red Sea, as in ISAIAH 43:16; or to the deliverance from Babylon, when the waters of the Euphrates were transferred into a new channel by Cyrus, that by the old one he might introduce his army into the city.”

28 That saith of Cyrus, [He is] my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

That saith of Cyrus (לְכֹרֶשׁ), note the great difference in pronunciation, *Joresch*, with a Spanish j). Gesenius notes: “The Greeks have remarked that the Persians called the *sun* by this name.” The Targum (Ⲛ), LXX (Ⲭ) and Vulgate (Ⲱ) also mention Cyrus by name. ¶ Keith writes: “A last illustration of divine power introduced by the prophet is the employment of Cyrus as the instrument of God in delivering the Jews from Babylon, and rebuilding Jerusalem and its temple. He

was the son of Cambyses king of Persia, and of Mandane, the daughter of Astyages the king of Media, which two kingdoms were united in his reign. The employment of so celebrated a monarch as the shepherd of God in leading the Jews from Babylon to Judea, of which he was the means, is a fit illustration of divine power. The part he acted in the deliverance of the Jews, and in the rebuilding of the temple, is recorded in sacred history in 2 Chronicles 36:22–23; Ezra 1; and in profane history by Xenophon and others. Josephus relates that the prophecy by Isaiah was pointed out to Cyrus by the Jews when in Babylon. It has been supposed that it is to it that he refers in his edict inviting the Jews to return to Jerusalem: ‘Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah: who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up,’ (2 Chronicles 36:23).” ¶ The naming of Cyrus was given long before his birth. Some say 150 years and others 300 (e.g., Henderson). This is considered by many exegetes, impossible. Whitehouse, for instance, has: “We can only conclude that we have here the language of a contemporary of Cyrus who watched his career with absorbing interest. The occurrence of this name in an oracle more than 150 years before he lived would be wholly unintelligible and purposeless.” And this is really the sum and substance, we have said, of why moderns believe that there were two or more authors to the book of Isaiah. They limit prophets to being wise men³⁴ that can see and interpret the present. ¶ The Savior castigated the Pharisees in Matthew 16:3 for leaning on their cleverness when it came to the weather but not on Scripture when it came to religious matters: “When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather today: for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?” (Matthew 16:3b–4). Yet, for God all things are present. The Talmud, written by the Jewish Rabbis, testifies: “All the prophets prophesied not but of the days of the Messiah,” *Sanhedrin* 99a. Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*. I humbly and most reverently witness that God does speak to man about the future. ¶ Jennings well says: “When one remembers the day in which the ending of this chapter was written, that Jerusalem was still a great and prosperous city, that the cities of Judah needed no rebuilding, that Babylon was but a struggling

petty power, that no potentate of the name of Cyrus was known to exist; there cannot be the least surprise that modern rationalism has to make the prophecy to date after the event. Since no miracles are possible; since the Creator of all has been, always ‘reverently,’ expelled from His own universe; and since this would be as wonderful a miracle as any that could be conceived, then to them it follows that Isaiah did not write this prophecy.” ¶ *[He is] my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure*: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “That promises Cyrus that He will give him a kingdom; and *that* he shall establish all my pleasure.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Who saith, to Cyrus [I will give] wisdom, and he shall execute all my pleasure. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “Thou art my shepherd, and thou shalt perform all my pleasure.” ¶ Gill says: “Justin [*Hist. ex Trogo* l. 1. c. 5.] says, he had this name given him, while he was among the shepherds, by whom he was brought up, having been exposed in his infancy.” The Shepherd is Christ and he utilizes many shepherds to help him. Not all of them, Cyrus being an example, are members of His Church. ¶ *Even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built*. The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Who saith to Jerusalem, ‘Thou shalt be rebuilt.’” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “Who say to Jerusalem: Thou shalt be built.” Skinner says: “There have been abundant intimations that he is the destined instrument of Israel’s restoration, but these have hitherto occupied a secondary place in the prophet’s thoughts. Here, however, the figure of Cyrus is brought prominently on the scene, he is addressed directly and by name, and the ultimate scope of his mission is clearly unfolded. He is to set the exiles free, to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple.” ¶ *And to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid*. The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And the house dedicated to me I will found.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “And to the temple: Thy foundations shall be laid.” Kay well says: “Both this title [My Shepard] and that of ‘My Anointed’ (in ISAIAH 45:1) shew that Cyrus, the actual liberator of the Jews, was also a type of the world’s Saviour ... Cyrus’s work fitted him to prefigure the *Sun of Righteousness* (Malachi 4:2), who should overthrow mystic Babylon,—the empire of darkness.” Clarke notes: “This Cyrus should say to the temple: ‘Thy foundation shall be laid.’ Not—thou shalt be *built*. The fact is, only the *foundation* was laid in the days of Cyrus, the *Ammonites* having prevented the building; nor was it resumed till the *second* year of Darius, one of his successors.”

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³⁴ Certainly, there are wise men who can read the present. One of the farm hands in my mother’s vineyard in San Javier, Chile, confidently and correctly predicted both of President Obama’s presidential elections. This was not a revelation from God, but simply astuteness on his part.

Isaiah 45

Just like Cyrus played a crucial role in the return of Israel from Babylon; so would the Book of Mormon to the return of Israel from mystic Babylon in the last days. Through prayer and study of the Book of Mormon, and through turning to Christ, every individual is promised that their “confidence [shall] wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine of the priesthood shall *distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven*” (D&C 121:45, emphasis added). God makes it clear that we will not seek Him in vain, nor that mankind was created by accident. Finally, we are gloriously informed that every knee shall bend and every tongue confess and testify that Jesus is the very Christ, the Son of God.

vv. 1–4. From the pre-existence, Cyrus was set apart by the Lord to do an important work. Three reasons are given, all beginning with **לְמַעַן** *that* [or, *to that end*—Young], to explain why the Lord would bless Cyrus: (1) *that Cyrus might know* it was the Lord who helped him (ISAIAH 45:3); (2) *that Israel might be blessed* (ISAIAH 45:4); and (3) *that the whole world might know the Lord* (ISAIAH 45:6). In each of these cases the word **יָדַע** *know* is involved in some way. In the first instance, *that* Cyrus might **יָדַע** the Lord; in the last, *that* the world might **יָדַע** the Lord; in the middle, *that* even through Cyrus did not **יָדַע** he was an instrument of the Lord, yet he would be used to bless Israel and come to acknowledge His hand.

1 ¶ THUS saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, ✓ to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;

✓ or, strengthened

THUS saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him.

The Targum (ܬ) has, “לְמַשִּׁיחָא” as does the

Masoretic text (מ) “לְמַשִּׁיחָא,” to his anointed, or to his Messiah. Other individuals who have been anointed, such as kings (i.e., the Lord’s anointed) are often types of *The Anointed One*, or *Christ the Lord*. Here we have the title given to King Cyrus, כּוֹרֶשׁ, (or, כּוֹרֶשׁ in Aramaic), that is *Jorash* or *Jorash*, respectively (the ‘J’ or כּ, pronounced as a Spanish j, or German Ch). The Targum (ܬ) has, “Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whom I hold firm by his right hand, to deliver the nations unto him (literally, ‘before him’).” The LXX (Ϟ) reads, “Thus saith the Lord God, For mine

anointed, for Cyrus, (whose right hand I have taken hold of that nations may listen before him).” The Douay Rheims (Ϟ) has, “Thus saith the Lord to my anointed Cyrus, whose right hand I have taken hold of, to subdue nations before his face.” ¶ *Whose right hand*. This is an emblem of being helped. See ISAIAH 41:10, 13. There is, indeed, nothing sweeter than to be taken by the right hand of the Lord. I love living life in which the Lord holds us continually by the right hand. Rawlinson follows the margin ¶ in suggesting, *Whose right hand I have strengthened*. Benson says: “... supporting and directing his right hand, and enabling him to surmount all difficulties, and to overcome all opposition.” ¶ Of Cyrus, Jenour writes: “He is described by Xenophon as remarkable for the beauty of his person, the strength and agility of his body, and the extraordinary qualities of his mind. Surpassing all others in every military exercise, he was at the same time endued with great intellectual powers; and with such sweetness of disposition, and such engaging manners, that he gained the hearts of all with whom he had to do, even of those whose country he had conquered, and rendered tributary to himself. ([For more details see] *Cyropaedia*. L. 1 § 1.1).”¹ Delitzsch says: “The politics of Cyrus were pervaded by purer motives [than the rest of the world’s leaders], and this brought him eternal honour.” ¶ **לְמַשִּׁיחָא**, **מָשִׁיחַ**, from the root, **מָשַׁח**, or in Greek, **Christ**, **Χριστός**. Slotki/Rosenberg have: “The Hebrew root of the verb does not necessarily imply actual anointment with oil. It may only mean ‘consecration’ or ‘appointment to a high office’ (Rashi, Kimhi, Ibn Ezra).” Some, in an effort to eliminate Christological references in the Old Testament, suggest that the Hebrew expression for Messiah or Anointed, **מָשִׁיחַ**, is *never* used for the future Christ in the

¹ Some scholars consider the *Cyropaedia* by Xenophon as an interesting book but not necessarily based on fact (Xenophon, by the way, is the author of one of the early treatises on academic equitation and the art of dressage). Those who malign Cyrus are just as likely to be incorrect, however. When my father was young, Professor Albert Einstein told him—upon hearing of his desire to study history—“Half of history is true; the other, interesting.”

prophetic books. While we have plenty of examples when the word מָשִׁיחַ is used for a king or “the Lord’s anointed,” yet there are at least three such references in the latter prophets that speak of Jesus Christ: two in the book of Daniel (Daniel 9:25–26) and one in the Minor Prophets (Habakkuk 3:13²). In addition, Young points out a powerful reference in the *Wittings*: “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against *his anointed* [מָשִׁיחוֹ], saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee” (Psalm 2:1–7, emphasis added). ¶ Henderson explains: “The allusion is to the ancient rite of anointing with oil those who were invested with royal dignity (e.g., Judges 9:8; 1 Samuel 9:16; 15:1; 1 Kings 1:34). Today, of course, we tend to only think of *Messiah* or the *Anointed* מָשִׁיחַ, as especially associated with Jesus the Christ, fully understanding, of course, that in the Bible it is also used in other instances. Cowles has: “Some have considered [this title, i.e., my anointed] a special indication that Cyrus was a type of the great Messiah. The just view seems to be that he was anointed as king for the special work which the Lord had for him to do, as Jesus was for his special work, while yet their respective missions were exceedingly unlike.” ¶ *To subdue nations before him*. Alexander explains: “The treading down of nations is a trait peculiarly appropriate in this case, as the Greek historians give long catalogues of distinct nations subjugated by Cyrus, such as the Medes, Hyrcanians, Assyrians, Arabians, Cappadocians, Phrygians, Lydians, Carians, Babylonians, &c.” ¶ *And I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut*. The LXX (6) reads, “I will break the power of kings; I will open gates before him, and cities shall not be shut up.” The Peshitta (5) is missing *the two leaved gates*. The Douay-Rheims (2) has, “And to turn the backs of kings, and to open the doors before him, and the gates shall not be shut.” ¶ Skinner explains: “To *loose* (lit. ‘open’³)

is to *ungird*, or *disarm*; see 1 Kings 20:11⁴, where the same verb forms the contrast to ‘*gird*.’” So also Birks who further explains: “The loosing is a contrast to the girding of the loins. It denotes the weakening of every adverse power, so that resistance would be vain. There is a special allusion to the night when the handwriting appeared on the wall, when ‘the king’s countenance changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote together one against another’ (Daniel 5:6).” Alexander notes: “Clericus and J. D. Michaelis suppose an allusion to the removal of the sword-belt, as the ancient method of disarming or dismissing from active service ... But most of the modern writers are agreed that the words at least include a reference to the ordinary use of the girdle as a part of oriental dress, on which the activity of the wearer and his exercise of strength are in a great degree dependent, as it gathers up and tightens the flowing garments which would otherwise impede his movements.” Keith likewise has: “As girding the loins, or securing the flowing robe worn about the person in the East, indicated preparation for work, or war,—so loosing the loins, as it occurs in the text, expresses unpreparedness, unfitness, or feebleness ... If the loins be regarded as the seat of strength, to loose them is to render helpless.” ¶ *To open before him the two leaved gate*. Birks, referring back to Daniel says: “The opening of the doors and gates has a similar reference to that night of revelry, when the river-gates were carelessly left unclosed.” Rabbi Rosenberg has: “The dual form דְּלָתַיִם,⁵ used also in Deuteronomy 3:5, probably denotes two doors with which the gate was closed.” Alexander explains: “All interpreters admit that while this clause, in its most general sense, is perfectly appropriate to all the fortified places which were attacked by Cyrus, it is specifically and remarkably appropriate to the taking of Babylon. It can scarcely be considered a fortuitous coincidence, that Herodotus speaks of the gates which led to the river as having been left open on the night of the attack; and Xenophon says the doors of the palace itself having been unguardedly opened, the invaders took possession of it almost without resistance.” Calvin well notes: “God frequently chooses to hold us in suspense, and thus conceals from us the method which he has ready at hand, yet, in this instance he indulges the weakness of his people, and explains the method in which he will deliver them ... the Prophet shews that all defenses are useless, and that it serves no purpose to block up every entrance, when the Lord wishes to open up a way for the enemies.

² “Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed [מָשִׁיחְךָ]; thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation unto the neck. Selah” (Habakkuk 3:13).

³ *Open*, אָפַתָּה, from the root פָּתַח.

⁴ We have הִנֵּה בְּמִצְחָתוֹ or “Let not him that *girdeth* on his harness boast himself *as* he that *putteth it off*.”

⁵ Gesenius explains: “Root דָּלָה, the *leaf* of a door, so called from its hanging and swinging.”

Although it is certain that the gates were shut and securely barred, yet ... the Prophet justly affirms that nothing shall be closed against him.” When the Lord opens, who is there who can shut? See Revelation 3:7b where Christ applies the following to Himself: “These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth.”

2 I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:

I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: The Chilton Targum (Ⓢ) translation has, “My Memra will go before you, and I will level walls.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “I will go before thee and level mountains.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, for the second clause, “And will humble the great ones of the earth.” I like the expression in the Masoretic text (Ⓜ),

אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ where it says, “I before thy face.” Cyrus, given as a type of Christ, would have *the crooked places made straight* and all things prepared before him (see also ISAIAH 40:1 ff.). Birks has: “While Belshazzar and his nobles scoffed in their feasting, and drank wine, in scorn, in the vessels of God’s temple, the warning of God, published so long before, was fulfilled, first in their folly, and then in their speedy ruin. ‘If now the Babylonians had perceived beforehand, or learned what Cyrus was doing, they would, overlooking the entrance of the Persians, have destroyed them utterly. For by fastening all the gates towards the river, and themselves mounting on the walls along the river sides, they would have caught them as in a net. Now, however, the Persians come upon them unawares. Also from the size of the city, as those who live there report, when one end of it was taken, the Babylonians who lived in the middle did not know it; but as it happened to be a feast with them, they were dancing at the hour, and making merry, until indeed they knew it too well. And thus Babylon was taken for the first time’ (Herodotus 1:191).” There is no more beautiful understanding than to know that the Lord will go before us to open the way. ¶ *I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:* The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and burst asunder the bars of iron.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, for the second clause, “And will burst the bars of iron.” ¶ Skinner notes: “Babylon had 100 gates ‘all of brass,’ according to the description of Herodotus (I. 179). Cf. Psalm 107:16.” Alexander has: “Herodotus and Abydenus say expressly that the gates of Babylon were all of brass (compare Psalm 107:16).” When we are in the Lord’s errand, He

will remove all obstacles for us—even though at the time they may seem insurmountable. Recall, for instance, Nephi’s return to Jerusalem to obtain the brass plates.

3 And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call [thee] by thy name, [am] the God of Israel.

And I will give thee the treasures of darkness. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And give thee treasures of darkness.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “And I will give thee hidden treasures.” ¶ The context suggests *out of darkness*, rather than *of darkness*. So also Skinner: “*the treasures of darkness*] i.e. treasures hid in darkness. The following word rendered *hidden riches* (Heb. מִסְתָּוִן, held by some to be the original of the N.T. ‘Mammon’), means properly treasure *hidden* underground (Job 3:21; Proverbs 2:4; Jeremiah 41:8). The treasures referred to are chiefly the loot of Sardis, which Xenophon describes as ‘the richest city of Asia next to Babylon’ (Cyrop. VII. 2. 11), and of Babylon itself (Jeremiah 50:37; Jeremiah 51:13).” Keith has: “The treasures which fell into the hands of Cyrus ... at the taking of Babylon, and in his other successes, is stated by historians to have been immense. These it was customary to secure in secret places; often, it is stated, in periods of hostile invasion, in caves; hence they are called ‘treasures of darkness,’ ‘hidden riches,’ riches ‘of secret places.’” ¶ *And hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call [thee] by thy name, [am] the God of Israel.* The Targum (Ⓢ) only has, “and hidden treasures” for the first clause. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Deep, hidden, unseen treasures I will disclose to thee, that thou mayest know, that I, the Lord thy God, who calleth thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, for the first clause, “And the concealed riches of secret places.” ¶ Wordsworth explains: “Cyrus did not require to be told that *the Lord (Jehovah) was the God of Israel*. All the heathen knew this; but he and they needed to be taught that the Lord God of Israel was the only God, and that all the gods whom the heathen worshipped were vanity.” Lowth has: “Sardes and Babylon, when taken by Cyrus, were the wealthiest cities in the world. Croesus, celebrated beyond all the kings of that age for his riches, gave up his treasures to Cyrus, with an exact account, in writing, of the whole, containing the particulars with which each wagon was loaded, when they were carried away: and they were delivered to Cyrus at the palace of Babylon (*Xenophon Cyropaedia* 7:503, 515, 540). The gold and silver estimated by

weight in this account, being converted into pounds sterling, amount to £ 126,224,000 (*Brerewood, De Ponderibus*, cap X).” ¶ *Treasures of darkness* and *hidden treasures* essentially mean the same thing: that which is not apparent. These treasures may be material, but the most valuable riches are treasures of knowledge. The Book of Mormon is one such treasure. It was kept hidden for centuries until the boy Prophet was able to remove it from its dark place in Hill Cumorah and begin translating its pages. The Word of Wisdom offers: “And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures” (D&C 89:19). We have powerful promises given to us in these last days: “God shall give unto you knowledge by his Holy Spirit, yea, by the *unspeakable gift of the Holy Ghost*, that has not been revealed since the world was until now; Which our forefathers have awaited with anxious expectation to be revealed in the last times, which their minds were pointed to by the angels, as held in reserve for the fulness of their glory; A time to come in the which nothing shall be withheld, whether there be one God or many gods, they shall be manifest. All thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, shall be revealed and set forth upon all who have endured valiantly for the gospel of Jesus Christ ... How long can rolling waters remain impure? What power shall stay the heavens? As well might man stretch forth his puny arm to stop the Missouri river in its decreed course, or to turn it up stream, *as to hinder the Almighty from pouring down knowledge from heaven upon the heads of the Latter-day Saints*” (DyC 121:26–30, 33, emphasis added).

4 For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.

For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: The LXX (6) reads, “For the sake of my servant Jacob, and of Israel my chosen one, I will call thee by thy name.” ¶ Benson suggests: “The prophet here gives us the reasons why God showed such favour to a prince, who had been addicted to the superstition of his country, and ignorant of the true God, that he prospered all his under takings, and gave success to all his endeavours. It was, 1st, For Israel's sake: For *Israel, mine elect, I have even called thee, &c.*—I have called thee to this honour, and that by name; not for thy own sake, but for Israel's: therefore, neither despise them, though a poor and despised people, nor be puffed up in a great opinion of thyself.” Luther points us to John 10:3: “To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.” ¶ Elder

Bruce R. McConkie explains that the *elect*: “... are the portion of church members who are striving with all their hearts to keep the fulness of the gospel law in this life so that they can become inheritors of the fulness of gospel rewards in the life to come. As far as the male sex is concerned, they are the ones, the Lord says, who have the Melchizedek Priesthood conferred upon them and who thereafter magnify their callings and are sanctified by the Spirit. In this way, ‘They become the sons of Moses and of Aaron and the seed of Abraham, and the church and kingdom, and the elect of God.’”⁶ ¶ *I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.* The Targum (7) has, “I have guided thee, though thou hast not known that thou shouldest fear me.”⁷ The LXX (6) reads, “and receive thee kindly. As for thee, thou didst not know me.” The Douay-Rheims (8) has, “I have made a likeness of thee, and thou hast not known me.” ¶ Kay has, “Long before he knew God, he was ‘known’ by Him (see Jeremiah 1:5).” So also Delitzsch (and many others who say): “The passage is to be explained in the same way as Jeremiah 1:5, ‘Before I formed thee in the womb, I knew thee.’” In other words, even from the pre-existence.⁸ ¶ Skinner says: “*though thou hast not known me*] ... the words present no difficulty in their natural sense, which is that Cyrus entered on his career of conquest ignorant of the true God who made his way prosperous.” How many have been led to incredible discoveries and yet did not know the Lord nor acknowledge His hand. ¶ Cowles has: “‘Surnaming’ (here as in ISAIAH 44:5), means to give a special name of honor, implying significant relations to him who gave the name.”

vv. 5–10. It is the Lord who has power. A double allusion—one to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and one to the reuniting of the City of Enoch with the City of Zion in the last days—is given. The Lord foresees the persecution and murmuring that will arise with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ.

⁶ McConkie, Elder Bruce R. *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3:330–331; *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed., p. 217; and *Commentary* 2:267–269, 271–278, 283–285.

⁷ Pauli has: “This paraphrase agrees with what Xenophon tells us of the end of Cyrus; when about to die, he sacrificed to Jupiter, to the sun, and to other idols, and supplicated to his wife, &c. (Cyropaedia, lib viii. cap 5).” In other words, that Cyrus only partially acknowledged the hand of the Lord in his great success.

⁸ See President Joseph Fielding Smith's notes on “Bible Evidences for Man's Pre-Existence,” *Answers to Gospel Questions*. Also, in the same book, see President Smith's comments on the talents we possessed in the pre-existence, under “Different Dispositions.” Furthermore, he taught that “pre-mortal callings [were not] confined to the prophets” (see under “Acceptance of the Prophet Joseph Smith”).

5 ¶ I [am] the LORD, and [there is] none else, [there is] no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:

Wordsworth renders the first clause: “*I, the Lord* (Jehovah), am God, *and none else beside me is God.*” The Lord’s concern here, and in other like places in the Scriptures, is that no one might confer godhood status to the idols and other no-gods of the heathen nations. ¶ The Targum (Ⲯ) has, for the second half, “I have supported thee, though thou hast not known that thou shouldest fear me (the Royal Polyglot has לְמַפְלָא, ‘to worship’).” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Because I am the Lord God and there is no God else besides me; I strengthened thee when thou didst not know me.” ¶ Skinner points out: “*I gird thee*] the contrast to ‘loose the loins of kings’ in ISAIAH 45:1.” Birks says: “The former verse taught that it was the God of Israel, who, for Israel’s sake, led Cyrus to victory. Here the further truth is taught, that He is no mere tutelary, national God, like those of the heathen; but Jehovah, the unchangeable I AM, who claims justly the reverence and worship of all creation.” Alexander notes: “What is said before of naming him is here said of girding him, i.e. investing him with royal dignity or personally strengthening him; both may be included.” ¶ *Though thou has not known me.* At some point Cyrus finds out about the Lord, but these words suggest to a *knowing* that goes beyond a *knowing about* the Lord. In John we read: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3).

6 That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that [there is] none beside me. I [am] the LORD, and [there is] none else.

The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “That they from the risings of the sun and they from its goings down may know, that there is no God besides me. I the Lord am God and there is none else.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, for the first half, “That they may know who are from the rising of the sun, and they who are from the west, that there is none besides me.” ¶ Parry, Parry and Peterson have: “This prophecy is similar to the one made by Malachi: ‘For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; ... for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts’ (Malachi 1:11).” Skinner has: “*from the west*] Lit. from the going down thereof.” Keith suggests: “No doubt, the capture of so

famed a city as Babylon, by such a conqueror as Cyrus, would attract universal notice in the then known world, and the public recognition of Jehovah in his decree would spread the name and fame of the one true God.” Calvin explains: “He does not predict what shall happen immediately, but what shall happen afterwards, though these things were long concealed. God therefore did not permit the remembrance of this transaction to fade away, but determined that it should be handed down in permanent records, that it might be celebrated in all ages, and by the most distant nations, to the very end of the world.” The return of the Jews from Babylon would pave the way for the birth of the Savior.

7 I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these [things].

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Who prepares the light, and creates darkness, makes peace, and creates punishment for evil (בִּישׁ). I the Lord do all these things.” ¶ Pauli notes that regarding בִּישׁ, “Words expressing, as in Hebrew, *evil*, sin, signify sometimes the punishment for sin, or sacrifice for sin; thus 2 Corinthians 5:21, ‘He that made him *αμαρτιαν*, *sin*, (sacrifice) for us.’” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “It was I who provided light and made darkness; who make peace and create evils: I the Lord God am he who doth all these things.” Instead of *evil*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *hardship* (Lamsa) / *adversity* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “I form the light, and create darkness, I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord that do all these things.” Instead of *peace*, שְׁלוֹם, found in the Masoretic text (ⲡ), the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲥ) has *good*, טוֹב. ¶ *Light and darkness.* See Genesis 1:14–19. In this Isaianic verse, the Lord is reminding us of the organization of the earth. Rabbi Rosenberg, leaning on the ancient Rabbis has: “Since darkness is merely the absence of light, it is not really a creation, but a decree that the light absent itself (Ibn Ezra, Redak).” So likewise, Westermann, “Though he is lord over the darkness, God is certainly not its creator. He took it into creation and set bounds to it ...” ¶ Cowles writes about the false doctrine of *Zoroaster*: “[So] the people of the distant East, the regions of the rising sun, might know that there is no God beside me. For Persia, pre-eminently to the Hebrews the land of the rising sun, was the home of the celebrated doctrine of Zoroaster, taught in the Zend-Avesta, viz, that there is *not* one God only, but virtually two; one the author of all good; the other, of all evil; one, the former of light; the other, of darkness. These two rival creators were held to be each eternal; and if not precisely equal; yet both indefinitely powerful, and by their very nature terribly

and eternally antagonistic.—But squarely in opposition to this dualistic system, and that his word might go at once through all that Eastern world whence Cyrus came, the Lord here affirms that he alone both formed the light and created darkness ...” ¶ *Evil*, רָע. Better, *calamity* (Skinner), *hardship* (Lamsa) or *adversity*. Jenour speaks about what he calls a mystery: “That evil exists, we know; but how did it first come? To say that God *permits* it, is saying nothing to the point, for permitting is not originating, and the question is as to the source of evil. Nor does it help the difficulty, to say that Satan is its author. Doubtless the evil there is in our world originated with that fallen spirit; but, how did he himself become evil? ... Volumes have been written upon it, but it remains as inextricable as ever.” Gladly, latter-day revelation sheds a clear light over all these matters. At the heart of it were both pride, as well as a desire to destroy man’s agency: “Satan⁹ rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord God, had given him” (Moses 4:3b). ¶ I particularly appreciate Ironside’s comments: “[There are those who] insist that God has foreordained everything that takes place on the earth; therefore that man should sin, in order that He might have opportunity to display His redemptive grace. But that is not what is involved here when He says, ‘I create peace and I create evil.’ It is evil in the sense of calamity.” ¶ If you are like me, the first thing you do is rush to your footnotes and look for the JST. But there is not JST here. Yet, in a similar verse we do have a JST: “Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be *evil* [רָעָה] in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?” (JST, *know it*, Amos 3:6). Since the prophet Joseph Smith was taken before he completed the JST, one possibility is that this verse might still need changes. But there are other, more likely, explanations at work here. We must begin by defining the word *evil* in English. Then we will look at the original word, רָע, in Hebrew. When we think of *evil*, we tend to first associate it with something that is “morally

⁹ In LDS.org we read: “Heavenly Father allows Satan and Satan’s followers to tempt us as part of our experience in mortality (see 2 Nephi 2:11–14; D&C 29:39). Because Satan ‘seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself’ (2 Nephi 2:27), he and his followers try to lead us away from righteousness. He directs his most strenuous opposition at the most important aspects of Heavenly Father’s plan of happiness. For example, he seeks to discredit the Savior and the priesthood, to cast doubt on the power of the Atonement, to counterfeit revelation, to distract us from the truth, and to contradict individual accountability. He attempts to undermine the family by confusing gender, promoting sexual relations outside of marriage, ridiculing marriage, and discouraging childbearing by married adults who would otherwise raise children in righteousness. Individuals do not have to give in to Satan’s temptations. Each person has the power to choose good over evil, and the Lord has promised to help all who seek Him through sincere prayer and faithfulness.”

reprehensible, sinful, wicked” (*Webster*). Or, “disposition to do wrong; moral offence; wickedness; depravity” (*Webster Unabridged Dictionary*, pre-1923).¹⁰ NBD suggests that *evil* is more than sin, “The Hebrew word comes from a root meaning ‘to spoil’, ‘to break in pieces’: being broken and so made worthless. It is essentially what is *unpleasant, disagreeable, offensive*.” Dictionaries often distinguish between *moral evil* and *physical evil* (e.g., see *evil*, ISBE, רָע). One thing that should be absolutely clear is that God does not *create moral evil* and that there is nothing about Him that is *evil*. So let us move into the second definition of the word, using physical evil as a descriptor. The HarperCollins Bible Dictionary has: “Bad situations or natural calamities can be referred to as ‘evil,’ since such occurrences are typically interpreted as a consequence of human sin, if not a direct punishment for specific sin (e.g., Deuteronomy 31:17; Ezra 9:13; Proverbs 11:21 {רָעָה is translated as *wicked*—GB}; Jeremiah 26:19; Amos 3:6 {but see JST there}). It is only in this sense (evil as *calamity* as opposed to evil as immorality or wickedness) that God can be portrayed as the cause of evil. God is never presented as wicked or immoral in the Bible, but God does sometimes send evil upon people in the sense of causing misfortune to befall them (Deuteronomy 28:20 {רָעָה is translated as *wickedness*—GB}; 2 Samuel 24:16; Job 42:11; cf. 1 Kings 2:44 {רָעָהָה is translated as *the wickedness*—GB}; 14:10).” Furthermore, the Lord often *permits* or *knows about* such evil רָע, without causing it, as in the case of Job. Regarding Job, Jennings says: “Was not Job right in attributing both the giving and the taking away of his all to the Lord, even though Satan was the active intermediary?” We also know of Prophets sealing the heavens so it would not rain. See notes on ISAIAH 7:12.

8 Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the LORD have created it.

The Targum (ܬ) has, “Let the heavens drop down from above, and the clouds flow with good, let the earth open itself, and the *dead* live, and let righteousness be revealed together; I the Lord have created them.” The LXX (Ϟ) reads, “Let the heaven above be glad; and the

¹⁰ Webster, Noah. *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary*: Vintage Pre-1923 Edition (Annotated).

clouds shower down righteousness. Let the earth spring and bloom with mercy and let it cause righteousness to spring up with it. I the Lord am he who created thee. Instead of *skies*, the Peshitta (S) has *clouds*; instead of *bring forth salvation*, the Peshitta (S) has *salvation be multiplied*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the just: let the earth be opened, and bud forth a saviour: and let justice spring up together: I the Lord have created him.” Nägelsbach has: “Under the figure of rain is represented, in oriental fashion, the fructifying influence of the heaven on the earth (compare Deuteronomy 32:2).” Shalom Paul has: “For Heb. מִמַּעַל (‘from above’) serving as an adverb, see Exodus 20:4: ‘Or any likeness of what is in the heavens above (מִמַּעַל);’ Job 31:28: ‘For I would have denied God above (מִמַּעַל).’” Gill, leaning in the Vulgate (V) sees an allusion to the Savior, “Or, ‘the righteous One,’ as the Vulgate Latin version; the Lord our righteousness, Christ the author of righteousness ... and whose coming was to be, and was, as the rain, as the former and latter rain to the earth, and who came from heaven to earth to fulfil all righteousness; and with him came an abundance of blessings of rich grace, even all spiritual blessings, peace, pardon, righteousness, salvation, and eternal life, which were poured down from above upon the sons of men ...” ¶ Lowth has: “These images of the dew and the rain descending from heaven and making the earth fruitful, employed by the prophet, and some of those nearly of the same kind which are used by the Psalmist¹¹, may perhaps be primarily understood as designed to set forth in a splendid manner the happy state of God’s people restored to their country, and flourishing in peace and plenty, in piety and virtue; *but* justice and salvation, mercy and truth, righteousness and peace, and glory dwelling in the land, *cannot with any sort of propriety, in the one or the other, be interpreted as the consequences of that event; they must mean* the blessings of the great redemption by Messiah” (emphasis added). Yes, definitely *redemption by Messiah* is involved. There could be nothing greater! But the *how* of this is quite glorious as well, as we shall see in a moment. Luther says that *let the earth open* means that “the earth sprouts through the *Word of God*” (emphasis added). Calvin is inspired when he says that: “The Prophet always speaks in the name of God, who, in the exercise of his authority, calls on heaven and earth to lend their services *to the restoration of the Church*” (emphasis added). ¶ We have a further hint in Deuteronomy 32, that these things are symbolic of the doctrine that would be poured forth in the First Vision: “My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall

distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass” (Deuteronomy 32:2). The tender herb here is symbolic of the boy prophet and the beginnings of the restored Church, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. ¶ We also find similar words in the Pearl of Great Price: “And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem” (Moses 7:62). Nyman quotes the Prophet Joseph Smith: “In commenting on the passage in Moses, Joseph Smith said: ‘And now, I ask, how righteousness and truth are going to sweep the earth as with a flood? I will answer. Men and angels are to be co-workers in bringing to pass this great work, and Zion is to be prepared, even a new Jerusalem, for the elect that are to be gathered from the four quarters of the earth, and to be established an holy city, for the tabernacle of the Lord shall be with them.’ (TPJS, p. 84.)” ¶ I was particularly touched by the words of Elder L. Aldin Porter, who after quoting Moses powerfully testified: “Did you note that He said, ‘Truth will I send forth out of the earth’? To do what? ‘To bear testimony of mine Only Begotten.’ The Book of Mormon was compiled and translated for our day.¹² It came forth out of the earth as was prophesied to bless and guide the lives of the people of this day. It came in a day and time as the Lord knew it would when the dislocations caused by wickedness would be very intense. As Moroni concluded the immense work of his father and others, he made a promise that has been shared widely in a multitude of languages. But I fear it has become too commonplace among us. We learn about it in Sunday School, in seminary, in family home evenings, and we even memorize it as missionaries. But today I would ask that you listen as I read this promise as if you had never heard of it. ‘And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.’ This is the promise, that our Eternal Father will give us

¹¹ Psalm 85:10–14.

¹² We also have, of course, another scriptural reference to the Book of Mormon in: “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of *heaven*, having the *everlasting gospel* to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people” (Revelation 14:6, emphasis added).

a manifestation of truth—a personal revelation of eternal consequence. The Book of Mormon was given to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, manifesting Himself unto all nations. Do not treat lightly the revelations of God. Do not treat lightly this astonishing promise. I bear a solemn testimony to you that this promise has been fulfilled not only in my life but in the lives of hundreds of thousands, even millions, of people. You will find that when Moroni's promise is fulfilled and you are given the knowledge that the Book of Mormon is truly the word of God, there will come with it a witness that Jesus is the Christ, the Redeemer and Savior of the world. I have never known an instance where this did not occur. Moreover, I do not believe a violation of this principle will ever take place. A spiritual witness of the Nephite scripture will always bring the certainty of the Savior's existence. With that witness borne of the Holy Ghost will come a sure knowledge that Joseph Smith told the truth when he said that he had seen the Father and the Son on that spring morning of 1820. A knowledge that Jesus Christ lives and is our Redeemer and Savior is worth whatever the cost may be. This is the fulfillment of Moroni's promise in our lives. After that, we then through study and prayer can come to know that He has given us life through the Resurrection. We will come to know that He has promised us a quality of life hereafter beyond our capacity to comprehend. We must understand that this testimony comes only through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the gospel. Read the Book of Mormon. 'With a sincere heart [and] real intent,' begin to read. Ponder the words. Often pause and ask your Heavenly Father 'if these things are not true.' Continue to read, to ponder, and to ask. It will not be easy reading. There will be roadblocks along the way. Persist. Approach your Father in Heaven having expelled your prejudices and biases. Leave your heart open to receive the impressions that come from eternal sources. Many inspiring treasures will be revealed to you. There will, in time, come into your heart and mind an assurance that Jesus Christ is the living Son of the living Father. With it will come a knowledge that Joseph Smith is the prophet of the Restoration and that there are apostles and prophets on the earth today ... I make this promise to those who are investigating the Church, to those who are members but who have lost enthusiasm for the work and are, therefore, in a state of confusion in a world that is in moral chaos. I make this promise to those who through transgression and faithless living are in despair over eternal things. Our hearts will overflow with gratitude for His sacrifice in our behalf. This doctrine of personal revelation is not new. After this sacred witness comes, you will see His hand in a thousand things. 'And behold, all things have their likeness, and all things are created and made to bear record of me, both things which are temporal, and

things which are spiritual; things which are in the heavens above, and things which are on the earth, and things which are in the earth, and things which are under the earth, both above and beneath: all things bear record of me.' We will find great joy in contemplating His life, and we will shortly realize that in truth all things do bear witness of Him. Furthermore, in the midst of our trials and challenges, we will find peace, knowing that in the end it will be all right. We will find serenity in the face of affliction. We will find this serenity in life even as chaos swirls around us. Such is the power of a testimony and witness that Jesus is the Christ, the Redeemer, our Advocate with the Father, the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh, the very Savior of the world."¹³ ¶ President Ezra Taft Benson mightily declared: "The Book of Mormon is the instrument that God designed to 'sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out [His] elect' (Moses 7:62). This sacred volume of scripture needs to become more central in our preaching, our teaching, and our missionary work."¹⁴ Furthermore, President Benson testified: "The Lord promised, therefore, that righteousness would come from heaven and truth out of the earth. We have seen the marvelous fulfillment of that prophecy in our generation. The Book of Mormon has come forth out of the earth, filled with truth, serving as the very 'keystone of our religion.' The Book of Mormon God has also sent down righteousness from heaven. The Father Himself appeared with His Son to the Prophet Joseph Smith. The angel Moroni, John the Baptist, Peter, James, and numerous other angels were directed by heaven to restore the necessary powers to the kingdom. Further, the Prophet Joseph Smith received revelation after revelation from the heavens during those first critical years of the Church's growth. These revelations have been preserved for us in the Doctrine and Covenants. These two great works of scripture, then, become a major tool in the Lord's hand for preserving His people in the latter days: the Book of Mormon, written under the hand of inspiration for our day, preserved through the centuries to come forth in our time, translated by the gift and power of God. It is the keystone of our religion. It is the keystone of our doctrine. It is the keystone of our testimony. It is a keystone in the witness of Jesus Christ. It is a keystone in helping us avoid the deceptions of the evil one in these latter days. Satan rages in the hearts of men and has power over all of his dominions. But the Book of Mormon has greater power—power to reveal false doctrine, power to help us overcome temptations, power to help us get closer to God than any other book. The

¹³ Porter, Elder L. Aldin. "To Bear Testimony of Mine Only Begotten," April 2001 General Conference.

¹⁴ Benson, President Ezra Taft Benson, Flooding the Earth with the Book of Mormon, October 1988 General Conference.

Book of Mormon must be reenthroned in the minds and hearts of our people. We must honor it by reading it, by studying it, by taking its precepts into our lives and transforming them into lives required of the true followers of Christ.”¹⁵ ¶ Skinner notes: “Two words are here used for righteousness, that which comes down from heaven is צְדָקָה, that which springs from the earth is צְדָקָה.” That is, the male and female versions of the word. The Lord speaks this way when He wishes to express the totality of importance. Birks says: “The figure is varied and complete. The heavens are to distil righteousness, like dew, and the skies to pour it down in copious showers. The earth is to open her bosom, and to receive these gifts of heaven. Both, in concert, are thus to yield the fruit of salvation; and the earth is to bring forth righteousness {צְדָקָה, feminine} in response to the floods of righteousness {צְדָקָה, masculine} from on high.” Jenour has: “As by prophetic command he bids the *skies* and the *clouds*, the former *gently to drop down*, the latter to *pour forth*, not the fertilizing dews, or the refreshing shower, but, what would be far more beneficial to the soul of man than even these having issued his command to the *heavens*, the source of natural and spiritual good, the same divine word bids the *earth* open her bosom to receive the good prepared for her; or, in other words, the *inhabitants* of the earth to open their hearts for the reception of the quickening, *sanctifying gospel of Christ*” (emphasis added). ¶ Alexander writes: “J. D. Michaelis explains this whole verse as relating to prophecy and its fulfilment.” Horsley suggests: “*The universality of the blessing* is the thing particularly described in this verse, under the images of the dew and the rain, falling indiscriminately on all parts of the earth, and the herbage sprouting spontaneously from its whole surface” (emphasis added). Horsley’s comments make us think of the creation: “But I, the Lord God, spake, and there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground” (Moses 3:6). But in this verse we will see both the *revelatory* aspect and the *universality* of the Book of Mormon, both of which, along with the restored Church of Jesus Christ, bring priesthood authority and salvation would be made available to both the living and the dead. Young interestingly says: “Parallel is the command to the clouds to pour out righteousness. Here the verb is best taken as a jussive, *let them pour out*.” What interests me here is the plural, for both the Father and the Son are represented as coming forth in the First Vision. Barnes says: “There cannot be found anywhere a more beautiful description of a genuine revival of pure

religion than in this verse. It is descriptive, doubtless, of what is yet to take place in the better days which are to succeed the present, when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth.” Such began to be fulfilled with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the formation of His Church, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

9 Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! [Let] the potsherd [strive] with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Woe to him who thinks of striving against the *words of his Creator*, and trusts that the images of a potter shall do him good, which are made out of the dust of the earth. Is it possible, that the clay could say to him that worketh it, Thou hast not made me? or thy work, He hath no hands?” (emphasis added). The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Is anything endowed with excellence? I fashioned it like the clay of a potter. Will the ploughman plough the ground all the day long? Will the clay say to the potter, ‘What art thou making? Or the work to the workman, ‘Thou hast not hands.’” For the last clause, the Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲯ) has, “Or am I not the work of your hands?” / “Was I not the work of thy hands?” (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “Woe to him that gainsayeth his maker, a sherd of the earthen pots: shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it: What art thou making, and thy work is without hands?” ¶ Barnes suggests: “It may be designed to refer to the fact that any interposition of God; *any mode of manifesting himself to men meets with enemies*, and with those who are disposed to contend with him, and especially any display of his mercy and grace in a *great revival of religion*. In the previous verse the prophet had spoken of the revival of religion. Perhaps he here adverts to the fact that such a manifestation of his mercy would *meet with opposition* ... Men thus contend with their Maker; resist the influences of his Spirit; strive against the appeals made to them; *oppose his sovereignty*; are enraged at the preaching of the Gospel, and often combine to oppose him” (emphasis added). Is this not a perfect description to the opposition to the Book of Mormon, the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the restoration of the church of Christ?¹⁶ ¶ Alexander suggests: “The absurdity consists in the thing made denying the existence of the hands by which it was itself produced. The essential idea is the same as in ISAIAH 10:15, but the expression here much stronger,

¹⁵ Benson, President Ezra Taft. The Gift of Modern Revelation. October 1986 General Conference.

¹⁶ JS—History 1:20–25.

since the instrument is not merely charged with exalting itself above the efficient agent, but the creature with denying the power or skill of its Creator ...” Indeed, surely the refusal of the world to accept modern revelation and the Book of Mormon as the word of God, is pronounced in this and the next verse. The Book of Mormon warns against the resistance with which it would be received (see for instance, 2 Nephi 28:4b–5a, 9; 16a; 2 Nephi 29:1, 3–13). ¶ And why *potsherd*s (i.e., weaklings, fools)? Henderson has: “The language is that of contempt, being expressive of the mean [i.e., *lowly* in modern English—GB] and worthless character of the subject spoken of.” Barnes says: “The word rendered ‘potsherd’ (חֶרֶשׁ) means properly ‘a shard,’ or ‘sherd,’ that is, a fragment of an earthen vessel. It is then put proverbially for anything frail and mean¹⁷. Here it is undoubtedly put for man, regarded as weak and contemptible in his efforts against God ...” Efforts to ridicule the word of God are not limited to the Book of Mormon, but also to the Bible itself. ¶ Among the exegetes, there is almost total agreement that ISAIAH 45:9–10 constitute *murmuring* against the things of God, although the subject of the complaining varies (e.g., see Luther, Calvin, Nägelsbach, Wordsworth, Henderson, Jenour, Whitehouse, McFadyen, Benson, Lowth, Orelli, Wade, Cheyne and Rawlinson, to name but a few). Calvin paraphrases: “How far shall your insolence carry its excesses, that you will not allow me to be master in my own workshop, or to govern my family as I think fit?” Nägelsbach writes: “The whole [of ISAIAH 40–66] is a book of consolation. Hence it begins with ISAIAH 40:1 with the double ‘comfort ye.’ But the Prophet knows the human heart too well not to know, that among those for whom this book of consolation is written, there are many who will be content neither with the quality nor quantity of the comfort that is offered, and who strive with their Maker as if no comfort were there. Against these he justly utters a woe, for nothing offends God so much as unbelief. Thus there is an incisive contrast between ISAIAH 45:8 and ISAIAH 45:9 sqq. In ISAIAH 45:8 we see the future beaming in clear light. But this clear light exists not for those who, when things are not as they wish, immediately despair, because they see no human help, and will not see the divine help. Yet what is man in comparison with God?”

10 Woe unto him that saith unto [his] father, What begetteth thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?

¹⁷ Insignificant.

The LXX (6) reads, “Will the thing formed reply against him who formed it? Will one say to his father, What wilt thou beget? Or to his mother, What art thou bringing forth?” The Douay-Rheims (2) has *why* in each of the two cases of *what*. The Stenning Targum (3) translation has, for the second half, “And to a woman, With what travailest thou?” Pauli (3) rather explains that the expression *to a woman* וְלִאִמָּה, in this case is a respectful title for a mother, and the signification or idea is rather, “And to his mother, What has thou brought forth.” ¶ In Syriac-Aramaic, ܐܡܐ, ܐܡܐ (see Targum Lexicon) can also mean *wife*,¹⁸ almost giving the impression that a husband is asking her “who is the father of this child?” Horsley says: “The Prophet, therefore, says, Wo to him who says to a father, to one who is already a father, Why goest thou about to beget children ? and to a woman, already a mother, Why art thou again bringing forth?” Although Horsley takes his argument in a different direction, he supports my belief that this is a complaint by the people about God *bringing forth more*—not more children—but *more of His word* beyond the Bible. This verse continues, then, the very same theme as the previous, with those who demand that God has already spoken what He has spoken and that He shall speak no more.

vv. 11–19. The Lord contrasts His own strength, wisdom, knowledge and understanding to that of the potsherds of the earth. Once again, the Lord chastises those who dare challenge His right to govern and speak again. In the latter days, Israel will be gathered from all the nations, and all the nations of the earth shall begin to look to Christ, our Savior. Those who are ashamed or those who despise the words of Christ, the Book of Mormon, and the Lord’s restored Church, will in turn suffer shame. Those who repent and seek the Lord will have everlasting joy and eternal life. This earth was not created in vain but in due time will become the abode of celestial beings. The Lord is ever inviting us to come unto Him with stretched out arms. Cyrus is a type of Christ.

11 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.

Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker. The Targum (3) has, “Thus saith the Lord, the

¹⁸ “Woe to him who says to a father, ‘What will you beget?’ or to a woman, ‘With what will you be pregnant?’” *The Aramaic Bible: The Isaiah Targum* (B. D. Chilton, Trans.).

Holy One of Israel, and He that formed him, Ye question me about things concerning my people, which shall come to pass.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Wherefore thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, even he who made the train of events.” After *his Maker*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has added the ܡ equivalent of,

יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ, “Yahweh of Hosts is his name.”

¶ Jenour well writes: “The folly of those who dared to doubt the goodness and justice of God’s dealings is here further shewn. Did they think that they were authorized to *demand* of him what providential dispensations he should send upon his children? Or will ye, asks the eternal Creator, *command* me how I am to set towards the work of my hands? Will ye, my creatures, give direction to your Creator? Let Christians learn here an useful lesson.—Are we not all too ready to suppose that we know better than God himself what is good for us?”

¶ *Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And will ye command me concerning the work of my power?” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Do you question me concerning my children; and concerning the works of my hands give me directions!” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “Ask me of things to come, concerning my children, and concerning the work of my hands give ye charge to me.” Ibn Ezra explains: “*Will ye command me.* It is a question.” Wade has: “If the imperative is correct, it must be understood ironically; but many critics would substitute an indignant interrogation, *Will ye question me?* which harmonizes better with the mood of the parallel verb, which should be rendered, *will ye command me!*” Henderson suggests: שְׂאֵלֹנִי

[ask me] is subordinated to צַוֵּנִי [command me] in the Future, and both are to be rendered interrogatively.” So it is that either a question or exclamation mark is given in many versions, as if to show incredulity that mankind can be so presumptuous as to command God: “Thus hath said the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and he who hath formed him, About events to come will you ask me? concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands will ye command me?” (Leeser).

¶ *Concerning my sons.* Cheyne suggests: “A deep saying. Jehovah implies at once that it must be well with those whom he regards as his sons (Hosea 1:10), and that those who murmur against him tacitly renounce the privilege of sonship.”

12 I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, [even] my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “It is I who have made the earth by my Word, and I have created man upon it; it is I who have suspended the heavens by my power, and I have laid the foundation of all the hosts of them.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “It was I who made the earth and man on it: it was I who with my hand established the heaven: it was I who gave direction to all the stars.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “I made the earth: and I created man upon it: my hand stretched forth the heavens, and I have commanded all their host.” ¶ Elder McConkie explains who the Father of our spirits is: “In a passage of great doctrinal worth and of surpassing literary beauty, Isaiah speaks of the Lord Jehovah, ‘the Holy One of Israel,’ who is Christ, as man’s ‘Maker.’ ‘I have made the earth, and created man upon it,’ says he who is the Son of God. ‘I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded’ (ISAIAH 45:9–12). And once again we have the creation of man ascribed, seemingly, to the Son of God. However, from other sacred sources we know that Jehovah—Christ, assisted by ‘many of the noble and great ones’ (Abraham 3:22), of whom Michael is but the illustration, did in fact create the earth and all forms of plant and animal life on the face thereof. But when it came to placing man on earth, there was a change in Creators. That is, the Father himself became personally involved. All things were created by the Son, using the power delegated by the Father, except man. In the spirit and again in the flesh, man was created by the Father. There was no delegation of authority where the crowning creature of creation was concerned.”¹⁹ Elder McConkie teaches that we often misunderstand this point because Jehovah often speaks in the voice of the Father through the principle of *Divine Investiture*.^{20 21}

13 I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct[✓] all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the LORD of hosts.

✓ or, make straight

I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “It is I who will verily bring him forth publicly, and all his paths will I direct.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “It is I who have raised him up with righteousness to be king; and all his ways

¹⁹ McConkie, Elder Bruce R. *The Promised Messiah*.

²⁰ McConkie, Elder Bruce R. *The Promised Messiah*. Elder McConkie explains that Jehovah sometimes “without hesitation or explanation [quickly] assumes the voice of the Father,” as in D&C 29:1, 42–43.

²¹ McConkie, Elder Bruce R. *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, p.63.

shall be straight.” ¶ Gill says: “Though this may be said with some respect to Cyrus, yet chiefly to Christ, of whom Cyrus was a type.” Alexander says: “From the general proof of divine power afforded by creation, he descends to the particular exercise of his omnipotence and wisdom in the raising up of Cyrus, who is thus referred to without the express mention of his name, because he had been previously made the subject of a similar appeal, and the Prophet simply takes up the thread which he had dropped at the close of the fifth verse, or perhaps of the seventh.” ¶ *He shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the LORD of hosts.* The Targum (T) has, “He shall build my city, and he shall direct the captives of my people go, not for a price or for money, saith the Lord of hosts.” The LXX (G) reads, “He shall rebuild this city of mine, and send back the captives of this my people, not for ransom nor reward, said the Lord of Hosts.” Instead of *reward*, the Peshitta (S) has *bribe*. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, for the second half, “Not for ransom, nor for presents, saith the Lord the God of hosts.” ¶ Cowles says: “The last clause means that Cyrus would send home those Jewish exiles without demanding any redemption price, doing it his own generous free will.” In this way Cyrus would also be a type of Christ, who invites us to come unto Him *without money and without price*.

14 Thus saith the LORD, The labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine: they shall come after thee; in chains they shall come over, and they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, [saying], Surely God [is] in thee; and [there is] none else, [there is] no God.

Thus saith the LORD, The labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine: The Targum (T) has, “men of traffic” instead of *men of stature*. The LXX (G) reads, “Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, That for which Egypt laboured and the traffick of the Ethiopians, and the Sabeans men of tall stature shall come over to thee.” The Peshitta (S), besides having the men pass, in what appears to imply a surrendering or joining in forces, has an additional clause, “they shall come after you” (Lamsa) / “And they shall be yours” (BPE). ¶ It is of ISAIAH 45:14–15 particularly, that Keith sees a type in Cyrus’s efforts and success, of the gathering of Israel in the last days:

“There is now made by the prophet, what is so frequent a transition from the events of the deliverance from Babylon to those of the final deliverance of Israel ... If it seems to any an irrational thing to understand literally what is foretold of kings being her nursing fathers, and of her eating the riches of the Gentiles, let it be remembered that this will be nothing more than she experienced first at the hands of the Egyptians, and again at the hands of Cyrus and the Persians; and the thing is not more improbable in regard to the future than to the past. The prophet having foretold the aid Israel would experience from the greatest of monarchs, when she would return from Babylon, foretells next how similar honour will be put upon her when she shall be gathered from all the nations among which she has been scattered.²² Some of the consequences of the visible interferences of God in her behalf will be, that the nations around will place their wealth and service at her disposal, honouring God in honouring her ... The different incidents of the verse are as distinct and positive as those of the preceding, and will doubtless receive as literal an accomplishment; and if they have not their exact counterpart in any past historical facts—and with scarcely an exception no attempt has been made by commentators so to apply them—it must be waited for in future events. And may it not be one purpose of placing prophecies, whose fulfilment has been the most literal and minute possible, side by side with others of which no literal fulfilment has yet been given, to teach that the accomplishment of the latter may be expected to be as minute as that of the former; and that if not supplied by past history, it will be by what is to come. Predictions corresponding with those in the text are made in regard to the nations of the earth generally, and all in connexion with the return and conversion of Israel: ‘The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces (margin ||, riches) of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. The multitude of camels shall cover thee: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the Lord’ (ISAIAH 50:5–6). And in more particular coincidence with the text, we read, ‘Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God’ (Psalm 68:31, ‘The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts’ (Psalm 72:10) ...)” ¶ *The Sabeans, men of stature.* Lowth explains: “That the Sabeans were of a more majestic appearance than common, is particularly remarked by Agatharchides, an ancient Greek historian quoted by Bochart, Phaleg. (2:26) ... So also the Septuagint understand it, rendering it ἀνδρες ὑψηλοί,

²² Ironside well says: “There are those who insist that all the prophecies connected with the return of Israel have been fulfilled already and, therefore, we are not to look for any future fulfillment of them, but God says in this very book of Isaiah, ‘I will set my hand a second time to recover my people,’ and that is what He has already begun to do, as they gather back as a people to their land.”

‘tall men.’ And the same phrase, **אֲנָשֵׁי מִדָּה**, is used for **persons** of extraordinary **stature** (Numbers 13:32²³, and 1 Chronicles 20:6:24” ¶ *They shall come after thee; in chains they shall come over, and they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, [saying], Surely God [is] in thee; and [there is] none else, [there is] no God.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “They shall walk according to thy command; they shall pass along in chains; and they shall bow down unto thee, and shall supplicate thee saying, Verily (Chaldee, ‘in truth’) God *is* in thee, and there is no God whatever besides Him.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And they shall be thy vassals and shall follow thee bound with chains. They will come over to thee and pay thee homage and pray to thee because God is in thee.” The Peshitta (Ⲯ) has, for the second half, “Shall make supplication to thee, saying, ‘There is no other God.’” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “They shall walk after thee, they shall go bound with manacles: and they shall worship thee, and shall make supplication to thee: only in thee is God, and there is no God besides thee.” ¶ Rabbi Rosenberg, leaning on Rashi, has: “The feminine form [of *over to you*] indicates that it refers to a city, all names of cities and lands being feminine.” Regarding this verse, Henderson also has: “The punctators²⁵, who are followed, among the moderns, by Michaelis, Döderlein, Dathe, Gesenius, Hitzig, and Scholz, apply it to Jerusalem, and rightly. The prophecy refers to the result of the Persian conquests in Egypt, &c., as regards the Jews and their religion. Favored as the people of God were by the victors, the inhabitants of these countries would be led to respect them, inquire into their peculiar polity, send them munificent presents, and, in great numbers, become proselytes to their religion.” Kay, gives support to the idea of Jerusalem by his comment that: “The phrase, *make supplication unto*, is the same that is used in 1 Kings 8:35, 42; where it is rendered, *pray toward*.” Nägelsbach likewise has: “And they shall fall,’ etc., does not say that they shall worship Israel, but that they shall worship in the direction of the land of Israel, for they know the Temple and the throne of the true God to be there (comp. Daniel 6:10).” The very idea that someone might prostrate themselves to any other than God the Eternal Father or His Son Jesus Christ is embarrassing to a disciple of Christ (Acts 14:13; 17:30; Revelation 19:10; 22:8–9). ¶ Alexander explains: “*they shall pass in chains*] Whether these are here considered as imposed by their conquerors, or by themselves in token of a voluntary submission, is a question which the words themselves leave undecided.” It seems to me and most exegetes that this will be a

²³ **אֲנָשֵׁי מִדָּה**

²⁴ **Man** of great **stature**, **אִישׁ מִדָּה**.

²⁵ That is, the Masoretes or the creators of the Masoretic text (ⲙⲓⲗ).

voluntary submission to the Lord, as we see also in ISAIAH 45:23.

15 Verily thou [art] a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Verily (Chaldee, ‘in truth’), thou art He, who dost make thy Shekinah to dwell in the highest heaven, o God of Israel, the Saviour!” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “There is indeed no God besides thee. For thou art God and we knew it. The God of Israel is a Saviour.” The BPE (Ⲯ) has, “Of a truth, thou art a shelter, O God of Israel, and his Savior.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “Verily thou art a hidden God, the God of Israel the saviour.” ¶ Young well says: “The profound truth is that God cannot be known by man apart from revelation, and His ways are hidden from the eyes of man until He Himself makes them clear.” Skinner suggests: “*a God that hidest thyself*] ... to the nations of the world Jehovah had hitherto been a hidden deity ... Now at length He is revealed in His true character, as a ‘Saviour’ (or **Deliverer**) (see on ISAIAH 43:3). Compare, however, ISAIAH 55:8 f.; Deuteronomy 29:29; Proverbs 25:2, for a sense in which Jehovah might be said to hide²⁶ Himself even from Israel.” The Lord hiding His face is the opposite of His pouring out knowledge²⁷ from heaven. ¶ Cowles writes: “*Thou art a God that hidest thyself!* How long the world has lain in darkness, ignorant of these glorious plans of God for its ultimate conversion!” Horsley suggests: “These words plainly allude to the concealment of the Divinity under the human form in the person of our Lord.” Keith beautifully has: “Similarly it is said, ‘I will wait upon the Lord who hideth his face from the house of Jacob; and I will look for him (ISAIAH 8:17); ‘In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee’ (ISAIAH 54:8).” ¶ At times we may feel all alone. In modern day the Prophet Joseph Smith poured out his heart to God likewise: “O God, where art thou? And where is the pavilion that covereth *thy hiding place*? How long shall thy hand be stayed, and thine eye, yea thy pure eye, behold from the eternal heavens the wrongs of thy people and of thy servants, and thine ear be penetrated with their cries? Yea, O Lord, how long shall they suffer these wrongs and unlawful oppressions, before thine heart shall be softened toward them, and thy bowels be moved with compassion toward them? O

²⁶ See also ISAIAH 45:19, Deuteronomy 32:20 (Kay). Also see Deuteronomy 31:16–18; 32:18, 20a.

²⁷ Deuteronomy 32:1–4 also represents part of the *blessings* associated with *Rain in Due Season*, including the pouring out knowledge as represented by *the dews from heaven*, the *rain drops* and the *small rain*.

Lord God Almighty, maker of heaven, earth, and seas, and of all things that in them are, and who controllst and subjectest the devil, and the dark and benighted dominion of Sheol—stretch forth thy hand; let thine eye pierce; let thy pavilion be taken up; *let thy hiding place no longer be covered*; let thine ear be inclined; let thine heart be softened, and thy bowels moved with compassion toward us” (D&C 121:1–4, emphasis added). To all of this the Savior answers: “My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment ...” (D&C 121:7, plus read the verses that follow). One of my all-time favorite scriptures is: “But behold, verily, verily, I say unto you that mine eyes are upon you. I am in your midst and ye cannot see me; But the day soon cometh that ye shall see me, and know that I am; for the veil of darkness shall soon be rent, and he that is not purified shall not abide the day” (D&C 38:7–8).

16 They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them: they shall go to confusion together [that are] makers of idols.

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, for the second half, “The worshippers of images shall walk in confusion.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “Let all that oppose him be ashamed and confounded and in shame let them march along. Dedicate yourselves to me, ye islands!” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓜ) has, for the second half, “The forgers of errors are gone together into confusion.” ¶ Rawlinson explains that the language used here is the “perfect of the prophetic certainty.” In this verse we note who will be ashamed and confounded while in the next verse we see who will *not be ashamed or confounded*. Alexander explains: “... the sentence closes with a general expression, which has already been referred to as a proof that the war in question is a spiritual war, and that the enemies to be subdued are not certain nations in themselves considered, but the heathen world, the vast mixed multitude who worship idols. These are described as the carvers or artificers of images ...” All those who reject the divinity of Christ and the inspiration of the Book of Mormon shall suffer shame.

17 [But] Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.

[But] Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: The Targum (Ⓣ) has it, “by the Word of the Lord,” rather than by the Lord. The LXX

(Ⓟ) reads, “The Lord hath saved Israel with an everlasting salvation.” The BPE (Ⓢ) is particularly interesting to LDS, “The salvation of Israel is in Yahweh, *the Savior of the worlds*; they shall not ever be ashamed nor confounded” (emphasis added). The Douay-Rheims (Ⓜ) has, “Israel is saved in the Lord with an eternal salvation.” ¶ Cowles, says, regarding ISAIAH 45:16–17: “Two grand facts are here put in antithesis: (1) That the makers of idols [but also note the words *all of them*, speaking of the potsherd of the earth, i.e., those who reject the Book of Mormon and the divinity of Christ—GB] shall be confounded and put to shame; (2) That the true Israel shall be saved with everlasting salvation and never be put to shame through disappointment by the failure of her God to fulfill his promises. These promises, now fresh in mind and deeply affecting, are in these words guaranteed against possible failure.” Young underscores that we are saved

in the Lord, בַּיהוָה. ¶ *Ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded*²⁸ *world without end*. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded for ever, yea, for ages after ages.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “They shall not be put to shame nor confounded any more forever.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓜ) has, “You shall not be confounded, and you shall not be ashamed for ever and ever.” ¶ In Lehi’s dream we encounter those who have partaken of the fruit of the Gospel and experience joy for a moment but then are ashamed when the mocking

²⁸ One of my frequent petitions to God is that a stamp of approval may be put upon my testimony as I teach by the Spirit. That is, that my testimony might be *justified* so that it may reach the hearts of others to strengthen them in the Lord, and so I might be an instrument in the hands of God. I have experienced the shame of speaking without the *stamp of approval* being given so my words have fallen flat on their face. I remember one particularly painful occasion, speaking to a group of non-members in Sonora, California, on the topic of avoiding defensiveness in communication. The Comforter had been strongly present before I made a comment that drove the Spirit away (it was my last presentation before I retired from the University of California, and I remember the situation with sorrow even now, years after). I believe that every participant in that classroom could tell the difference. Until I apologized and addressed the problem, I was not able to continue my presentation. I never take it for granted that I will speak by the Spirit and that the same will reach those whom I am addressing. Having experienced the difference between speaking my own words and teaching by the Spirit, I deeply hope and pray for the latter. Gladly, most of my experiences as a speaker either at work or at Church have been very upbeat. I will mention two. The first took place when I was the Branch President of the Modesto 12th Branch and we had a General Authority come and asked that a few of the Bishops / Branch Presidents would speak briefly on something that he had spoken on earlier. I chose the topic of “And as all have not faith, seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; *seek learning, even by study and also by faith*” (DyC 88:118, emphasis added). The other was a talk I gave in the San Javier Branch on September 2014, at the request of Branch President Jaime Cancino. I spoke with much power and after the meeting an investigator came up to me to share his positive feelings and tell me about his upcoming baptism.

fingers point at them. Barnes writes: “No man on a dying bed regrets that he is a friend of God.” ¶ As I think of the notion of not being confounded, I am transported to a beautiful scripture in the Doctrine and Covenants: “Therefore, verily I say unto you, lift up your voices unto this people; speak the thoughts that I shall put into your hearts, and *you shall not be confounded* before men; For it shall be given you in the very hour, yea, in the very moment, what ye shall say. But a commandment I give unto you, that ye shall declare whatsoever thing ye declare in my name, in solemnity of heart, in the spirit of meekness, in all things. And I give unto you this promise, that inasmuch as ye do this *the Holy Ghost shall be shed forth in bearing record unto all things whatsoever ye shall say*” (D&C 100:5–8, emphasis added). ¶ עַד-עוֹלָמִי עַד,

Worlds without end. עוֹלָם can mean eternity, as also

עַד. So we can have, *time and eternity; from eternity to eternity*. LHI has, *forever to eternity*. Kimhi in Slotki/Rosenberg has: “to the worlds of everlasting, to all eternity.” Gill has, “unto the ages of eternity.” Skinner writes: “*world without end*] More literally: **to all eternity**. The exact expression does not occur again.” But it does in the Doctrine and Covenants: “And they shall be servants of the Most High; but where God and Christ dwell they cannot come, worlds without end” (D&C 76:112).

18 For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I [am] the LORD; and [there is] none else.

The LXX (6) reads, “Thus saith the Lord who made the heaven, the same God who displayed the earth to view, and who, having made it, parcelled it out: he did not make it to be waste, but formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord and there is none else.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, for the second half, beginning with *he hath established it* “The very maker thereof: he did not create it in vain: he formed it to be inhabited. I am the Lord, and there is no other.” ¶ Not in *vain* (literally, פֶּהֶר, translated as *without form* in Genesis 1:2, can also mean *waste*, Gesenius—see also ISAIAH 45:19). In other words, God **organized** (בִּנְיָא root בִּנְיָא) the earth for a purpose. This earth will be transformed from its present telestial state, then through the terrestrial during the millennium and eventually into a celestial globe. Kay writes: “[God] had brought light and order and life out of the waste earth (Genesis 1:2 ff.); He would also

rescue the world out of the confusion caused by man’s sin, and make it the abode of ‘righteousness’ (2 Peter 3:13).” Alexander translates as: “... he established it—not in vain (or not to be empty) did he create it—to dwell in (or to be inhabited) he formed it.” ¶ *The God*. The Bishops, Leeser, ASV, NASB and WEB give a more literal translation of אֱלֹהִים: “**the God**.”

Cheyne interprets that as “the God of gods, the true God.”

19 I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.

The Targum (7) has, for the second half, “Seek me reverently in vain: I the Lord speak the truth, declaring upright things.” The LXX (6) reads, “I have not spoken in secret nor in an obscure part of the earth. I have not said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye a vain thing. I am THE I AM, the Lord, who speak righteousness and proclaim truth.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, for the second half, “I am the Lord that speak justice, that declare right things.” ¶ Birks has: “The God of Israel ... reveals himself, and always has revealed himself to His people, by clear declarations of His holy will ... The Creator of heaven and earth, and no vain idol, the God who has made known His will from the first by public messages, and no lying oracle, here invites the whole heathen world.” McFadyen has: “Though it is true that it is in Israel that Jehovah hides (and reveals) himself (ISAIAH 45:15), his words within Israel, spoken by his human representatives, the prophets, have not been obscure or mysterious, like the oracular utterances of the heathen, but clear, frank and true—**righteousness and right**, i.e., words which are right and true ...” Ibn Ezra writes: “Many refer this verse to the revelation on Sinai; but I refer it to those future events, of which the Lord informed the prophet, and which the prophet announced to Israel and all other nations.” The Book of Mormon has not been given in secret, but rather, has gone forth to *flood the earth*. ¶ *In a dark place of the earth*. Lowth explains: “In opposition to the manner in which the heathen oracles gave their answers, which were generally delivered from some deep and obscure cavern.” ¶ *Righteousness*. Wade has: “The Lord’s predictions and promises were true and consistent with the facts: hence they did not require secrecy, as being something that shunned the light. For *righteousness* in the sense of what is true ...” Cheyne suggests the following as a possibility: “The prophet, as it were, supplements the words of Moses, and declares that Jehovah’s *Torah*, or prophetic revelation, is not to be

obtained by any occult arts from Sheól or the Underworld. For the phraseology, compare Job 10:21, Psalm 88:12.—The best commentary on alternate renderings is Jeremiah 2:31, where Jehovah pathetically exclaims, ‘Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness?’ i.e., Have I not been the source of light and happiness to my people, and all temporal blessings’ (compare Jeremiah 2:6)? ¶ Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: “There are no private doctrines. All of the doctrines and practices of the Church are taught publicly. There are no secret doctrines, no private practices, no courses of conduct approved for a few only (ISAIAH 45:19; 48:16; 2 Nephi 20:16; D&C 1:34). The blessings of the gospel are for all men ... Everything that is taught and practiced in the Church is open to public inspection, or, at least, where temple ordinances are concerned, to the inspection and knowledge of everyone who qualifies himself by personal righteousness to enter the house of the Lord.”²⁹ ¶ In asking us to pray, God did not say to us to pray that we might seek Him in vain (literally, תהו). Rawlinson has: “God wills to be importuned. Not, however, for his own sake, but for ours. He would have us fervent and persistent in prayer, for the improvement of our characters, the increase of our faith by exercise, the intensifying of our sense of dependence upon him. Especially he would have us persistent in intercessory prayer, because we are then exercising, not only faith, but love; and by increasing in love, we advance in resemblance to himself” (see in Exodus 33:12). ¶ I cherish the Scripture that says: “And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew *that thou hearest me always*: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me” (John 11:41b–42, emphasis added). I would suggest that Christ’s prayer was answered *before* he left Bethabara (beyond the river Jordan), where He first heard of Lazarus illness and impending death, and before he departed for Bethany (a village near Jerusalem where Martha, Mary and Lazarus dwelt). Christ is our example of what we can expect when we pray to the Father in His name. I bear the most solemn witness that God *always hears* our prayers (please see ISAIAH 1:15). Please note I am not suggesting that God will give us what *we think is best* for us. God will never forget a righteous prayer: such will never be uttered in vain.

vv. 20–25. The escaped of the nations makes reference to scattered Israel. All shall confess the Christ. The prophet Joseph Smith quoted ISAIAH 45:22–24, as an

invitation for the whole world to turn to Christ and repent.³⁰

20 ¶ Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye [that are] escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god [that] cannot save.

Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye [that are] escaped of the nations: The LXX (6) reads, “Assemble yourselves together and come; consult together ye who escape from among the nations. They are devoid of knowledge, who carry the wood—their carved image; and who pray to gods which cannot save them.” Instead of *escaped*, the Peshitta (5) has *delivered* (Lamsa) / *liberated* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (8) has, for the second half, “Ye that are saved of the Gentiles.” ¶ *Escaped from the nations* (פְּלִיטֵי הַגּוֹיִם) is a reference to scattered Israel as a remnant and recovered back into the fold by conversion. Nägelsbach, speaking of the former days, of times related to the release of Judah from Babylon has: “the Israelites are called escaped of the nations, and he that helped them to this title can be no other than Cyrus.” In the last days there would be *escaped from the nations* in a much larger scale (see Deuteronomy 30:3–4). There seems to be an invitation to the former exiles as well as to the latter-day converts to put away idolatry—in any of its forms—and put their trust in God. ¶ *They have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god [that] cannot save.* The Targum (9) has, “They know nothing that carry about their wooden images, and *who* pray unto a god who shall not save.” Kimhi, in Slotki/Rosenberg has: “The idols are so helpless that they cannot even carry themselves. They must be carried by their worshippers to their temples, in their processions or into battle (compare 2 Samuel 5:21).” Skinner also: “That idols have to be carried is a sign of their powerlessness.” Rawlinson explains: “It was a practice of the idolatrous heathen to carry the images of their gods in processions, generally exposed to view upon their shoulders (Layard, *Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. 2. opp. p. 451), but sometimes partially concealed in shrines, or ‘arks’ (Rawlinson, *Herodotus*, vol. 2. pp. 100–101).” Alexander has: “The verse contains two indirect reflections on the idols: first, that they are wooden; then, that they are lifeless and dependent on their worshippers for locomotion.”

²⁹ McConkie, Elder Bruce R. *Sermons and Writings of Bruce R. McConkie*, p.234.

³⁰ Smith, Joseph. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*. Selected by Joseph Fielding Smith. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Press, 1938, p. 81.

21 Tell ye, and bring [them] near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? [who] hath told it from that time? [have] not I the LORD? and [there is] no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; [there is] none beside me.

Tell ye, and bring [them] near; yea, let them take counsel together: The LXX (6) reads, “If they will proclaim, let them draw near and know at once.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “Tell ye, and come, and consult together: who hath declared this from the beginning.” ¶ Alexander says: “According to Vitranga’s exposition, the idolaters are called upon to state their case, and to defend it.” McFadyen says: “Another scene like ISAIAH 41:1–4; 21–29; 43:9–13. The futility of the heathen gods is proved by their inability to predict the future.” ¶ *Who hath declared this from ancient time? [who] hath told it from that time? [have] not I the LORD?* The LXX (6) reads, “Who hath published these things from the beginning: then let them be announced to you.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “Who hath foretold this from that time?” ¶ Alexander has: “[The Lord] in the common form of an interrogation, [is] asking who, except himself, had given evidence of prescience by explicitly foretelling events still far distant ...” ¶ *And [there is] no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; [there is] none beside me.* The LXX (6) reads, “I am God and there is no other besides me; a just God and a saviour besides me there is none.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “Have not I the Lord, and there is no God else besides me? A just God and a saviour, there is none besides me.” ¶ A just God, or a righteous³¹ God (אֱלֹהִים צַדִּיק). Nägelsbach observes: “[The Lord] calls Himself Saviour in contrast with a god that cannot save, ISAIAH 45:20.”

22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I [am] God, and [there is] none else.

³¹ I was browsing through Geikie’s *The Life and Words of Christ* and came across this little pearl: “The word righteous receives an illustration of its meaning among the Jews, from the name by which the Zealots of the Law were known, from the time of John Hyrcanus. צַדִּיק (Tsaddouk) or צַדִּיקִי (Tsaddouki)—Sadducees—was the name given to the party who prided themselves on strict legality. It came from צַדִּיק (Tsaddik) ‘just, righteous’ applied both to God and men. —ISAIAH 45:21; Proverbs 29:7. Yet, besides legal exactness, it, in other cases, implied moral worth.” (p.562, 1896 Revised Edition).

The Targum (7) has, for the first half, “Turn unto my Word, and be ye saved, all that are at the ends of the earth.” The LXX (6) reads, “Turn to me and ye shall be saved, ye from the farthest part of the earth, I am God and there is none else.” The Peshitta (5) begins, “Draw near to me” (Lamsa) / “Come near unto me” (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “Be converted to me, and you shall be saved, all ye ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is no other.” The Masoretic text (11) has: פְּנוּ-אֵלַי, rendered *look unto me* while some translate it as *turn unto me*. TWOT, DHB, Holladay and Lexham Theological Workbook particularly give the more complete idea of *turn to face*. ¶ It is Christ’s loving invitation to look unto Him, or turn unto Him, that is, repent, and follow Him. Alexander explains: פְּנוּ does not correspond exactly to the English *look*, but denotes the act of *turning round* in order to look in a different direction.” The Savior invites: “Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not” (D&C 6:36). So also: “Behold, I am the law, and the light. Look unto me, and endure to the end, and ye shall live; for unto him that endureth to the end will I give eternal life” (3 Nephi 15:9). ¶ The invitation to turn unto Christ is to *all the ends of the earth*, כָּל-אַפְסֵי-אֲרֶץ, reminding us at once that in the last days, Israel would be gathered *from all the nations* [literally, מִכָּל-הָעַמִּים, *from all the peoples*], *whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee* (Deuteronomy 30:3b), even from “the *outmost parts of heaven*” בְּקִצֵּה הַשָּׁמַיִם (Deuteronomy 30:4b).

23 I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth [in] righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.

I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth [in] righteousness, and shall not return. The Targum (7) has, “I have sworn by my Word, the word is gone forth in righteousness from my presence, and shall not fail.” The LXX (6) reads, “By myself I swear (righteousness shall proceed from my mouth; my words shall not be reversed).” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “I have sworn by myself, the word of justice shall go out of my mouth, and shall not return.” ¶ Cheyne has: “Jehovah swears ‘by himself’ (‘because he could swear by no greater,’ Hebrews 6:13), when the accompanying revelation is especially grand, or especially hard to believe.” Skinner points out: “*By myself have I sworn*” Cf. Genesis 22:16; Jeremiah 22:5; and see Hebrews 6:13. The form of Jehovah’s oath by Himself is given in ISAIAH 49:18, ‘as I live, saith Jehovah.’” Beale and Carson give additional references in which the Lord

swears or pronounces an oath in the Old Testament, including: “Exodus 32:13; Jeremiah 49:13; Ezekiel 20:5; Amos 6:8; cf. Heb. 6:13; see Chilton 1987: 264.” ¶ Benson says: “This plainly points us to the Messiah, whose very name is the *Lord our righteousness*, Jeremiah 23:6; and whose great business it was to bring in *everlasting righteousness*, Daniel 9:24; and *who of God is made unto us righteousness*, 1 Corinthians 1:30.” ¶ In the scripture before us, “The word is gone out of my mouth [in] righteousness, and shall not return” can benefit from the missing ellipsis *unfulfilled*. This is similar to the “... and did let none of his words fall to the ground [unfulfilled]” (1 Samuel 3:19) “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” (ISAIAH 55:11), and “For as I, the Lord God, liveth, even so my words cannot *return void*, for as they go forth out of my mouth they must be fulfilled” (Moses 4:30). ¶ Furthermore, this seems to have reference to the *word* gone out in righteousness spoken about in ISAIAH 45:8, regarding the First Vision and the Book of Mormon. In no case is the word clearer, the Gospel purer, than in the Book of Mormon. In a day when so many are attempting to sow seeds of doubt on the divinity of Christ—on the Sonship of Christ—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Book of Mormon stand firm, as a beacon of light, in declaring these truths: “And we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins” (2 Nephi 25:26). ¶ Elder Marion G. Romney, speaking of the Book of Mormon, testified: “From almost every page of the book, there will come to them a moving testimony that Jesus is indeed the Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Redeemer and Savior. This witness alone will be a sustaining anchor in every storm. In the Book of Mormon, they will find the plainest explanation of Christ’s divine mission and atonement to be found anywhere in sacred writ.”³² ¶ *That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear*. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “That before me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “That to me every knee shall bow and every tongue shall swear.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “For every knee shall be bowed to me, and every tongue shall swear.” ¶ Ibn Ezra well suggests: “These things here foretold I shall do, till ‘unto me every knee shall bow’ and ‘every tongue shall swear’ to belong to me. לִי ‘unto me’ must be repeated before תשבע ‘shall swear;’ it is an ellipsis, such as is

frequently met with.” Cowles has: “Paul quotes this passage twice, first applying it (Romans 14:11) to the whole world standing before Christ’s judgment seat and recognizing his infinite supremacy there; and again (Philippians 2:9–11) to Christ’s glorious exaltation by the Father to the throne of the universe, with perhaps a tacit reference to the same judgment seat.” Wordsworth, leaning on the same scriptures, explains that Paul’s words are a testimony of Jesus Christ’s divinity. ¶ For years it has been my contention that the day will come when *every* knee shall bow and tongue confess *gladly, without compulsion*.³³ I would suggest that this will be so regardless of which kingdom of glory³⁴ people are assigned to, for each person will need to lean on the atonement of our Savior for that appointment. Every single person who is saved in any of the kingdoms of glory—at some point—will be moved to *overflowing tears of gratitude and praise*, תְּלַלְלוּ.

24 Surely, shall [one] say, in the LORD have I righteousness[✓] and strength: [✓] [even] to him shall [men] come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed.

✓ righteousness

✓ ✓ or, Surely he shall say of me, In the LORD is all righteousness and strength

Surely, shall [one] say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Surely, He has promised to bring me righteousness and strength by the Word of the Lord.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “With respect to God, saying, Righteousness and glory shall come to him.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has, “And they shall say, In Yahweh is righteousness.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “Therefore shall he say: In the Lord are my justices and empire.” ¶ *Righteousness*. Henderson explains, “צְדָקוֹת, *righteousness*, is the plural of excellence or eminence; signifying *the most distinguished righteousness*.” Horsley, leaning on Lowth (and perhaps also on the Targum ⲧ) suggests: “... Surely to Jehovah it belongeth to speak truth.” And

³³ So also Delitzsch “This bending of the knee, this confession as an oath of homage, will be no forced one.”

³⁴ Nyman writes: “The prophet Abinadi gave an indication of the time when this prophecy will be fulfilled (see Mosiah 16:1–4), and his text was used by President Joseph Fielding Smith to show that those who ‘bow’ and ‘confess’ are not [only] celestial beings who will receive exaltation, but primarily telestial beings who will have to acknowledge the Savior and admit that his judgments are just (see DS, 2:30–31). The Doctrine and Covenants also uses similar language in reference to the telestial beings (see D&C 76:110; compare 88:104).” Parry, Parry and Peterson also suggest Romans 14:10–12; Mosiah 27:31; and D&C 76:111.

³² Romney, Elder Marion G. Romney. “Drink Deeply from the Divine Fountain,” *Conference Report*, April 1960, pp. 110–113.

may we enlarge these comments, to speak *additional truth, modern-day revelation* beyond that which is preserved for us in our beloved Bible. ¶ [Even] to him shall [men] come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “In His Word they shall offer praise, and all the nations that are incensed (or, ‘have waged war’) against His people shall be ashamed.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And all that make distinctions among them shall be ashamed.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has, “Even to him shall mighty men come (Lamsa) / “Even the powerful shall come unto him” (BPE) and all who *reproach* (Lamsa) / *envy* (BPE) thee shall be ashamed.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲫ) has, “They shall come to him, and all that resist him shall be confounded.” ¶ We return to the theme of who will be *ashamed*, as we saw in ISAIAH 45:16.

25 In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “In the Word of the Lord all the seed of Israel shall be justified and glorified.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “On account of the Lord they shall be acquitted; and in God all the seed of Israel will glory.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲫ) has, *and praised* instead of *and shall glory*. ¶ Baltzer well says, in explaining that they will more literally “‘praise’ (הַלְלָהוּ), that is, ‘the whole of Israel’s seed’ is to raise the ‘Hallelujah.’” That is, הַלְלָהוּ, *praise Yah*, praise the Lord. ¶ Both JUSTIFICATION and SANCTIFICATION have many elements in common and are part of the same process of helping us come unto Christ and be perfected in Him. Both require the atoning sacrifice of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Son of God. And both require that His grace be imparted upon us. Both are on-going processes rather than a single event—although there appears to be a time, in the future, when both justification and sanctification are imparted in a fuller and more complete way upon a person who has been faithful and endured to the end. *Justification* seems to be related to specific human acts revolving around what we do, say and think. For instance, anything we do, if we do it in righteousness—or often even with a righteous desire which falls short of perfect righteousness—through God’s tender mercies and loving kindness may be justified by the Holy Ghost. This may be any brief and finite action we take, such as

giving a talk at Church, bearing a testimony, forgiving someone who has hurt us, speaking a word in kindness, feeding the poor, or showing mercy. We often feel the strong presence of the Spirit at those times, confirming that our offering before the Lord has been accepted. For instance, if we share a testimony humbly and teach by the Spirit “the Holy Ghost shall be shed forth in bearing record unto all things whatsoever ye shall say” (D&C 100:8b). That all includes the person who has spoken so that “... he that preacheth and he that receiveth, understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together” (D&C 50:22b). Longer efforts may, in the same way, be justified or be accepted by the Lord, such as serving a mission, magnifying a Church calling, being faithful in our employment, or having a temple sealing ratified by the Holy Spirit of Promise. Of course, we are not aware of all the positive effects of our actions in this life. To summarize, then, it is what we do, together with the eternal effects of the atonement of Christ—wherein the imperfection in our offering is coupled with the perfection in His Holy offering—that brings about justification, or the acceptance of this offering we brought to the Lord. While justification has to do with a stamp of approval—or the acceptance of our offering before the Lord—*sanctification* appears to be the long process wherein we are transformed into a different, holier being. Wherein we begin to become like the person we hope to someday be. Like justification, we can never do this on our own merits. Rather, it is through the grace of Christ as the result of His holy expiatory sacrifice, after we “have expended [our] own best efforts” (Grace, LDS Bible Dictionary), that we are slowly changed or sanctified that we may in time enter into the presence of the Father. Satan attempts to discourage our efforts by pointing out our weaknesses. Yet Christ already knows these and comforts and reassures us. The Holy One of Israel is continually inviting us to turn unto Him—“look unto me” He beckons (ISAIAH 45:22)—and put our trust in Him and become His disciples. As with justification, we also have manifestations of the spirit—such as a great joy and feelings of gratitude—these help us understand that indeed this transformation is gradually taking place.

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Isaiah 46

A contrast is made between idols—that have to be carried around on the shoulders of men or on the backs of animals—and the Lord. Our Savior is capable of uplifting and carrying His children. In moments of need, we need to lean on God rather than on man or on idols. God sees the end from the beginning and has sent prophets to guide us back. Fulfillment of past prophecies shows that God will succor us in the future. As Cyrus was used to rescue Israel as a nation from the Babylonian conquest; so now man needs to look unto Christ. In the last days, through the First Vision and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, men’s hearts will be softened and turned unto the Lord so He can save us. It is the Lord who invites us to follow Him.

vv. 1–4. The Babylonian gods have to be carried around by their devotees, and will be powerless to resist being carried away by the conquering Persians. They have no locomotive power of themselves. In contrast, the God of Israel not only has power to move, but those who come unto Christ will also be supported by Him.

1 ¶ BEL boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle: your carriages [were] heavy laden; [they are] a burden to the weary [beast].

BEL boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle: The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “Bel is bowed down, Nebo is cut down. Their images are *in* the likeness of serpents and beasts.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Bel is fallen; Nabo is broken to pieces, Their graven images were a load for wild beasts and cattle.” The Peshitta (Ⓔ) has something like, “Bel has fallen, Nebo has been overthrown; their carved images were loaded as burdens upon beasts.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, for the first half, “Bel is broken, Nebo is destroyed.” ¶ Cowles explains that Nebo was derided, etymologically, from “a word [that] means a prophet or interpreter.” Barnes has: “Perhaps in the language [*Bel has fallen*] there is allusion to the fact that Dagon fell before the ark of God (1 Samuel 5:2, 3, 7). The sense is, that even the object of worship—that which was regarded as the most sacred among the Chaldeans—would be removed ... *Their idols were upon the beasts.* That is, they are laid upon the beasts to be borne away in triumph. It was customary for conquerors to carry away all that was splendid and valuable to grace their triumph on their return; and nothing would be a more certain indication of victory, or a more splendid accompaniment to a triumph, than the gods whom the vanquished nations had adored. Thus in Jeremiah 48:7b, it is said, ‘And Cheraosh shall go forth into captivity,

with his priests and his princes together.’ (compare with Jeremiah 49:3, margin ¶¹.) What idols where once “carried by priests and nobles in solemn procession,” explains Cheyne, were now “packed up as a load” on the backs of beasts. ¶ Jennings has: “Bel! Who is Bel? What do we care about a piece of stone to which they may have attached the name ‘Bel.’ But behind that ‘Bel’ is he who was created the fairest of all the principalities and powers, to whom was given the name that he has long lost, ‘Shining one, star of the morning’ (Ephesians 6), and we—even you and I—wrestle not against human Babylonian or Assyrian potentates, but against Bel, Nebo, and all their lords, the spirit-powers that were behind those earthly empires ... [even Satan, who will be bound and cast out, see Revelation 20:2–3].” ¶ *Boweth down and stoopeth.* Baltzer notes that **כָּרַע** is used in the previous chapter in *every knee shall bend*, **כָּל-בָּרָךְ יִכָּרַע** (ISAIAH 45:23). Alexander explains: “כָּרַע is the common term for stooping, bowing, especially in death (Judges 5:27; 2 Kings 9:24).” Gill, leaning on Rashi, explains that these idols soil themselves in terror, without being able to reach the stool on time. ¶ *Your carriages [were] heavy laden; [they are] a burden to the weary [beast].* The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “The burdens of your idols shall be heavy upon those who carry them; because they be exhausted.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “You are carrying them bound like a burden on the weary, fainty, and hungry.” The Peshitta (Ⓔ) has something like, “Yea, upon *weary* (Lamsa) / *hungry* (BPE) beasts and *cattle* (Lamsa) / *animals* (BPE).” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “Your burdens of heavy weight even unto weariness.” ¶ Baltzer associates this burden with the idea of a *prophetic burden* (as we saw in ISAIAH 13:1; 17:1; 19:1; 21:1, etc.), and a load of heaviness as we see here: “The term ‘burden’ (**מִשָּׁא**) also shows that form and content cannot be divided in

¹ That is, instead of *king*, Melcom (or Milcom) de idol of the Ammonites. Leeser uses the *margin* ¶ in his translation: “for Malcolm shall go into exile, *with* his priest and his princes together.”

this text. Derived from the root נשא, ‘carry, lift,’ the word means especially the ‘load’ that has to be carried. But it can also be a technical term for the prophetic oracle (Jeremiah 23:33–40 is already a play on this ambiguity) ... the text can also be viewed as a prophetic oracle—as “burden” (משא) in this sense—about the downfall of Babylon, or more precisely as the fulfillment of this oracle, for the downfall is now taking place ... What is worth noting for the present ... text is that ‘the burden’ (משא) can be seen, and is therefore part of a visionary action.” Finally, Baltzer connects these words in ISAIAH 46 to those of an earlier prophecy: “ISAIAH 21 is of interest, since it is also a ‘burden’ (משא, ISAIAH 21:1) about the fall of Babylon. According to ISAIAH 21:6–7, a watchman is to be posted to await a ‘caravan of pack animals’—horses, donkeys, and camels. The caravan comes and the message is announced: ‘Fallen, fallen is Babylon, and all the images of her gods lie shattered on the ground’ (ISAIAH 21:9). For the person who was familiar with an oracle of this kind, the train of pack animals would already be an indication of Babylon’s fall, which is otherwise not explicitly mentioned.” ¶ Cowles explains: “Their images are packed upon beasts of burden. ‘Your carriages,’ are not vehicles, but the load itself, in the ancient and nearly obsolete sense of this word; the same which we find (1 Samuel 17:22) where David is said to have ‘left his carriage,’ i.e., his burden, the provisions borne by him to his brethren.—Your load is loaded, i.e., placed on the back of the animals, a burden to the weary beasts.—The prophet in keen sarcasm expresses his pity for the poor animals, doomed to stagger under such a load!” McFadyen, leaning of George Adam Smith, says: “The idea is that the gods could not save their own idols from the fate of captivity; they are simply ‘so much dead weight for weary beasts’ (G. A. Smith).”

2 They stoop, they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden, but themselves[✓] are gone into captivity.

✓ their soul

They stoop, they bow down together. The Targum (ܬ) has, “They are cut off, yea, they are altogether cut to pieces.” The LXX (ϸ) reads, “Who are all without strength and unable to escape from battle.” The Peshitta (ܫ) has something like, “They were overthrown, and together they have fallen down.” The Douay-Rheims (ṽ) has, “They are consumed, and are broken together.” ¶ Cowles explains: “These poor beasts sink down under their burden, quite unable to carry it through and deliver it at the desired point.—The verbs rendered, ‘stoop’ and ‘bow down,’ are the same which in ISAIAH 46:1 are

used of Bel and Nebo, the thought being that the beasts are borne down to the earth very much as those gods were brought down by the heavy hand of God’s providential judgments. The last clause of the verse means that the gods themselves as distinct from their images, were borne away into captivity, powerless to resist the Almighty or even to render any aid to the poor beasts, staggering under their crushing load. The whole scene is intensely graphic and keen in its caustic irony. The full force of it will not be seen till we take into view the current notions of the age in respect to these gods as the tutelary defenders of their worshippers, and consequently as themselves going into captivity with the nation whom they should have saved if they could—with whose fortunes therefore their own were knit together.” ¶ *They could not deliver the burden, but themselves are gone into captivity.* The Targum (ܬ) has, “And they were not able to deliver them that carried them; and their worshippers are gone into captivity.” The LXX (ϸ) reads, “And as for them, they are carried away captives!” The Peshitta (ܫ) has something like, “They were not able to rescue those who carried them, but rather they themselves are gone into captivity.” The Douay-Rheims (ṽ) has, for the first clause, “They could not save him that carried them.” ¶ *But their soul* (i.e., spirit) נפשם, see margin ¶. Calvin has: “*And their soul hath gone into captivity.* This is a Hebrew mode of expression, by which he ridicules those gods which have neither ‘soul’ nor understanding. He speaks ironically, therefore, against useless and dumb idols, when he says that they shall be carried into captivity along with their soul.” Birks has: [This] is an address to the men of Babylon, and describes these same images or idols, as wont to be carried by their votaries in solemn procession; but now consigned with ignominy by the Persian conquerors to beasts of burden, to be carried away as the spoil of conquest.”²

² An amusing story is told in *The Legends of the Jews* by Rabbi Louis Ginzberg, who synthesized much of the rabbinic literature. In it we learn how little by little Abraham became disenchanted with the idols that Terah, his father, made and worshiped. One day Abraham was sent to sell idols by Terah. When three of the five idols broke after his mule was frightened by a camel, Abraham began to doubt the power of idols. Next, Abraham asked one of the idols, Barisat, to keep a fire burning for him, while he had to leave for a moment. Upon returning, Abraham found Barisat had been burnt. On another occasion Abraham decided to feed his father’s gods, “but when Abraham brought the offering to the gods, he saw that they had no voice, no hearing, no motion, and not one of them stretched forth his hand to eat.” At first Abraham blamed himself for the idols’ lack of appetite but soon realized they were man-made vanities: “Abraham then took a hatchet in his hand, and broke all his father’s gods, and when he had done breaking them he placed the hatchet in the hand of the biggest god among them all, and he went out. Terah, having heard the crash of the hatchet on the stone, ran to the room of the idols, and he reached it at the moment when Abraham was leaving it, and when he saw what had happened, he hastened after Abraham, and he said to him, ‘What is this mischief thou hast done to my gods?’ Abraham

3 Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne [by me] from the belly, which are carried from the womb:

Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel. The LXX (⚡) reads, “Hearken to me house of Jacob and all ye remnant of Israel.” ¶ Delitzsch has: “The Assyrian exile was earlier than the Babylonian, and had already naturalized the greater part of the exiles in a heathen land, and robbed them of their natural character, so that there was only a remnant left by whom there was any hope that the prophet’s message would be received.” While Judah seems to be the original audience, it is likely that the latter-day *remnants* of both Ephraim and Judah were also intended.³ Nägelsbach well says: “This expression (*‘remnant,’ שְׁאֵרִית*) is an honorable title designating the quintessence of the whole nation, without distinction of tribe, that remains after all siftings ... the thought is expressed that we find e. g., Jeremiah 3:14⁴: that no one belonging to the *‘remnant,’* even though he

answered: ‘I set savory meat before them, and when I came nigh unto them, that they might eat, they all stretched out their hands to take of the meat, before the big one had put forth his hand to eat. This one, enraged against them on account of their behavior, took the hatchet and broke them all, and, behold, the hatchet is yet in his hands, as thou mayest see.’ Then Terah turned in wrath upon Abraham, and he said ‘Thou speakest lies unto me! Is there spirit, soul, or power in these gods to do all thou hast told me? Are they not wood and stone? and have I not myself made them? It is thou that didst place the hatchet in the hand of the big god, and thou sayest he smote them all.’ Abraham answered his father, and said: ‘How, then, canst thou serve these idols in whom there is no power to do anything? Can these idols in which thou trustest deliver thee? Can they hear thy prayers when thou callest upon them?’” Abraham then finished off the largest idol with the hatchet and ran away after admonishing his father to change his ways. Ginzberg, Rabbi Louis. *The Legends of the Jews*. Philadelphia, The Jewish Publication Society, 1913, pp. 1:209–215. Also see, Book of Jasher.

³ So also Whitehouse: “To whom do the parallel expressions house of Jacob and remnant of the house of Israel refer? It is quite reasonable to suppose that the Northern Israelites of the Ephraimite kingdom, both those who were deported by Sargon as well as those who still resided in Palestine, are referred to. That they were not forgotten by Hebrew prophets ... is clearly shown by the beautiful poem of Jeremiah 31:15–20 ... and Ezekiel 37:15–28 (the two sticks united). It is, however, certain that Judah is also included, since ‘Israel’ (as well as ‘Jacob’) is constantly used in [ISAIAH 40 ff.] as a designation of the Jewish race ... Similarly Yahweh is called ‘Holy One of Israel’ as the national deity of the entire Hebrew race.” Well, certainly, when we hear of deliverance (ISAIAH 46:4) we know that the gathering of Israel, both Ephraim (Northern tribes) and Judah (Southern tribes) are meant.

⁴ “Turn [שׁוּבוּ], O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion” (Jeremiah 3:14). Spanish versions often using the term ‘Convertíos’ or *be converted* for שׁוּבוּ.

may dwell most concealed and solitary, will be forgotten.” Barnes has: “The utter vanity of the idols had been set before [Israel]; and in view of that, God now addresses his own people, and entreats them to put their trust in him. The address he commences with words of great tenderness and endearment, designed to lead them to confide in him as their Father⁵ and friend.” ¶ *Which are borne [by me] from the belly, which are carried from the womb:* The Targum (⚡) has, “Who are beloved above all nations, yea, beloved above all kingdoms.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “Who have been carried from the womb, and instructed from childhood to old age.” The Peshitta (⚡) eliminates the ellipsis, *by me*, but the meaning remains the same. The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, “Who are carried by my bowels, are borne up by my womb.” ¶ As a nation, Cowles notes: “He had borne them *from their birth*; or, in other words, from the time when he first called Abraham, from the midst of his idolatrous connections, to be his servant; which event was, as it were, the *birth* of the people of Israel.” Birks remarks: “There is here a striking contrast between the idols, borne aloft by their votaries, or carried helplessly away; and the true God, who bears and sustains His people from infancy to old age, and in hours of sickness and sorrow.” Barnes points us to Deuteronomy 1:31: “And in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that the LORD thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place.” And not only are we carried and upheld physically, but also through the atonement, the Lord bears the weight of our sins if we will turn unto Him. President N. Eldon Tanner testified: “No one can state too plainly or emphasize too strongly this eternal truth that only through the atonement of Christ can mankind be saved.”⁶

4 And [even] to [your] old age I [am] he; and [even] to hoar hairs will I carry [you]: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver [you].

And [even] to [your] old age I [am] he; and [even] to hoar hairs will I carry [you]: The Targum (⚡) has, “Even unto eternity I am He, and my Word shall endure for ages after ages⁷.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “I am the self-existent, even till you grow old, I am, I sustain you.” Instead of *carry [you]*, the Peshitta (⚡) has *endure*. The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, “Even to your old age I am the

⁵ See “The Father and the Son: A Doctrinal Exposition of the First Presidency and the Twelve,” 30 June 1916. In *MFP* 5:26–34. Salt Lake City, 1971.

⁶ President N. Eldon Tanner, “Where Art Thou?” *Ensign*, December 1971, p. 32.

⁷ Reminds us of ISAIAH 40:8.

same, and to your grey hairs I will carry you.” ¶ *Hoar hairs* means *white hair*, or old age. Whitehouse writes: “The old age and the ‘grey hairs’ of Israel do not refer to the present but to the distant future.” Keith writes: “He had carried Israel in her infancy, and in her old age he would not forsake her. Similar language, implying affection and care, is employed in other places: ‘He bare them and carried them all the days of old’ (ISAIAH 63:9b); ‘I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms’ (Hosea 11:3a); ‘As the eagle fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him’ (Deuteronomy 32:11–12a). Babylon had to burden herself with her gods; but the Lord burdened himself with Israel. From the expression ‘the remnant of the house of Israel,’ and the allusion to old age and hoary hairs, it appears that the period of Israel’s history specially intended is the same as in previous chapters, viz., that connected with their return to their country and their God [i.e., the gathering of Israel—GB].” ¶ *I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver [you]*. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “It is I who have created all men, and I have scattered them among the nations, yea, I will forgive their sin (literally, ‘debts’), and I will pardon.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “I made you and I will bear with you; I will lift you up and I will save you.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “I have made you, and I will bear: I will carry and will save.” ¶ We again see a reference here to the atonement of Jesus Christ. Horsley explains: “[What] I have made, I will carry; and [what] I take upon my shoulders [אֶסְבֵּל] I will carry off safe.”

vv. 5–13. The gods are made with expensive materials, all of which are provided by nature. Idols are carried on the shoulders of men but are incapable of hearing the cries and petitions of men. In moments of fear, worry and doubt we need to look to the Lord. God is incomparably great and we should take comfort on what He has done for man from the earliest history. God has a plan and has declared, through His prophets, things to come. We again note the strong allusions to the First Vision and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. Just as God used Cyrus to bring temporal salvation to Israel, in the last days He will use the Book of Mormon to bring Israel unto Christ and be saved. The hard of heart are invited to look unto Christ and live.

5 ¶ To whom will ye liken me, and make [me] equal, and compare me, that we may be like?

The Targum (ⲧ) has, for the last clause, “And compare me in truth?” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “To what have you

likened me?” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, for the last clause, “And made me like?” ¶ See also, ISAIAH 40:18. In the Pearl of Great Price we read one of my favorite scriptures: “And the Lord said unto me: These two facts do exist, that there are two spirits, one being more intelligent than the other; there shall be another more intelligent than they; I am the Lord thy God, I am more intelligent than they all” (Abraham 3:19). ¶ And yet idol worshipers were putting Jehovah as just one more god among many, thus the incredulous question on the part of the Lord, “and make me equal?” Nothing, of course, could be so absurd.

6 They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, [and] hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship.

They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, [and] hire a goldsmith. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Behold, the people collect gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Look! Contrive, ye wanderers! Collecting gold from a bag, and silver by weight they will put it in a balance; and having hired a goldsmith.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲥ) has something like, “To those who *go astray* (Lamsa) / *have deviated* (BPE), who take out gold from their bags and weigh silver in the balance and pay a goldsmith.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “You that contribute gold out of the bag, and weigh out silver in the scales: and hire a goldsmith.” ¶ Keith has: “It is in language of keen satire that it is said, the material of the idol was before shut up in a bag; it is put into a balance and weighed; it is given into the hands of a workman, and then the thing is worshipped.” ¶ Birks has: “Expense alone is in religion no pledge at all of a reasonable or acceptable service. These idols of Babylon were very costly and very worthless.” ¶ *And he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, for the last clause, “They do it reverence (literally, ‘they make themselves servile’).” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “They made handiworks and bowing themselves down they will worship them.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “To make a god: and they fall down and worship.” Our minds turn, once again, to Jeremiah 9:23–24, and we may profitably ask in our lives: Do we tend to glory / trust in man’s *wisdom, might / strength, or riches*? Or, do we glory and put our trust in the Lord? The Lord will carry us and sustain us as we put our trust in Him. When fear comes upon us, do we lose our resolve to put our trust in the Lord? In ISAIAH 46:8, the Lord asks us to be brave. Let us not bend the knee except to the Lord.

7 They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove: yea, [one] shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble.

They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth. The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “They carry it on the shoulder and move on; but if they set it in its place, there it remaineth.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) does not have the clause, *and he standeth*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, for the first half, “They bear him on their shoulders and carry him.” ¶ Gill writes: “That is, the idol; men carry him upon their shoulders in procession, and expose him to the view and veneration of the people.” Gill has: “The idol being set in his place stands fast, being nailed; he stands upright as a palm tree, and can never stir from the place where he is, to help any of his worshippers, in whatsoever distress they may be; nor can he get out of the way of any danger to which he may be exposed; if the temple or house, in which he is, is on fire, or overflowed with water, or broke into by thieves, he cannot move out of his place, and escape the danger; a fine deity to be worshipped indeed! [And] as Baal’s priests and worshippers cried to him, but no voice was heard, nor answer returned (1 Kings 18:26, 29), for though they have ears, they hear not, and mouths, yet they speak not (Psalm 115:5–6) [and furthermore] the idol cannot save the idolatrous worshipper out of his distress, which has caused him to cry unto him.” ¶ *From his place shall he not remove: yea, [one] shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble.* The Targum (Ⲛ) has, “It is not possible for him to move from his place; yea, one supplicates to him; but he does not answer him, nor save him out of his distress.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “It cannot move itself. And if any one cry to it, it cannot hear, nor can it save him from evils.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “And shall not stir out of his place. Yea, when they shall cry also unto him, he shall not hear: he shall not save them from tribulation.” ¶ Idols cannot move of their own volition, nor can they hear the pleas of the helpless. Today, individuals are less likely to fall down before idols of wood and stone, and are more likely to put their trust in philosophical idolatry.

8 Remember this, and shew yourselves men: bring [it] again to mind, O ye transgressors.

The Targum (Ⲛ) has, “Remember this, and be ye strong; and bear *it* in mind, O rebels!” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Remember these things and groan; reform, ye who have been led astray.” For the first half, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has, “Remember these things and discern.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “Remember this, and be ashamed: return, ye transgressors, to the heart.” ¶ See Rabbi Rosenberg here, explaining that some follow the idea of *man*, מַן; others, of *fire*, אֵשׁ thus *shame*. Similarly, a number of exegetes (e.g., Calvin, Cheyne and several others) suggest that Isaiah is predicting that the apostates will be *ashamed* if they do not repent. So Bishops Bible, “Consider this well, and be ashamed: go into your owne selues”; Geneva Bible, “Remember this, and be ashamed: bring it againe to minde, O you transgressors” as well as a number of more modern versions. Birks writes: “All superstition and idol worship is mental cowardice, while true faith and right worship are a manly and reasonable thing.” ¶ Alexander has: “... the proof just given of the impotence of idols, the worshippers of which, whether Jews or Gentiles, are addressed in this verse as *apostates* [פֹּשְׁעִים] or rebels against God.” Kay has: “*Remember this*”—this impotence of the idol-gods; of which you were warned from the beginning; *and shew yourselves men* (or ‘stand firm,’ Vulgate, ‘fundamini’); *bring it back to mind*...” One of the roles of the Holy Ghost is to help us remember.

9 Remember the former things of old: for I [am] God, and [there is] none else; [I am] God, and [there is] none like me,

The Targum (Ⲛ) has, for the last half, “And there is no god whatever beside me.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Return with the heart and remember the things of old, that I am God and there is none besides me.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “Remember the former age, for I am God, and there is no God beside, neither is there the like to me.” Birks says, continuing with his comments about cowardice: “Hope for the future, even more than memories of the past, is the duty and privilege of the faithful.” In other words, we need to remember what the Lord has done for us in the past; remember how He succored us—and so refuse to yield to fear. As the Lord has never abandoned us in the past, there is no reason to believe He will do so in the future. Living with such confidence is a life-long pursuit. We learn this lesson as we increase our faith and dependence on the Lord.

10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times [the things] that

are not [yet] done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times [the things] that are not [yet] done. The LXX (6) reads, “Who can declare events before they happen, as if they were already accomplished.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “Who shew from the beginning the things that shall be at last, and from ancient times the things that as yet are not done.” ¶ Following with the theme of reassurances, the Lord knows the end from the beginning, and once having obtained reassurances from him we must lean on them in faith. ¶ Ibn Ezra has: “*Declaring the end from the beginning*, that is, declaring the event before it happens.” I never tire of reading the words of Elder LeGrand Richards, who bore one of the strongest, most enthusiastic testimonies of the restoration of the Gospel and of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. There are no less than a dozen instances in which Elder Richards quoted this verse in General Conference. I reproduce only a few thoughts: “Well, if prophecy is the most sure way of knowing what is to happen—and Isaiah said that the Lord had declared the end from the beginning it’s all there when we understand it ... We are advised to study the scriptures, the older scriptures and the modern scriptures, to see what the prophets have said. Remember the words of Peter, that we have a more sure word of prophecy and that we do well to take heed. I want to bear you my testimony here that this is the work of God the Eternal Father⁸ ... As far as my experience goes in studying the scriptures, Joseph Smith has given us more revealed truth than any prophet who has ever lived upon the face of this earth except the Savior of the world. I thank the Lord for this marvelous truth. This helps us to understand the words of Isaiah when he said: ‘Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men’ (ISAIAH 29:13) ... I have talked to ministers for hours and only received one question from them, because I was explaining things to them out of God’s holy book, the Bible, that they had never understood before in their lives. I tell you, brothers and sisters, we have that marvelous work and a wonder! You would think that if the Lord raised up a prophet and a messenger to prepare the way for his coming, the first thing he would want that messenger to do would be to correct the false impressions in the world with regard to the personality of God the Father and his Son Jesus

Christ. For at that time all churches taught that they were three in one, without body, without parts, and without passions. Moses knew that such a condition would prevail, for when he led the children of Israel into the promised land, he told them that ‘there ye shall serve gods, the work of men’s hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell’ (Deuteronomy 4:28⁹). Just think how literally the very words of Moses spoken over 3,000 years ago are fulfilled in the doctrine that was proclaimed in all the Christian churches all over this world at the time that Joseph Smith had his marvelous vision. But Moses didn’t leave it at that. He said: ‘But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice’ (Deuteronomy 4:29–30). And we live in the latter days. Thank God we have found him through the raising up of this prophet. When the Father and his Son Jesus Christ revealed themselves unto him so that he understood what the Godhead really was, the next question that Joseph had was to know which of all the churches he should join. And who in the heavens above and on the earth beneath had a better right to pronounce judgment upon the churches of the world than the Savior of the world? He answered him that he should join none of them for they all taught for doctrine the precepts of men. There isn’t going to be time to outline very much more, but just think of Moroni’s coming, think of the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated. Where in all the world does anybody know about that other record that the Lord commanded Ezekiel should be written, that the Lord would bring forth and put with the record of Judah and make them one in his hand? We are the only people in the world that know where that record is. Just think what it contains of the knowledge that the Lord preserved for the convincing of the Jew and the gentile that Jesus is the Christ.”¹⁰ ¶ *Saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:* The LXX (6) reads, “When I have spoken, all my counsel shall stand; and all that I have determined, I will effect.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “Saying: My counsel shall stand, and all my will shall be done.” ¶ Ibn Ezra writes: “For who can annul my decree; ‘my counsel’ stands for ever, and I will do ‘all my pleasure.’” In ISAIAH 45 the Lord told the potshards of the earth not to question His perfect judgement about the Book of Mormon. Now, once again, we receive reassurances that the Lord’s will shall come to pass regardless of the murmuring of man.

⁸ Richards, Elder LeGrand. “The Second Coming of Christ.” April 1978 General Conference.

⁹ Deuteronomy 4 is part of the *Rain in Due Season* Scriptures.

¹⁰ Richards, Elder LeGrand. “Prophecy.” April 1974 General Conference.

11 Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel[✓] from a far country: yea, I have spoken [it], I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed [it], I will also do it.

✓ of my counsel

Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Who hath promised to gather together the captivity from the East, to bring openly, as a swift bird, the sons of Abraham, my chosen, from a distant land.” The Targum (Ⓣ) here helps us think of the work that will be carried out in bringing a present back to the Lord, in terms of gathering Israel, as mentioned in ISAIAH 18. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Calling from the east a winged fowl, even from a far distant land, for purposes which I have resolved on.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “Who call a bird from the east, and from a far country the man of my own will.” ¶ Birks has: “The ‘man of my purpose’ means one set apart by God’s decree for a special service.” Jenour suggests: “*A swift bird from the east*] Meaning Cyrus, who is so called from the rapidity of his conquests. Xenophon relates, that the standard of Cyrus was an eagle, with extended wings, upon the top of a lance (Cyropaedia B: 7:1).” Baltzer notes that the expression, **מֵאֶרֶץ מְרֹחֶק**, is precisely the one we see in the prophecy against Babylon, in ISAIAH 13:5. The ravenous bird from the east, then, could certainly be applied to Cyrus—as a type of Christ. ¶ There is a greater one than Cyrus that shall liberate Israel in the last days. Rabbi Rosenberg, leaning on Kimhi, has: “Rabbi Joseph Kimhi interprets it as a reference to the King-Messiah, who will come swiftly when the time arrives. So also Govett: “ISAIAH 46:11 predicts the advent of Christ under the emblem of an eagle, a bird swift of wing from afar, and to pounce upon the prey. He is promised as ‘the man of Jehovah’s counsel,’ as said the apostle, ‘He hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteousness *by that man whom he hath ordained*; whereof he hath given assurance in that he hath raised him from the dead’ (Acts 17:31). And he shall be the righteousness and salvation of God, as it is written, ‘I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgement and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness’ (Jeremiah 23:5–6).” So also Keith: “The position of the passage in this chapter, *which does not relate particularly to the capture of Babylon* by Cyrus, the idols not being removed then, but which relates to the ‘remnant’ of the

house of Israel, an expression which is applied pre-eminently to those who are left in the last days—to such as shall be gathered from their wanderings and spared from their judgments,—which relates also to the hoar hair, the old age of the nation,—this position of the verse, followed as it is by a description of the final conversion of Israel—every circumstance connecting it with events long subsequent to the time of Cyrus—seems to require that it also be understood of Christ when he comes to judge among the nations, and to reign in Zion. The figure of a ravenous bird corresponds with the character in which he shall then visit the nations: ‘He shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies: I will destroy and devour at once’ (ISAIAH 42:13, 14b)” (emphasis added). ¶ *Yea, I have spoken [it], I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed [it], I will also do it.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Yea, I have promised *it*; yea, I will bring it to pass; I have ordained it; yea, I will do it.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “I have spoken and brought, I have created and made, I have brought it and made its way prosperous.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “And I have spoken, and will bring it to pass: I have created, and I will do it.” ¶ The Lord once again give reassurances that He has spoken these words, and not in vain, for they shall come to pass.

12 Harken unto me, ye stouthearted, that [are] far from righteousness:

The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Hear me, ye who have lost understanding—who are far from righteousness!” Or as the Peshitta (Ⓢ) translators render it, “stubborn of heart” (Lamsa) / “hard of heart” (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “Hear me, O ye hardhearted, who are far from justice.” ¶ These last two verses, as Birks points out: “the message passes on to the times of Messiah” or at least, to the dispensation of the fulness of times. ¶ **Stout-hearted**, **לֵב אֲבִירִי**. Shalom Paul writes: “For similar expressions denoting stubbornness, see Ezekiel 2:4: **לֵב חֲזָקִי** [stiff hearted]; Ezekiel 3:7: **לֵב יָקִישׁ** [and hard hearted].” Cowles has: “The stout-hearted [Hebrew ‘strong of heart’] are those who boldly and defiantly oppose God.—Their being ‘far from righteousness’ means that they are utterly unrighteous, void of integrity and uprightness. The Lord implores such to listen to his call. Reckless and desperate though they may be, yet the great compassion of God beseeches them to consider their ways, to cease from their folly and madness, and to return to reason and to their divine Father.” Orelli writes: “The ‘stout-hearted,’ *i.e.*, those who, full of self-sufficiency, think to find strength and righteousness in themselves ...” In Alma, by contrast, we read of the consequences of leaning on the Lord: “Yea, and it came to pass that the Lord our

God did visit us with assurances that he would deliver us; yea, insomuch that he did speak peace to our souls, and did grant unto us great faith, and did cause us that we should hope for our deliverance in him” (Alma 58:11). ¶ Rashi, in Slotki/Rosenberg thinks this of Judah, such that “in spite of their exile among the nations, were *obstinate in adhering*¹¹ to God’s worship, yet did not receive His righteousness” (emphasis added). Is this not what the Father and the Son told Joseph Smith about the modern professors of Christendom during the First Vision? “... the Personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those professors were all corrupt; that: ‘they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof’” (JS-History 1:19, see ISAIAH 29:13). These words, of course, help us understand ISAIAH 46:13 in its proper context.¹² ¶ Young says, “The glorious news those who are far from righteousness are to hear it that God has brought His own righteousness near.” It was the reading of the Book of Mormon that softened my heart and prepared me to embark in a new life in Christ.

13 I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “My righteousness is nigh, it is not far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion, and my glory in Israel.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “I have brought my saving mercy near; and the salvation which is from me I will not delay. I have placed in Sion salvation for Israel, for a subject of glory.” ¶ Young says: “What God brings to His people is righteousness, even salvation. It is this that man receives ... for God will bring it near ... This action is for the sake of Israel, for if God does not act, Israel cannot be saved. The glory Israel possesses, it possesses not in and of itself but receives from its Lord as a gift ... Through the saved Israel, the glory of the Lord, will be seen the Lord of glory, the Savior of His people.” ¶ It

is so frequent and painful to read of the exegetes that God is not speaking at all of the descendants of Jacob, but rather these have been moved aside to make way for the Gentiles, that it is a breath of fresh air to read the words of Jennings here: “So our chapter closes with the constantly repeated promise of God’s salvation being found in Zion, His glory given to Israel ... —but when they tell us that the prophet himself meant the Church [here standing for the Gentiles grafted in rather than Israel] ... and not the nation to which he had been directly commissioned to go, in that, we are compelled to say, they greatly err.” ¶ Henderson writes: “There seems to be here a momentary transition to a greater deliverance than that from Babylon, but for which the latter was to be preparatory ... Jehovah declares that he would effect a still more wonderful work—that of redemption through the Messiah, in consequences of whose righteousness there would be in Zion that salvation which would be the glory or beauty of all believers.” ¶ While this verse certainly can be applied to the times of deliverance from the Babylonian captivity, I see in these words both (1) the birth of the Christ child and the ensuing salvation from His atoning sacrifice in the meridian of time; and (2) the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the latter-days—including the publication of the Book of Mormon. Through these, the Lord brought His righteousness, or His presence, near. In the former He lived upon the earth with the children of men and in the latter He appeared in glory to the boy Prophet. In the first, through the atoning sacrifice of our Savior; in the latter, to the spreading forth of the *good news* and the gathering of the remnant of Israel to Zion.

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¹¹ Webster explains the word *obstinate*, in one of its significations, as adhering to something. It seems, from the context, that the holding on to these opinions was not bad in itself, except that they were *far from righteousness*. The adherence was not to *truth*.

¹² A few days after I wrote these words I was thrilled to find that Kay was thinking in exactly these same terms and even quoting the same verse: “*far from righteousness*” because they had ‘removed their heart far’ from God (ISAIAH 29:13).” Although not in the same context as that of ISAIAH 29, the Book of Mormon chapter, Kay goes on to say that God “would *manifest* His own righteousness (Romans 1:17), and communicate righteousness to ‘many’ (ISAIAH 53:11).”

Isaiah 47

This is a taunt-song celebrating the future fall of arrogant and prideful Babylon. Govett has: “This is another of the sentences against Babylon, both the literal and the mystic.” Indeed, if we turn to Revelation (e.g., Revelation 2:23; 9:21; 13:2; 16:10; 17:15–16, 18; 18:4, 7–8, 15, 20, 22–23; 19:2—Gill), we see that several of our verses in ISAIAH are quoted there regarding the end of times. While the conquest by Cyrus was sudden, Keith suggests that: “[The prophecy about the collapse of Babylon] must therefore be understood of her gradual downfall, which was not effected until after repeated shocks, of which the attack of Cyrus was the first. It is a general prophecy of her fate.” Ironside says: “Babylon, by her sorceries, her enchantments, is said to have bewitched the nations. Nation after nation followed her in the practice of idolatry. She was called, ‘The Lady of Kingdoms.’” Babylon, today, stands for the antithesis of Zion. Even though Babylon has ceased to exist as a nation, mystical Babylon is given as a representation of Satan’s dominions. Israel is being gathered from mystical Babylon—the world—and brought into Zion. Baltzer says of ISAIAH 47, that we will find a “correspondence between Babylon’s deposition here and Zion’s installation in ISAIAH 51.” False thinking and false reasoning are exposed.

vv. 1–6. Babylon, being personified as a pampered young woman, is commanded to descend from her throne of opulence and sit on the bare ground. When she was indulged her every wish and desire was carried out by her servants; but now she has the most menial of jobs, working the mill to grind cereal grains into flower. Babylon has had to remove her royal garments and show herself in public, fully humiliated. Formerly, her delicate feet would have been protected from the stones as she crossed rivers in a wagon. Now, she has to wade rivers on foot. She had not only punished the children of Israel but took pleasure in doing so.

1 ¶ COME down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: [there is] no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate.

COME down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Descend and sit on the dust, O kingdom of the congregation of Babylon; sit on the ground.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Come down, sit on the ground, Virgin daughter of Babylon!” ¶ Sit on the dust as well as sit on the ground are synonymous ways of saying that Babylon is captive. Abarbanel, in Slotki/Rosenberg suggests that this sitting on the ground is not just mourning, but also humiliation. While an upward change of status is easy to deal with, downward mobility¹ requires that we swallow our pride. Christ

¹ Members of The Church of Jesus Christ may one day serve as Bishops or Stake Presidents or Seventies, with great amounts of responsibility over a large number of people. And when released they

Jesus willingly left His divine position as the son of God to become the lowliest servant² on this earth. Though Christ had the command of legions, He never did anything that would not meet the approval of His Father. ¶ Whitehouse has: “The genitive is what is called an appositional genitive, the city or nation being personified (cf. ISAIAH 1:8).” Henderson says: “The Orientals are accustomed to speak of cities or empires that have never been conquered, as *virgins* ... By *daughter* is meant the people or inhabitants” (emphasis added). Similarly, see Rabbi Rosenberg, leaning on Ibn Ezra and Redak. ¶ The contrary view is given by Rawlinson who says: “‘Virgin’ does not mean ‘unconquered;’ for Babylon had been taken by the Assyrians some half-dozen times (‘Ancient Monarchies,’ 2:58, 130, 149, 157, 164, 175, etc.).” Kay explains: “Babylon boasted (Herodotus 1:191) that she had never been captured.” ¶ *[There is] no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate.* The Targum (ⲧ) adds, “of glory” after *throne*. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Sit on the ground, daughter of the Chaldeans! for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate!” The Douay-Rheims

go on to serve in other callings where they may command little notice or attention. This is the normal way in the Lord’s Church, for members learn they are serving the Lord when they serve each other. Position and rank do not matter to the true disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the world, things are not quite like that. As a young man in Chile, I grew up in a home with four maids and a gardener. As a youth I never knew how to even saddle my own horse. For a time we had a woman who came in to cut our fingernails and toenails. This all changed when life took me to California. I not only learned to saddle my own horse, but to saddle horses for others. I worked at a country club in which part of my duties were to clean the toilets. I noticed I was not even considered a person to be greeted. I also cleaned horse stables. Also see my notes on the movie, *The Last Emperor*, in ISAIAH 21:12.

² I love to read *The Ascension of Isaiah* in the *Pseudepigrapha*. See ISAIAH 53:2.

(ו) has, for the first half, “There is no throne for the daughter of the Chaldeans.” ¶ Benson says: “Imperial power is taken from thee, and translated to the Persians.” Skinner explains: “The parallel phrase *daughter of the Chaldeans* ... describes Babylon as the city of (possessed by) the Chaldeans, the reigning dynasty.” ¶ The expression *tender and delicate*, *רַכָּה וְעֵנִיָּה*, as a number of exegetes point out, also appears in the *Rain in Due Season*: *the tender among thee and the delicate* (Deuteronomy 28:56), *הַרַכָּה בְּךָ וְהָעֵנִיָּה*.

**2 Take the millstones, and grind meal:
uncover thy locks, make bare the leg,
uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers.**

Take the millstones, and grind meal: The Targum (ט) has, “Receive this calamity and go into servitude; put away the glory of thy kingdom, thy princes are overthrown.” The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “Take a millstone and grind corn.” The Peshitta (ܣ) also has “grind flour.” ¶ Barnes describes these: “The mills which were there commonly used, and which are also extensively used to this day, consisted of two stones, of which the lower one was convex on the upper side, and the upper one was concave on the lower side, so that they fitted into each other. The hole for receiving the grain was in the centre of the upper stone, and in the process of grinding the lower one was fixed, and the upper one was turned round, usually by two women (see Matthew 24:41), with considerable velocity by means of a handle. Jenour has: “The business of grinding corn among the Jews was performed by two women; one sat on the ground and turned the stone, whilst the other supplied the corn [i.e., rather, the wheat or other cereal—GB]. The same method is practiced in the east to this day. It was, however, the employment only of the lowest order of females (see Exodus 11:5)³.” ¶ Cowles has: “[Babylon’s] debasement is compared to the change from being a queen to being an abject slave. As in ISAIAH 47:1, so here the prediction of this change takes the form of command. Go, virgin daughter, strip off every badge of royalty; put on the wretched covering of the female slave and do her menial service.—‘Take the mill-stones,’ i.e., of the small hand-mill—a necessity in

every oriental family, with which the grinding for each day’s use was done every morning, and always done by the lowest class of servants ... always of the female sex.” ¶ *Uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers*. The Targum (ט) has, “The people of thy armies are scattered, they have vanished away like waters of the river.” The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “Doff thy veil; uncover thy grey locks. Make bare thy leg: wade through rivers.” The Peshitta (ܣ) has something like, “Remove your veil, cut your white hair, uncover your legs and ford the rivers.” The Douay-Rheims (ו) has, “Uncover thy shame, strip thy shoulder, make bare thy legs, pass over the rivers.” ¶ LITV renders it: “Take millstones and grind meal; uncover your veil; strip off the skirt; uncover the leg; pass over rivers”; and YLT has: “Take millstones, and grind flour, Remove thy veil, draw up the skirt, Uncover the leg, pass over the floods.” It is likely either the drawing up or removal of the *skirt* to cross the river, and thus expose the leg. Whether the word *שָׁבֵל* be translated as *skirt* (or some clothing, AMP, ASV, HCSB, JPS, NASB, LDS Reina Valera 2009⁴ or other versions; or in a number of other translations, *shoe*), or as leg (AV), it is given as singular in the Masoretic text (מ), *שָׁבֵל*, and plural in the 1QIsa^a, *שָׁבֵלִים*, *your skirts*. ¶ Cowles says, “‘Uncover thy locks,’ is precisely, *strip off thy vail* ... The next phrase should have been translated, ‘Strip off thy flowing robes,’ a dress with a long flowing train—another badge of the free and the honored class as opposed to the enslaved ... Her exposure of person would indicate and measure her debasement, the utter change of the condition from queenly dignity to abject servility.” ¶ Luther says: “As a servant you will have neither ship nor wagon. You will have to wade.” Jenour has: “To add to her degradation and misery, this great princess, who, to use the words of Moses, ‘would not have adventured to set her sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness,’ is represented as reduced to the necessity of exposing her tender and delicate limbs to the inclemency of the weather and the rude gaze of every idle spectator; and as being compelled, in this wretched condition, to walk barefoot upon the rough ground, and to wade a captive through rivers—none but the lowest class of females in eastern countries ever go uncovered or travel on foot; those who cannot afford a carriage ride on bullocks, and completely covered from head to foot with a long shawl. It is impossible to imagine anything more expressive than this imagery; and whoever contrasts the grandeur of ancient Babylon with her present desolate condition, cannot but be struck with

³ “And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts” (Exodus 11:5). The maidservant who is *behind the mill* is given as the lowest of people, in contrast to the Pharaoh. BBE renders it: “And death will come to every mother’s first male child in all the land of Egypt, from the child of Pharaoh on his seat of power, to the child of the *servant-girl crushing the grain*; and the first births of all the cattle” (emphasis added).

⁴ The LDS RV2009 translation, *levanta la falda*, coincides best with the YLT, *draw up the skirt*, which I believe is an excellent rendering. Literally, *levanta la falda* means *lift up the skirt*.

the awful manner in which this figurative prediction has been accomplished.”

3 Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen: I will take vengeance, and I will not meet [thee as] a man.

Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen: The LXX (6) reads, “Thy shame shall be exposed; thy nakedness shall be seen.” As mentioned above, by having to cross the rivers with girded clothing, and by not being to wear the clothing of the rich and powerful. Faussett has: “... in the East the head is the seat of female modesty; the *face* of a woman is seldom, the whole *head* almost never, seen bare.” ¶ *I will take vengeance, and I will not meet [thee as] a man.* The Targum (7) has, “I will take full vengeance on thee and I will change thy judgment from the children of men.” The LXX (6) reads, “This vengeance I will take on thy account and no more deliver thee up to men.” The Douay-Rheims (8) has, “I will take vengeance, and no man shall resist me.” ¶ Exegetes and translators render this clause differently, without the ellipsis given by the AV. For instance, we have: “I will take vengeance, and will spare no man” (ASV); “I will take vengeance, and will let no man intercede” (JPS); and YLT, which eliminates the ellipsis entirely: “Vengeance I take, and I meet not a man.” Alexander suggests: “The true sense is that expressed by Rosenmüller, *I shall encounter no man*, i.e., no man will be able to resist me. This simple explanation is at the same time one of the most ancient, as we find it distinctly expressed by Symmachus (οὐκ ἀντιστήσεται μοι ἄνθρωπος) and in the Vulgate (*non resistet mihi homo*).” I prefer Birks: “*Man* (Adam, אָדָם) placed last, has its full emphatic contrast with God, and its proper meaning as the kind or race, not a class or individual. The ellipsis of the pronoun is common with the previous clause, and adds to the force, when the object is plain. The absence of the particle of comparison makes the thought still more expressive. ‘It is not man thou wilt meet, when I meet thee. Thou shalt suffer no common, or merely human retribution.’”

4 [As for] our redeemer, the LORD of hosts [is] his name, the Holy One of Israel.

The LXX (6) reads, “Thy deliverer is the Lord of Hosts, his name is the Holy One of Israel.” Cowles notes: “It was for the sake of saving Zion and punishing Babylon for her cruel oppression of God’s people that these terrible judgments came upon her.” Alexander

suggests: “The fall of Babylon is brought into connection and subordination to the proof of God’s supremacy as shewn in the protection and salvation of his people.” Israel can be assured and call the Lord, our **Goel** (Cheyne), that is, **our redeemer**: גֹּאֲלֵנוּ. No one else can redeem but Jesus Christ.

5 Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms.

Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: The Targum (7) has, for the last clause, “O glory (the Royal Polyglot omits קִיָּה, ‘glory’) of the kingdom of the Chaldeans.” The LXX (6) reads, “Sit in compunction: enter into darkness, daughter of the Chaldeans!” ¶ Henderson has: “Silence and darkness characterize a state of imprisonment. Captives were usually shut up in dark dungeons, far removed from the noisy scenes of life.” Darkness is the opposite of the light of God: “And that which doth not edify is not of God, and is darkness. That which is of God is light; and he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day” (D&C 50:23–24). Finally, the extreme of darkness, is *outer darkness*. ¶ Calvin says: “When he bids her ‘sit’ and be ‘silent,’ it is an indication of shame or disgrace. Yet this silence may be contrasted with her former condition, while she reigned; for at that time not only did she speak loudly and authoritatively, but she cried with a loud voice, and by her commands terrified the whole of the East.” The time will come, also, when Satan will no longer have power over men, but will likewise be silenced. ¶ *For thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms.* The Targum (7) has, instead of *lady*, “mighty one.” The LXX (6) reads, “Thou shalt no more be called the strength of a kingdom.” Likewise, instead of *lady*, the Peshitta (9) has *mightiest* (Lamsa) / *strength* (BPE). ¶ Birks has: “Babylon, in the time of her disgrace, will seek to hide herself from the eyes of the world. A veil of oblivion must fall over the city, once so proud and haughty.” In ISAIAH 14:13–15 we read of the adversary: “For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.”

6 I was wroth with my people, I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thine hand: thou didst shew them no mercy; upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke.

I was wroth with my people, I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thine hand: The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “I was angry with my people: thou didst pollute my heritage, I delivered them into thy hand.” Instead of *I have polluted*, the Peshitta (Ⓔ) has *for they have polluted*. ¶ Other synonyms for polluted include *defiled* (LITV), *desecrated* (CJB), and *profaned* (ESV). Wade explains: “To *profane* is to ‘make common,’ the opposite of *sanctify* (i.e. set apart). The Lord had set apart Israel for Himself, and so long as it was faithful to its obligations, it was safe from aggression (cf. Jeremiah 2:3). But when the nation disregarded its duties, its privileges were cancelled and the land became ‘profane,’ at the mercy of any assailant (cf. Jeremiah 50:7; 12:7–8).” Vitringa (in Benson) has: “The metaphor in this verse is taken from a father, who, being angry with his children, delivers them up to chastisement; but his anger soon subsiding, and his affection reviving, he turns his indignation against those who had so executed his commands, as to punish immoderately and severely.” Calvin observes: “When he says that he ‘was angry,’ and that this was the reason why he ‘profaned his heritage,’ let us not imagine that he had changed his purpose, and was offended so far as to cast away the care of his people and the remembrance of his covenant. This is evident both from the event itself and from his deigning still to call them ‘his people’ ...” ¶ *Thou didst shew them no mercy; upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke.* The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And thou didst shew them no mercy. The yoke of the aged thou madest very heavy.” Lowth has: “God charges the Babylonians, though employed by himself to chastise his people, with cruelty in regard to them. They exceeded the bounds of justice and humanity in oppressing and destroying them; and though they were really executing the righteous decree of God, yet, as far as it regarded themselves, they were only indulging their own ambition and violence.” Throughout the Book of Lamentations we see the horrors of how the conquered peoples were treated. They had to purchase their water, their women were raped, and their elders abused (e.g., Lamentations 4:16; 5:12). This is a fulfillment of the *Rain in Due Season* prophecy: “Because thou servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, in

hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee. The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young” (Deuteronomy 28:47–50).

¶ Barnes says: *Laid the yoke*] The yoke in the Bible is an emblem of slavery or bondage, Leviticus 26:13; Deuteronomy 28:48 [both of these scriptures come from *Rain in Due Season*—GB] ... Here it refers to the bondage and affliction which they experienced in Babylon.” We need to ever remember to be kind to our foes when they are defeated before us.

vv. 7–15. Babylon had conceitedly thought that her power would have no end. She is sarcastically challenged to put her confidence in that which would not save her.

7 ¶ And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever: [so] that thou didst not lay these [things] to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it.

And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever: The Targum (Ⓔ) has, “And thou saidst, I shall be the mighty one of the kingdoms.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And saidst, I shall be empress forever.” Instead of *lady*, the Peshitta (Ⓔ) has *mighty one* (Lamsa) / *strengthened* (BPE). ¶ Cowles has: “‘She was so confident of the perpetuity of this honor that she would not think of the natural consequences of such cruelty, would not consider the latter end and the sure though possibly distant results of such crimes.’” Benson says: “If we consider that the city of Babylon had no less than one hundred gates made of solid brass; that its walls were two hundred feet high, and fifty broad, according to the lowest account given of them by historians, and, according to some, three hundred and fifty feet in height, and eighty-seven in thickness, so that six chariots could go abreast upon them; that it was defended by the river Euphrates, and supplied with provisions for many years; it might well be deemed impregnable: and ‘such a city as this might, with less vanity than any other, boast that she should continue forever, if anything human could continue forever’ (Bishop Newton).” ¶ Calvin suggests: “Thus the children of this world are intoxicated by prosperity, and despise all men as compared with themselves; but Isaiah mocks at this confidence, and shews that God regards it with the greatest abhorrence.” (See note by Brigham Young under ISAIAH 5:8.) ¶ *[So] that thou didst not lay these [things] to thy heart, neither didst*

remember the latter end of it. The LXX (⚡) reads, “These things did not enter thy heart; nor didst thou call to mind what might at last befall thee.” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, for the second clause, “Neither hast thou remembered thy latter end.” ¶ Cowles says: “‘Thou saidst, Forever shall I be a queen—*until* thou didst not lay these things upon thy heart,’ *i.e.*, thou didst repeat it with persistence and force *until* it produced this result, *viz.*, to harden thy heart against all sense and fear of retribution.” In Jeremiah we read how the Babylonian captivity would be temporal, and last seventy years, after which many of the people of Judah (*i.e.*, Judah and Benjamin) would return to the Holy Land, to Zion. “For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive” (Jeremiah 29:10–14). The greater fulfillment of these verses in Jeremiah is taking place right now as the children of Israel are gathered into Zion from every corner of the world. ¶ Regarding the *end of it* Baltzer says: “‘Babylon’ has not considered the consequences of her arrogance. אֶת־רֵיית is the ‘end’ (just as רֵאשִׁית is the ‘beginning’).”

8 Therefore hear now this, [thou that art] given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I [am], and none else beside me; I shall not sit [as] a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children:

Therefore hear now this, [thou that art] given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I [am], and none else beside me. The LXX (⚡) reads, “Now, therefore, hear these things, thou voluptuary! thou who art seated at ease, who thinkest thyself secure; who sayest in thy heart; ‘I am and there is none else.’” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, for the first half, “And now hear these things, thou that art delicate, and dwellest confidently.” ¶ Keith explains that one of the reasons why Babylon would be punished was “her pursuit of pleasures. This character belonged more or less to all the heathen cities of antiquity. Their

prosperity has always been the mother of licentiousness; and abundant as have been the dissipation and sensuality of other capitals, in no case has the catalogue of vices been more foul than in that of Babylon, according to the testimony of Herodotus and others. Hence she is made the symbol of the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth (Revelation 17:5).” Skinner points us to Zephaniah 2:15, speaking of Nineveh, where we read similar sentiments: “This is the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I am, and there is none beside me: how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in! every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his hand.” Alexander eliminates the present ellipsis [*i.e.*, though that art] and translates אֶת־רֵיית as “*Oh voluptuous one!*” So also, “And now hear this, thou voluptuous one” (Darby.); “Et maintenant, écoute ceci, voluptueuse” (FDB); “Ahora pues, oye esto, voluptuosa” (LBLA); “Oye, pues, ahora esto, mujer voluptuosa” (RV1960). Leeser translates it as: “And now hear this, luxurious one.” ¶ Birks has: “The phrase in the second clause has caused some perplexity. It is literally, ‘I am, and the absence of me beside.’ All beside me, says the proud city, is so worthless in comparison, that ‘it is not Babylon, no part of her empire,’ is description enough. The words are a profane parody of the Divine saying, ‘I am the Lord, and there is none else,’ (ISAIAH 43:10–11; 44:6, 8; 45:5–6, 14, 18, 21; 46:9). These chapters are full of the contrast between the false pride of Babylon and the true glory of the living God.” ¶ *I shall not sit [as] a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children:* The LXX (⚡) reads, “I shall not sit a widow, nor shall I know the loss of children.” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, for the last clause, “And I shall not know barrenness.” ¶ Cowles observes: “The same Babylon, before shown under the figure of a virgin, is here by a slight change, a wife with children. She has been intensely pleasure-loving, dwelling in supposed security and saying, ‘None so great and mighty as I. I have put myself above the reach of great calamity.’ The loss of children and of husband are fitly named as the most fearful calamities that can befall a wife and mother. It is better to take them therefore as figures for the greatest calamities that can befall a nation, *e.g.*, subjugation, captivity, and the sword, rather than to give them the more specific sense of the loss of her king (her husband) and of her soldiers or citizens (as her sons).” Whitehouse, in contrast, has: “The ‘childlessness’ refers to the depopulation caused by the sword, flight of inhabitants, or their captivity.” Several, including Redak (in Rabbi Rosenberg) suggest that widowhood, in this case, is a city left desolate without her king (see more in ISAIAH 47:9). Govett has: “‘I shall not sit as a widow, nor experience bereavement,’ is paralleled by St. John, ‘She saith in her

heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow' (Revelation 18:7)."

9 But these two [things] shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, [and] for the great abundance of thine enchantments.

But these two [things] shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, "But now upon thee shall come these two things, suddenly, in one day. The loss of children and widowhood." The Peshitta (Ⲫ) fills in the ellipsis, *things* with *plagues* (Lamsa) / *wounds* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, "These two things shall come upon thee suddenly in one day, barrenness and widowhood." ¶ Rabbi Rosenberg points out that Babylon indeed lost her king: "For Belshazzar the king was killed at night, and the Persians and the Medes entered and captured the city (Daniel 5:30; 6:1)." Keith observes: "The wife deprived at once of husband and children, widowed and made childless in one day, is a touching illustration of utter bereavement." Certainly, it reminds us of Job. Jenour writes: "The capture of Babylon, as has already been observed, was sudden and unexpected. The inhabitants were dissolved in mirth and festivity, and had not the smallest anticipation of the design of Cyrus until his army was in the city. Indeed, Herodotus says, that those who lived in the middle were dancing and making merry after the extremities had been taken." Gill has: "Dr. Prideaux thinks this prophecy had its accomplishment when Babylon was besieged by Darius, who, to save provisions, slew all their own women, wives, sisters, daughters, and all their children, reserving only one wife and maidservant to a man; and when it was taken, Darius ordered three thousand of the principal inhabitants to be crucified⁵. And in much such language is the destruction of mystical Babylon expressed, when God shall 'kill her children with death; her plagues shall come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine' (Revelation 2:23; 18:8)." Govett leans on some of the same Scriptures and says: "From which and similar passages the proof is convincing that the Babylon of the Old Testament is identical with that of the New." Luther says that the Second Coming will come upon the arrogant in a similar way, and will be an unexpected shock. ¶ *They shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, [and] for the great abundance of thine enchantments.* The Targum (Ⲛ) adds, "notwithstanding" to modify the

⁵ Faussett rather has, *impaled*.

comments about Babylon's sorceries and enchantments. The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, "Shall come suddenly on thee, in the midst of thy sorcery, in the full strength of thy mighty enchantments." The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, "All things are come upon thee, because of the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great hardness of thy enchanters." ¶ Cowles suggests that ⲕⲣⲃ be rendered *despite* instead of *for* "the multitude of thy enchantments." So also a number of versions, including Leeser, AMP, CJB, ESV, HCSB, ISV, NASB, Rotherham, and Reina Valera 1960. Lowth, for ⲕⲣⲃⲙⲉⲛⲉ prefers to lean on the LXX (Ⲯ) and Syriac (Ⲫ) and instead of *perfection* has *suddenly*. If it be perfection, it means to me that while Babylon was unrighteous in the punishments she meted out, God's punishment are always perfect (D&C 19:2b–13).

10 For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I [am], and none else beside me.

✓ or, caused thee to turn away

For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. The Targum (Ⲛ) has for the last clause, "None seeth thee (the Royal Polyglot reads ⲛⲓ, 'me')." The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, "Confiding in thy wickedness thou indeed saidst; 'I am and there is none else.'" The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, "And thou best trusted in thy wickedness, and hast said: There is none that seeth me." The Masoretic text (ⲙ) has *in thy wickedness*, ⲕⲣⲃⲙⲉⲛⲉ, while the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲙ) has *in thy knowledge*, ⲕⲣⲃⲙⲉⲛⲉ. ¶ Ibn Ezra says: "The prophet here alludes to that rationalism which denies the existence of God." Delitzsch well suggests that by saying *none seeth me*, Babylon was "thus suppressing the voice of conscience." Yet we read: "And the rebellious shall be pierced with much sorrow; for their iniquities shall be spoken upon the housetops, and their secret acts shall be revealed" (D&C 1:3, see also Luke 12:2–3). ¶ All those who trust in wickedness—or "astrology, divination, and magic" (Gill), or the *occult* (Skinner), or in evil in anyway—will be disappointed for "Behold, I say unto you, wickedness never was happiness" (Alma 41:10b). Once again, we must remember the underlying theme of leaving mystic Babylon and coming to the light of Zion. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: "There was nothing indecorous in the proceeding of the Lord's prophets in any age; neither had the apostles nor prophets in the apostles"

day anything of this kind. Paul says, ‘Ye may all prophesy, one by one; and if anything be revealed to another let the first hold his peace, for the spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets;’ but here we find that the prophets are subject to the spirit, and falling down, have twitchings, tumblings, and faintings through the influence of that [evil] spirit, being entirely under its control. Paul says, ‘Let everything be done decently and in order,’ but here we find the greatest disorder and indecency in the conduct of both men and women, as above described.”⁶ We know the Holy Ghost imparts peace and light; not darkness. And returning to the words of the Prophet Joseph Smith, “... nothing is a greater injury to the children of men than to be under the influence of a false spirit when they think they have the Spirit of God.”⁷ ¶ *Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I [am], and none else beside me.* The Targum (ⲧ) has for the first clause, “Thy wisdom and thy knowledge have corrupted thee.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Know thou, the consciousness of these things and thy whoredom shall be thy shame. Thou indeed saidst in thy heart, ‘I am and there is none else.’” Instead of *perverted*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *misled* (Lamsa) / *deviated* (BPE), much like the margin ||. The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, “Thy wisdom, and thy knowledge, this hath deceived thee. And thou best said in thy heart: I am, and besides me there is no other.” ¶ *וְדַעְתָּךְ וְחִכְמָתְךָ, thy wisdom and thy knowledge.* Henderson suggests: “Babylon was proud, not only of her political wisdom, but also of her astronomical and mythological science. דַּעַת, γνῶσις⁸, in connexion, as here, with חִכְמָה superior knowledge, i. e., that of the [false] gods, &c.” ¶ Henderson has, regarding *it hath perverted thee*, שׁוֹבְתָהּ: שׁוֹב [from the root, to *turn*, שׁוֹב] is used both in a good and a bad sense; here, as ISAIAH 57:7⁹, it indicates a determined *apostasy* from the true God” (emphasis added). As we have said before, at every instance we decide to either *turn* [שׁוֹב] to the Lord or give Him our *back*, i.e., turn away [שׁוֹב] from Him. BBE translates this expression: “... by your wisdom and knowledge you have been *turned* out of the way”; YLT, “Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, It is *turning* thee back.” ¶ Young says: “No one is seeing me] Babylon did not speak these

words aloud, but thought them in her heart.” ¶ *And none else beside me.* Similarly to what was noted above, Delitzsch writes: “אֵין signifies absolute non-existence [here] ... The form in which the presumption of Babylon expresses itself, viz., ‘I (am it), and I am absolutely *nothing* further,’ sounds like self-deification, by the side of similar self-assertion on the part of Jehovah (ISAIAH 45:5–6; 14:21–22; 46:9).”

11 Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth: ♀ and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: ♀ and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, [which] thou shalt not know.

- ✓ the morning thereof
- ✓ ♀ expiate

Young points out the rhythmical *ah* (אָה) endings of the three calamities that will befall Babylon: *evil*, *mischief*, and *desolation*, i.e., רָעָה, חָהָה, and שׁוֹאָה. Baltzer observes about these (אָה) endings: “One can probably say that this is a triad of terms, but that these are treated as female personifications.” ¶ *Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth:* The Targum (ⲧ) has, for the second clause, *thou shalt not know how to “deprecate it”* (Pauli), “pray against it” (Stenning), and “how to beseech” (Chilton) for לְמַבְעִי.¹⁰ The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “But upon thee shall come destruction, and thou shalt not know—a pit; and into it thou shalt fall.” Related to the margin ||, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *morning* (BPE) / *early morning* (Lamsa), in association to when the evil would come upon her. ¶ Skinner well says: “*evil*” is the same word as ‘*wickedness*’ in ISAIAH 47:10; the play on the two meanings of the word is intentional.” *Wickedness, in thy wickedness*, בְּרָעָתְךָ (from the root, רָעָה), and here in ISAIAH 47:11 verse: רָעָה. Henderson explains that: “... after a night of calamity [speaking figuratively]” there will be no dawn of reprieve. Gill, following the margin || has: “*thou shalt not know the morning of it*” that is, on what day, or at what time, it will be.” Following the margin ||, Cowles suggests: “Since calamity suggests darkness and often appears in the scriptures under this figure, the probable sense of this phrase is, Thou shalt see no dawn beyond it. To you, no day shall follow this night of ruin. ¶ *And mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off:* The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Yes, upon thee shall

⁶ *The Latter-day Saints’ Millennial Star*, Volume III, No. 3, July 1842, p. 40 (pp. 36 ff., Try The Spirits).

⁷ *The Latter-day Saints’ Millennial Star*, Volume III, No. 3, July 1842, p. 38 (pp. 36 ff., Try The Spirits).

⁸ γνῶσις, “comprehension or intellectual grasp of something” (BDAG).

⁹ ASV renders it: “... and he went on backsliding [שׁוֹבְתָהּ] in the way of his heart” (ISAIAH 57:17b).

¹⁰ To petition, request, beg (CAL Targum Lexicon), from בָּעִי.

come misery, of which thou shalt not be able to rid thyself.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And calamity shall fall violently upon thee, which thou canst not keep off.” ¶ McFadyen explains that all of these troubles that will beset Babylon, she will not be able to be put away through charms. Wade explains: “*put it away*] Literally, *to propitiate it* (cf. the Latin *expiare prodigia*), i.e., to avert it by propitiatory offerings. Diodorus Siculus (2:29) states : ‘The Chaldeans are devoted to divination, and predict future occurrences, of which they seek to avert the unfavourable and to promote the favourable by means of purifications or sacrifices or spells.’” The only true atonement can come through the Lord Jesus Christ. ¶ *And desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, [which] thou shalt not know.* The LXX (G) reads, “And destruction shall come upon thee suddenly of which thou wilt have no apprehension.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, for the first clause, “Misery shall come upon thee suddenly.” ¶ Lowth observes: “it is necessary to give the reader an exact verbal translation of the whole verse:—

‘And evil shall come upon thee, thou shalt not know how to deprecate it;

And mischief shall fall upon thee, thou shalt not be able to expiate it;

And destruction shall come suddenly upon thee, thou shalt not know’——

What? ... But as the ancient versions retain no traces of it, and a wide field lies open to uncertain conjecture, I have not attempted to fill up the chasm [or ellipsis—GB] ... which I cannot with any assurance pretend to supply.” Veiled threats are powerful, and perhaps this ellipsis is supposed to be filled out by the guilty party.

12 Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail.

Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth. The LXX (G) reads, “Persist now in thine incantations and in thy manifold sorcery, which thou hast learned from thy youth.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has *thy enchanters* instead of *thine enchantments*. The Masoretic text (M) has *stand now*, (N) is often translated as *I pray thee*, or some other admonition or entreaty, so one might also render it, *stand, I pray thee*, see Gesenius, BDB). This whole verse, as most exegetes point out, is extremely *sarcastic*. ¶ Nägelsbach and several others suggest that *from thy youth* is an allusion to the earliest days of the formation of Babylon

as a nation. ¶ *If so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail.* The Targum (T) only contains the second of these two clauses. The LXX (G) reads, “If thou canst be benefited by them.” Instead of *prevail*, the Peshitta (S) has *strengthen yourself* (Lamsa) / *be strengthened* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “If so be it may profit thee any thing, or if thou mayst become stronger.” ¶ The Lord is challenging Babylon. Keith says: “[Their diviners] are tauntingly urged to deliver Babylon if they could.” These verses are similar to the taunt we find in 1 Kings 18 addressed at the Priests of Baal.

13 Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from [these things] that shall come upon thee.

✓ viewers of the heavens

✓ ✓ that give knowledge concerning the months

Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. The LXX (G) reads, “Thou hast wearied thyself with thy counsels.” Instead of *counsels*, the Peshitta (S) has *thoughts* (Lamsa) / *conspiring* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Thou hast failed in the multitude of thy counsels.” ¶ Although Cheyne does not think so himself, he refers to Sayce (*Transactions of Society of Biblical Archeology*, 3:150), who believes that “the ‘consultations’ ... are astrological ones.” Keith explains: “The three classes [of diviners] enumerated here are generally supposed to be: (1) Those who divided the heavens for the purpose of auguries; (2) Those who judged from the appearances, the conjunctions, the colour, &c., of the stars; and, (3) Those who foretold what events might be expected in the course of each month. The term astrologers occurs only here. It signifies literally, dividers of the heavens.” Birks has: “These words describe the habitual state and character of Babylon before her calamity. She has abounded in wise men, diviners, interpreters of dreams, observers of the heavens, and has consulted them even to satiety. Such has been her wealth in counsellors, that to use them all has been even a toil and weariness. The clause ... portrays the character of the people in days of prosperity, full of expedients of human science and worldly wisdom.” ¶ *Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from [these things] that shall come upon thee.* The Targum (T) has: “Let them now rise up, and save thee, who are familiar with the Zodiac of the heavens, who look at the stars, who make known appointed seasons: deceiving thee, saying, Thus it shall happen

unto thee each month.” The LXX (6) reads, “Let the astrologers now stand up and save thee—let them who gaze on the stars tell thee what is instantly coming upon thee.” The Peshitta (5) has something like, “Let now the Chaldeans stand up and liberate you, those who observe the heavens and at the stars; let them foretell by the moon the things that shall come upon you.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “Let now the astrologers stand and save thee, they that gazed at the stars, and counted the months, that from them they might tell the things that shall come to thee.” Instead of the Masoretic text (11), astrologers (or, *dividers* [of the] *heavens*, *הַדּוֹבֵר שָׁמַיִם*), the DSS 1QIsa^a (10) has *binder*¹¹ (i.e., *enchanter*) [of the] *heavens*, *חֹבֶרֶת שָׁמַיִם*. The Masoretic text (11) has *stargazers* (i.e., *the gazers in stars*¹²), *הַזֹּהֲרִים בְּכּוֹכְבֵּימַיִם*, while the DSS 1QIsa^a (10) has *and stargazers* (i.e., *and the gazers in stars*, *וְהַזֹּהֲרִים בְּכּוֹכְבֵּימַיִם*). ¶ Jenour speaks about the irrationality of the horoscope: “... founded on the absurd idea that the events of a person’s life are connected, in an inexplicable manner, with the particular aspect of the stars and planets at the moment of his birth, so that, if this were known, his future destiny might be predicted. Hence, when a woman was about to be delivered, they were accustomed to *regard the stars* with the greatest attention, in order that they might be able to prognosticate the fate of the new-born infant.” Wade writes: “Babylonian astrology became so famous that *Chaldaei* became amongst the Romans a synonym for all diviners who told fortunes by the stars (see *Juv. Sat.* 6:553, 10:94 ; cf. also *Hor. Od.* 1. 11: 2, *Babylonios ... numeros*).” Rawlinson says of astrology that “[it] leads ... into a labyrinth of absurdities.” Barnes calls it an “absurd science.” ¶ Elder McConkie says: “In effect a sorcerer worships Satan rather than God and uses such power as Satan can give him in a vain attempt to imitate the power of God.”¹³ I feel that horoscopes are satanic counterfeits of Patriarchal Blessings.¹⁴

¹¹ From *הִבְרָה*, *binding* “applied to incantations,” or putting on spells on serpents or knots (see, Gesenius, *הִבְרָה*—2), or *charm, spell, enchantment* (HALOT, *הִבְרָה*—2).

¹² The word for stars, or rather *the stars* (*Hah-ko-kau-beam*, the Prophet Joseph Smith’s *transliteration* for *הַזֹּהֲרִים בְּכּוֹכְבֵּימַיִם*), should be very familiar to LDS, as we read it in Abraham 2, Facsimile 5, Pearl of Great Price.

¹³ McConkie, Elder Bruce R. *Mormon Doctrine* (2nd ed.), pp., 56, 747.

¹⁴ Patriarchal Blessings are *inspired revelations* pronounced through a Patriarch about *possibilities*. Patriarchal Blessings include a declaration of lineage; as well as blessings, cautions and admonitions to help us endure to the end in righteous living. All blessings are conditional to worthy living. I have a testimony of the inspiration of Patriarchal Blessings. I find it interesting that where true religion is absent from the lives of individuals, superstition takes its place. So

14 Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves ~ from the power of the flame: [there shall] not [be] a coal to warm at, [nor] fire to sit before it.

✓ their souls

Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them. The Targum (12) has, “Behold, they shall be weak as stubble. The nations which are as strong as fire shall consume them (the Royal Polyglot reads *שִׁעֲיִינוּ*, ‘each of the nations shall consume them’).” The LXX (6) reads, “Behold like brambles on a fire they shall all be burned up.” ¶ Wordsworth has: “*the fire shall burn them*] When Cyrus and his forces made an irruption into Babylon, he ordered them to set fire to the houses, which were very combustible, the doors being made of palm wood, smeared over with bitumen, and the roofs covered with reeds {Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 7:5). So it is foretold by St. John in the Apocalypse, concerning the mystical Babylon, that it will be burnt with fire.” Cowles has: “Instead of affording to Babylon the least help, these magicians are themselves awfully consumed. They are as stubble; fire devours them. They cannot even save themselves; much less the nation and the people. The last clause seems to mean that the fire of this conflagration brings all the mischiefs and calamities of a fire with none of its uses. This fire is not the sort before which one may warm himself or sit by it to enjoy its light. It is simply a terrible conflagration, bearing nothing but destruction in its sweep.” As for *stubble*, Rawlinson says: “A favorite metaphor with Isaiah for extreme weakness and incapacity for resistance. In ISAIAH 5:24 it is connected, as here, with fire.” ¶ *They shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame:* The Targum (12) has, “They shall not deliver themselves from the hand of the slayers.” The LXX (6) reads, “And shall not deliver their own life from the flame.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has *flames* instead of *flame*. ¶ Richard D. Draper of BYU observes: “John’s harlot [i.e., Babylon in the Book of Revelation—GB] is no commoner ... she represents a priestly class. The Levitical punishment for adultery or harlotry for the daughter of a priest was burning (see Leviticus 21:9) ... Babylon, as apostate—even

also Ironside, who says: “Wherever people turn away from the one, true and living GOD and refuse the Word of GOD, they are always ready to turn to other things ... Astronomy is an exact science, astrology is a fraud, a fake. Yet how many people give heed to it ... Men still believe in these worse than follies. They turn away from the Word of the living GOD to turn unto fables.”

idolatrous religion—deserves her fate.”¹⁵ ¶ *[There shall] not [be] a coal to warm at, [nor] fire to sit before it.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “There shall be no remnant nor escaped of them, yea, not a place, in which one might deliver himself.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Seeing thou hast coals of fire, sit upon them; will they give thee relief?” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “They shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flames: there are no coals wherewith they may be warmed, nor fire, that they may sit thereat.” ¶ Removing some of the ellipsis, HCSB renders it: “This is not a coal for warming themselves, or a fire to sit beside!” Wade explains: “*it shall not be a coal*, etc.] An ironical litotes,¹⁶ suggestive of the real magnitude of the fire which will be kindled for Babylon.” As has already been said, wood is useful for controlled burning; stubble burns fast and hot and is useless for warming oneself or for cooking.

15 Thus shall they be unto thee with whom thou hast laboured, [even] thy merchants, from thy youth: they shall wander every one to his quarter; none shall save thee.

Thus shall they be unto thee with whom thou hast laboured, [even] thy merchants, from thy youth: The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Thus shall the workers of thy lies be in thee, with whom thou wast occupied from thy youth.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Thou hast wearied thyself with this traffic from thy youth.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “Such are all the things become to thee, in which thou best labored.” ¶ Cowles explains: “Such is the doom of those with whom thou hast wrought even to weariness to find help from them for thyself. The fire of God’s judgments has utterly consumed them.” Whitehouse says, “If we adhere ... to the reading of our Hebrew text, ‘merchants,’ we should understand the term as referring to the magicians and soothsayers who trafficked in their arts with the deluded Babylonians.” This comment fits well with those about mystical Babylon, and the importance of escaping the grips of the adversary. So also Wade, leaning on and Duhm, Marti and Kittel: “Babylon’s commerce was famous. But the context seems to require a reference not to trade but to astrology or sorcery.” ¶ *They shall wander every one to his quarter; none shall save thee.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “The princes of thy power, shall go into captivity; each one straight before his face, none shall

save thee.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “The men have wandered away, everyone to his own home; but for thee there shall be no safety.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “Thy merchants from thy youth, every one hath erred in his own way, there is none that can save thee.” ¶ The expression, “They shall wonder each one to his quarter¹⁷,” means that the nations of the world would have nothing to do with trying to help Babylon in her troubles, despite the fact that they had been involved in commercial intercourse with her in the past. It is as when everyone runs to his own abode and leaves the battle field. Lowth warns: “... with equal truth, all that contributes to the commercial importance of New York, Philadelphia, Boston, London, or Paris, are under the control of God. By some secret causes he could make these cities a wide scene of ruins; and they may be, if they are like Babylon and Tyre and Tadmor in their character, yet like them in their doom. They should feel that the sources of their prosperity and their preservation are not in themselves, but in the favor and protection of God. Virtue, justice, and piety, will better preserve them than wealth; and without these they must be, in spite of their commercial advantages, what the once celebrated cities of antiquity now are.”

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¹⁵ Draper, Richard D., *Opening the Seven Seals: The Visions of John the Revelator*, p.201.

¹⁶ Litotes or understatement. To say it will *not be a small fire* to mean it will be a very large one. Too large to warm oneself or sit beside such as one would do at a campsite.

¹⁷ Alexander and several others explain it that literally it means: “*Each to the own quarter*, side, direction; substantially synonymous with אֶל-עֵבֶר פָּנָיו (Ezekiel 1:9, 12), and other phrases, all meaning *straight before him*, without turning to the right hand or the left.” Rotherham has, “every man stagger straight onwards.” Or, toward his own face. Here in ISAIAH 47:15, we have אִישׁ לְעֵבֶרוֹ תָּעוּ, *each man wondering his way*.

Isaiah 48

Israel is called out on her hypocrisy. The Lord reminds His people what He has done and will yet do for Israel, and what He would have done more if she had been obedient. The purpose of ISAIAH 48, says Westermann, is to lead Israel to repentance. A great many of the exegetes have pointed us to similar invitations for repentance found in various passages throughout the book of Ezekiel. God can see the future as easily as the past. The Lord has made marvelous promises to us, including the first and second comings of our Lord. We need to lean on these promises and not get distracted. Luther well says, “It is characteristic of the ungodly to snatch us away from the true promises and direct us to false ones.” We must *hear* the word, *turn* to the Lord, *flee* and *go out* of Babylon, *draw near* to Him, *tell* and *declare* His word to others. All this we need to do with great joy and singing. Nyman points out that this is the first chapter of Isaiah quoted in the Book of Mormon.

vv. 1–8. Israel has been hypocritical—she has only shown the outward signs of discipleship. The Lord is able to predict the future. Israel is accused of being stiffnecked. The Lord is offended when people are ungrateful (i.e., and credit themselves or others instead of God).

1 ¶ **HEARKEN** and hear ye this, O house of Jacob, ~~which~~ **who** are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, **or out of the waters of baptism, who** ~~which~~ swear by the name of the LORD, and make mention of the God of Israel, [~~but~~] **yet they swear** not in truth nor in righteousness.

HEARKEN and hear this, O house of Jacob, who are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, or out of the waters of baptism.

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, who are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth from the stock¹ of Judah.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Hear these things, ye house of Jacob, ye who are called by the name of Israel! ye who are descendants of Juda!” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *loins of Judah* (Lamsa) yet the BPE (Ⓢ) has *waters of Judah*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “Hear ye these things, O house of Jacob, you that are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Juda.” Delitzsch explains that in ISAIAH 48:1–2 the Lord summons Judah, after which He begins His address to them. ¶ Several exegetes mention the frequent use of the word *hearken*, or synonymous of the same. The chapter opens with an invitation to *hearken* (*listen ye*), **שמעו**, ¶ **יהודה**. Whitehouse says:

“*waters of Judah*” is very strange and hardly intelligible.” Rabbi Ibn Ezra and most exegetes suggest that the *waters of Judah* are meant as another way of saying *from the loins of Judah*, i.e., descendants of Judah. Rawlinson has: “Compare with Psalm 68:26, ‘Ye are of the fountain of Israel,’ marginal || rendering.” So also Skinner, who mentions but then questions the common view that this verse is related to the ancestors of Judah, “This clause cannot be explained in a satisfactory manner ... there remains the difficulty that Judah is nowhere named as the ancestor of the people.” ¶ Indeed! We instead find the answer to the enigma in the Book of Mormon. There it is clear that this is an allusion to baptism. *The Jewish Encyclopedia* confirms the use of baptism in ancient days: “*Baptism*: A religious ablution signifying purification or consecration. The natural method of cleansing the body by washing and bathing in water was always customary in Israel (see Ablution, Bathing) ... According to rabbinical teachings, which dominated even during the existence of the Temple (Pes. viii. 8), Baptism, next to circumcision and sacrifice, was an absolutely necessary condition to be fulfilled by a proselyte to Judaism (Yeb. 46b, 47b; Ker. 9a; 'Ab. Zarah 57a; Shab. 135a; Yer. Kid. iii. 14, 64d).” This same article explains the *pouring out of water before the Lord* has reference to Israel pouring “out their hearts in repentance.” The article from *The Jewish Encyclopedia* continues: “The bathing in the water is to constitute a rebirth, wherefore ‘the ger is like a child just born’ (Yeb. 48b); and he must bathe ‘in the name of God’—‘leshem shamayim’—that is, assume the yoke of God’s kingdom imposed upon him by the one who leads him to Baptism (‘maṭbil’), or else he is not admitted into Judaism (Gerim. vii. 8).” Finally, “... in the Messianic time God will Himself pour water of purification upon Israel.”²

² Singer, I. (Ed.). (1901–1906). In *The Jewish Encyclopedia: A Descriptive Record of the History, Religion, Literature, and Customs of the Jewish People from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, 12

¹ Family, clan (CAL lexicon), **יְהוּדָה**.

¶ While Israel had received baptism as an external ordinance, they had not been sincere. They had not *poured out their hearts in repentance*. We have a first thought with an implied ellipsis, followed by a parallel idea: (1) Israel had shown the outward tokens of contrition through baptism—and here we have an *ellipsis*—yet their hearts had not poured out in repentance. (2) Israel had sworn and oath to the Lord, but this oath had *not been in truth nor in righteousness*. In other words, we have an external baptism, but not the waters of repentance; an external confession, but not done in truth and righteousness. In ISAIAH 48:2, a third example is given of the variance between the claim and the reality: (3) Judah declares to live in a holy city but has profaned herself (ellipsis) by not leaning on the Lord. Yet the Lord would soon speak comfort to Judah and Israel. Such as: “In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer” (ISAIAH 54:8). ¶ Elder Bruce R. McConkie spoke of the ancient origins of baptism, “All of the apostles and prophets had the gospel; all were baptized and all performed baptisms. We have scriptures that speak of baptism in connection with Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Moses (Moses 6:47–68; 8:19–24; JST, Genesis 17:3–7; 1 Corinthians 10:1–4.) ... The very law of Moses itself is ‘the gospel of repentance and of baptism, and the remission of sins’ (D&C 84:27). The molten sea, standing on twelve brazen oxen in Solomon’s Temple, was a baptismal font ... When John the Baptist cried repentance and invited all Jewry to report at Bethabara and have their sins washed away in the Jordan, he was following a familiar pattern. The Jews of that day understood and practiced the law of baptism. It was a normal and natural thing for penitent persons to flock to John and desire immersion at his hands.”³ ¶ *Who swear by the name of the LORD, and make mention of the God of Israel, yet they swear not in truth nor in righteousness*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “With whom he hath made a covenant in the name of the Lord, the God of Israel, that the remembrance of them shall not cease. Shall not His Word stand in truth and righteousness?” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Ye who swear by the name of the Lord God of Israel, making mention of it, but not with truth, nor with righteousness.” ¶ Barnes quotes a similar sentiment in Jeremiah: “And though they say, The LORD liveth; surely they swear falsely” (Jeremiah 5:2). Cowles summarizes: “This verse strikes the key-note of this chapter in respect to the point of view in which God’s people are contemplated. They are insincere and untruthful in their religious professions.” We can

certainly *liken* these Scriptures unto us. Are we true disciples⁴ of the Lord Jesus Christ? ¶ *Judah*. Nägelsbach observes regarding the physical delivery from former Babylon: “The promise of deliverance by Cyrus relates only to the people of the kingdom of Judah.” The lower two tribes, Judah and Benjamin (and some of Levi) constituted Judah.

2 ~~For~~ **Nevertheless**, they call themselves of the holy city, ~~and~~ **but they do not** stay themselves upon the God of Israel, **who is** the LORD of hosts; **yea, the Lord of Hosts [is]** his name.

Nevertheless, they call themselves of the holy city. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “For their portion is in the holy city.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And who stay themselves on the name of this holy city.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲯ) has, “For they have taken the name of the holy city.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “For they are called of the holy city.” ¶ Young says, the introductory Ⲯ has puzzled commentators. The Hebrew word Ⲯ is here translated by the KJV as *for*, but the better translation is *nevertheless*. Barnes, who uses a *similar* word, explains: “The word rendered ‘for’ here, Ⲯ, means, as it often does, *although*; and the sense is, *although* they call themselves of the holy city, they do not worship God in sincerity and truth.” LBLA and NBLH also use *aunque*, which means *although* in Spanish. Two of the synonyms of *although* are *notwithstanding* and *nonetheless*. RV1995 uses precisely *nevertheless*, the Spanish *sin embargo*. Cowles says that one option is to consider this verse as “a continued description of the insincere professions of the people.” ¶ *But they do not stay themselves upon the God of Israel, who is the LORD of hosts; yea, the Lord of Hosts [is] his name*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And their confidence is in the God of Israel; the Lord of hosts is His name.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And rely for support on the God of Israel, whose name is the Lord of Hosts.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “And are established upon the God of Israel: the Lord of hosts is his name.” Is there not a great similarity between these verses in Isaiah and those in Helaman 4 regarding the Nephite nation? “Now this great loss of the Nephites, and the great slaughter which was among them, *would not have happened had it not been for their wickedness and their abomination* which was among them; yea, and it was *among those also who professed to belong to the church of God*. And it was because of the pride of their hearts, because of their exceeding

Volumes (2:499). Also available on-line, URL accessed 13Sep2015: <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/2456-baptism>.

³ McConkie, Bruce R. *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1985, pp. 250–251.

⁴ See Elder Robert D. Hales, “Becoming a Disciple of Our Lord Jesus Christ,” April 2017 General Conference.

riches, yea, it was because of their oppression to the poor, withholding their food from the hungry, withholding their clothing from the naked, and smiting their humble brethren upon the cheek, making a mock of that which was sacred, denying the spirit of prophecy and of revelation, murdering, plundering, lying, stealing, committing adultery, rising up in great contentions, and deserting away into the land of Nephi, among the Lamanites—And because of this their great wickedness, and *their boastings in their own strength, they were left in their own strength; therefore they did not prosper, but were afflicted and smitten, and driven before the Lamanites, until they had lost possession of almost all their lands*” (Helaman 4:11–13). ¶ Most exegetes agree and often use the word *hypocritical* in relation to these two opening verses. The LDS Bible Dictionary defines hypocrisy, in part, as: “... one who pretends to be religious when he is not.” Elder Uchtdorf taught: “The Savior was understanding and compassionate with sinners whose hearts were humble and sincere. But He rose up in righteous anger against hypocrites ...—those who tried to appear righteous in order to win the praise, influence, and wealth of the world, all the while oppressing the people they should have been blessing. The Savior compared them to ‘whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness.’ In our day, the Lord has similarly strong words for priesthood holders who try to ‘cover [their] sins, or to gratify [their] pride, [or their] vain ambition.’ When they do this, He said, ‘the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man.’ [Yet with] patience and persistence, even the smallest act of discipleship or the tiniest ember of belief can become a blazing bonfire of a consecrated life. In fact, that’s how most bonfires begin—as a simple spark.” ¶ *The Lord of hosts, יהוה צבאות*. Kay suggests, “[This name], was especially associated with the ark and temple; in other words, with the holiness of God (cp. 2Samuel 6:2; Psalm 24:3, 10).” These verses in Psalm 24 are among my all-time favorites: “**Who** [מִי] shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or **who** [מִי] shall stand in his holy place? ... **Who** [מִי] is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah.”

3 Behold, I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them. I did show [them] suddenly and they came to pass.

Behold, I have declared the former things from the beginning. The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Oh. I have already told you former things.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) only has, “The former things of old I have declared.” ¶ Regarding ISAAH 48:3, Nägelsbach says: “This is the seventh time the Prophet presents this argument.” And it is a truly important argument. Barnes says: “That is, in former times I have predicted future events by the, prophets, which have come to pass as they were foretold. Though the fulfillment might have appeared to be long delayed, yet it came to pass at the very time, showing it to be an exact fulfillment of the prophecy.” ¶ In Matthew we read: “Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought [in Greek, *do not fret*—GB, μεριμνᾶτε (see μεριμνάω). “① to be apprehensive, have anxiety, be anxious, be {unduly} concerned” (BDAG).] ... [for the things associated with our mortality] ... O ye of little faith? ... for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought [once again, *do not fret*, from μεριμνήσητε] for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil [עָוֹן], not moral evil intended here, but the little and big misfortunes associated with being alive, see ISAAH 45:7, κακία, 3rd definition, “a state involving difficult circumstances, trouble, misfortune” (BDAG).] thereof” (Matthew 6:25, 30b, 32b–34). About two weeks after I wrote the comments above, I found this from Martin Luther: “Therefore He is singularly urgent that we must wait patiently and cling to the promises. When it comes to this counsel, I, Martin Luther, am the weakest of all.” Except, Luther wrote his comments regarding ISAAH 48:15. I am constantly asking Heavenly Father for reassurances and He patiently provides them for me. As I have mentioned elsewhere in this book, this is an area of weakness I hope will someday become a strength. ¶ *And they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them.* The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “And they have gone forth from my Word, and I announced them.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “When they proceeded from my mouth and were published.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, for the second clause, “And I have made them to be heard.” The Lord has not hidden His words or His works. ¶ *I did show them them suddenly.* The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “I did them speedily and they came to pass.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “I did them suddenly and they came to pass.” ¶ Faussett has: “They came to pass so unexpectedly that the prophecy could not have resulted from mere human sagacity.” Perhaps the notion of suddenly is also related to the scripture: “Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the LORD, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in:

behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts” (Malachi 3:1). As President Hugh B. Brown testified: “The scriptures are replete with predictions and warnings concerning [Christ’s appearance again on the earth at the Second Coming].” So also many prophecies that have been fulfilled and will be fulfilled. It is a matter of just choosing any one of them, “For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled” (Matthew 5:18).⁵

4 And I did it because I knew that thou [art] obstinate, and thy neck [is] an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;

✓ hard

And I did it because I knew that thou art obstinate. The Targum (ܬ) has, “I knew (literally, ‘it was revealed before me’) that thou wouldst be a rebel.” The LXX (Θ) reads, “I know that thou art of an intractable temper.” The Douay-Rheims (ϐ) has, “For I knew that thou art stubborn.” ¶ Birks says: “The foreseen stubbornness of Israel was one reason why the predictions were made so clear, in order to shame them into the acknowledgment of God’s hand. [And, the following, with an allusion to the higher critics who deny that Prophets are permitted to see into the future—GB:] Those who treat them as mere guesses, or forgeries after the event, share in the blindness here so strongly condemned.” ¶ *And thy neck is an iron sinew* [וְנִיד בְּרִזָּל עֲרֶפֶךָ], *and thy brow brass* [וּמִצֵּחַךְ נְחוֹשֶׁת]. The Targum (ܬ) has, “And thy neck would be as hard iron, and thy brow (literally, ‘the place of thine eyes’) strong as brass.” The LXX (Θ) reads, “That thy neck is a sinew of iron and thy brow, brass.” The Douay-Rheims (ϐ) has *forehead* instead of *brow*. ¶ Cowles says: “The special reasons assigned here for the mission of the prophets and for the messages they bore, reveal a degree of apostasy that is startling. Because the people were morally hardened so that their neck was an iron sinew (stiff-necked), and their brow unyielding as brass: lest, if God had not predicted the events beforehand they would have attributed them to their idol gods.” Faussett suggests a string of interesting scriptures: In Ezekiel 3 we read, “But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are

impudent⁶ [HEB, *stiff of forehead*] and *hardhearted* [חֲזָק־מִצַּח וְקָשִׁי-לֵב הָמָּה]. Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads. As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house” (Ezekiel 3:7–9): “They are all grievous revolvers, walking with slanders: they are *brass and iron* [נְחֹשֶׁת וּבְרִזָּל]; they are all corrupters” (Jeremiah 6:28); “Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; and thou hadst a *whore’s* [lit., *female whore*] *forehead* [וּמִצֵּחַ אִשָּׁה זֹנֵה], thou refusedst to be ashamed” (Jeremiah 3:3). ¶ So Gill writes: “*and thy brow brass*] impudent, not ashamed of sin, nor blushing at it, refusing to receive correction for it, having a whore’s forehead.” So we have a combination of *stiff-neckedness* and *shamelessness*. Rabbi Ibn Ezra has: “And thy brow brass. And thou dost not blush, as if thy forehead were brass.” Keith writes: “The obstinacy of Israel in refusing the yoke of God, which is easy, is described in language borrowed from the refusal of its yoke by the bullock. The expression ‘the brow brass,’ denotes the insensibility, the want of shame, the unblushing effrontery, with which the nation pursued sin.” Keith continues: “‘Ye stout-hearted’ they are called; ‘They refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear’ (Zechariah 7:10, 12).” Faussett points us to Acts: “Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye” (Acts 7:51). ¶ Some exegetes seem to bask in their comments against Israel. As I was purchasing some books in a second-hand Christian bookstore a couple of decades ago, the clerk asked me if I was Jewish in the most *shame on you* fashion. How different the kindness of the Lord, who after making His comments of reproof, comes back with a word of consolation (such we see, for instance, in ISAIAH 48:12). The Savior Himself said: “Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again” (Matthew 7:1–2, but also read verses 3–5).

5 And I have even from the beginning declared [it] to thee; before it came to pass I shewed [it] them thee; and I showed them for fear lest thou shouldst say--Mine idol hath done them, and my

⁵ The *yud* (יוד) and *tittle* (κεραία) as representing the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet, the י, as well as the little horn, hook or projection (BDAG) in the Hebrew letters, such as what we find in כ in contrast to כּ.

⁶ Shameless (Webster).

graven image, and my molten image hath commanded them.

And I have even from the beginning declared to thee; before it came to pass I shewed them thee. The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “Therefore I told thee beforehand what would come upon thee.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “I foretold thee of old, before they came to pass I told thee.” ¶ Ibn Ezra explains: “I foretold the coming events, in order that thou shouldst not say when they happened, that thy idols worshipped by thee in thy land had prepared them, that by their decree the events took place.” Calvin says it shows our ingratitude not to honor God’s prophecies and give Him the credit for them. ¶ *And I showed them for fear lest thou shouldst say-- Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image hath commanded them.* The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “I published them that thou mightest not say, ‘The idols have done this to me,’ nor say, ‘The graven or molten images have ordered it for me.’” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has plural for *idols* and *graven images*. ¶ Birks writes: “Inspired prophecies are the proof of God’s real dominion, in contrast to the reign of mere chance, or of vain idols. The chief ‘molten image’ of modern times is the self-developing force of human intellect.”

6 Thou hast **seen and heard** ~~see~~ all this; and will **ye** not ~~ye~~ declare [it] **them**? **And that** I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.

Thou hast seen and heard all this; and will ye not declare them? The Targum (Ⲫ) has, “And as for you, will ye not declare *it*? Hast thou heard whether that was revealed to any people which was revealed unto thee?” The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “You have heard all these things, and did not yourselves know them.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) begins in first person, *I have heard and seen* &c., before switching to third person in this clause. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “See now all the things which thou hast heard: but have you declared them?” ¶ Along with the words already mentioned in the notes on ISAIAH 48:1, **שמעו**, *hear ye* and **שובו**, *turn ye*, the Lord adds, *declare ye*, **הגידו**. Indeed, after *hearing* and *turning* to the Lord, we must truly *declare* the word to others.⁷ ¶ In

⁷ “Therefore, verily I say unto you, **lift up your voices** unto this people; **speak the thoughts that I shall put into your hearts**, and you shall not be confounded before men; **For it shall be given you in the very hour, yea, in the very moment, what ye shall say**. But a commandment I give unto you, **that ye shall declare whatsoever thing ye declare** in my name, in solemnity of heart, in the spirit of meekness, in all things. And I give unto you this promise, that

the Doctrine and Covenants the Lord says that our very testimonies may be lost if we do not declare His word: “But with some I am not well pleased, for they will not open their mouths, but they hide the talent which I have given unto them, because of the fear of man. Wo unto such, for mine anger is kindled against them. And it shall come to pass, if they are not more faithful unto me, it shall be taken away, even that which they have” (D&C 60:2–3). ¶ *And that I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.* The Targum (Ⲫ) has, “I have shewed thee new things from this time, and hidden things, and thou didst not know them.” The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “But now I have made thee hear new things, which shall hereafter come to pass.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “I have shewn thee new things from that time, and things are kept which thou knowest not.” ¶ Several exegetes suggest that these new things are related to what comes next in Isaiah, a focus on the redeeming power of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Horsley has: “But the manner of the first promulgation of the Gospel, our Saviour’s mode of teaching, his reception among the Jews, his behaviour, the circumstances of his death, the success of the Gospel, and its effect upon the Gentile world, are nowhere so distinctly described in detail as in the subsequent chapters of Isaiah.” Faussett explains: “From this point forward, the prophecies as to Messiah’s first and second advents and the restoration of Israel, have a new circumstantial distinctness ... *Hidden*] which could not have been guessed by political sagacity (Daniel 2:22, 29; 1 Corinthians 2:9–10).”

7 They are created now, and not from the beginning, even before the day when thou heardest them not **they were declared unto thee**, lest thou shouldst say-- Behold I knew them.

They are created now, and not from the beginning. The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “Yet hast thou not said, ‘Things done now and not formerly!’” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, for the second clause, “And not of old.” ¶ The situation appeared so quickly and suddenly, as to not have permitted enough time for the sages to have predicted them. ¶ *Even before the day when thou heardest them not they were declared unto thee, lest thou shouldst say-- Behold I knew them.* The Targum (Ⲫ) has, “Yea, I have not announced them before the day of their coming to pass, lest thou shouldst say, Behold, I have known them.” The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “Yes, never in former days didst thou hear these things. Thou shouldst not say, ‘Indeed I know them.’” The BPE (Ⲫ) has,

inasmuch as ye do this **the Holy Ghost shall be shed forth in bearing record unto all things whatsoever ye shall say**” (D&C 100:5–8).

“Before today thou hast not heard them &c.” ¶ The expression, *even before the day*, **וְלִפְנֵי יוֹם**, is an interesting one, as it literally means *even before the face of the day*; perhaps, before the day where they showed their face or themselves. ¶ Faussett, leaning on Maurer has, “And before the day (of their occurrence) thou hast not heard of them”; that is, by any human acuteness; they are only heard of by the present inspired announcement.”

8 Yea, *and* thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time [that] thine ear was not opened; for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb.

Yea, and thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time thine ear was not opened. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Yea, thou didst not listen to the words of the prophets; yea, thou didst not accept the instruction of the law; yea, thou didst not incline thine ear to receive the words of the blessings and curses⁸ of my covenant which I made with you in Horeb.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Thou didst neither know nor didst thou believe, nor did I from the beginning open thine ear.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “Thou hast neither heard, nor known, neither was thy ear opened of old.” ¶ Delitzsch points out the triple **וְ**, *yea*, or often, *also*. Gill has: “This, as Kimhi rightly observes, is said by way of reproof; showing that they were so far from knowing these things before the prophecy of them was given out, that when it was, they did not hearken or listen to them; they did not understand them, nor receive and embrace them, but turned a deaf ear to them; their hearts being hardened, and they given up blindness of mind; which was the case of the Jews, even when the Messiah, the antitype of Cyrus, came, and there was a more clear revelation of Gospel truths, as was foretold, ISAIAH 6:9. To this sense is the Targum (Ⲯ), ‘Yea, thou has not heard the words of the prophets; yea, thou hast not received the doctrine of the law; yea, thou hast not inclined thine ear to the words of the blessings and curses of the covenant I made with thee at Horeb.’” ¶ Wordsworth has: “The word ‘that’ before *thine* is not in the original, and would be better omitted.” So also the Book of Mormon. ¶ Faussett has: “*from that time*”—Omit ‘that.’ ‘Yea, from the first thine ear did not open itself,’ namely, to obey them [Rosenmüller]. ‘To open the ear’ denotes obedient attention (ISAIAH 50:5); or,

‘was not opened’ to receive them; that is, they were not declared by Me to thee previously, since, if thou hadst been informed of them, such is thy perversity, thou couldst not have been kept in check [Maurer]. In the former view, the sense of the words following is, ‘For I knew that, if I had not foretold the destruction of Babylon so plainly that there could be no perverting of it, thou wouldest have perversely ascribed it to idols, or something else than to Me’ (ISAIAH 48:5).” This verse also makes an allusion to ISAIAH 6:8–9, “And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.” Not that Israel had not understood, but rather, as Skinner says, God had not opened her ears to hear—that is, had not *revealed*—for a reason. In this case, lest the people give credit either to their own intelligence of to their idol-gods. ¶ *For I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “For it was manifest to me that thou wouldest altogether deal falsely, and be called a rebel from the womb.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For I knew that, being in rebellion, thou wilt continue to rebel and wilt still be called a transgressor from the womb.” Instead of *treacherously*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *would lie* (Lamsa) / *act in falsehood* (BPE); and instead of *transgressor*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *wicked*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “For I know that transgressing thou wilt transgress, and I have called thee a transgressor from the womb.” ¶ Cowles continues to explain why God’s manifestations were withdrawn: “For he says, ‘I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously.’ The principle which underlies this policy is brought out by our Lord in his relations to the Scribes and Pharisees in a similar moral state; ‘Whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath’ (Matthew 13:10–16) ... Hence these hardened perverse men received far less light from prophecy than they otherwise would ...” ¶ *From the womb.* Birks (also see Faussett and Calvin) suggests: “From the days of Egypt they had sinned and been rebellious, as foretold in the Song of Moses.”

vv. 9–15. The Lord, for His name sake, will not obliterate Israel. The children of Jacob will need to be refined in the furnace of affliction. The Lord is the Great I AM. Faussett explains that in ISAIAH 48:12–15, “The Almighty, who has founded heaven and earth, can, and will, restore His people.” Indeed, He does promise to bring His people out of Babylon. If we would follow, the Lord points the way for us to find peace and joy. The Lord will still honor the Abrahamic covenant as people leave mystical Babylon and come into the waters

⁸ An allusion to the blessings and cursing found in *Rain in Due Season*.

of baptism—but no such blessings are promised to the disobedient.

9 ¶ Nevertheless, for my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain ~~for~~ from thee, that I cut thee not off.

Nevertheless, for my name's sake will I defer mine anger. The LXX (6) reads, “For mine own name’s sake I will shew thee my wrath.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “For my name’s sake I will remove my wrath far off.” ¶ Wordsworth observes: “The contraction of the nostrils was a sign of wrath; the relaxation of them a sign of patience and long-suffering.” Wordsworth so comments because the word translated as *anger* here and in most translations is אַפִּי, *my nostrils*. Gesenius has: “אַפִּי (for אָנַף from the root אָנַף), with suff. , אַפִּי אַפִּי, m. prop. a breathing place, the member with which one breathes, hence—(1) *the nose*. Used of the nose of *men*, Numbers 11:20, and of animals, Job 40:24; אָנַף גְּבוּהָ used of pride, see אָנַף רִיחַ; גְּבוּהָ the blowing of breath through the nostrils, as of those who are enraged, *Schnauben*, Job 4:9. Hence—(2) *anger*, which shows itself in hard breathing; אָנַף בְּעַל Proverbs 22:24, and אִישׁ אָנַף Proverbs 29:22, angry. Very often used of the anger of God, Deuteronomy 32:22; 29:19; Job 36:13.” Cartoons often illustrate the anger of a bull with his head low to the ground, snorting and pawing the dirt. Here at the farm in Llanquihue, Linda & I came across a herd of Holstein cows with a bull present. Gladly, there was a sunken waterway between the herd and ourselves, but it was truly frightening to see a bull in the full manifestation of his fury toward us, the intruders. There was a cloud of dirt around the bull as he violently pawed and snorted onto the soil. We decided not to stay but quickly left. ¶ *And for my praise will I refrain from thee, that I cut thee not off.* The Targum (7) has, “And for my praise I will preserve thee, so as not to destroy thee.” The LXX (6) reads, “And bring upon thee my marvellous things; that I may not cut thee off utterly.” Instead of *I refrain from thee*, the Peshitta (5) has *I keep you* (Lamsa) / *I will preserve you* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “And for my praise I will bridle thee, lest thou shouldst perish.” ¶ Faussett says, regarding *refrain*: “Literally, ‘muzzle.’” Muzzles are put on horses, for instance, to keep them from eating; or on dogs, to keep them from biting. Leaning on Rashi, Rosenberg explains that אָנַף, whose root is אָנַף, or what we have as muzzle, also means to restrain the nose (also see BDB). Some sorts of bridles act on the nose rather than on the mouth of

the horse. But returning to Rosenberg, “I will close My nose not to allow the smoke of My nostrils to go out and not to be angry with you, for when one is angry, smoke comes out of his nostrils ... My nose is heated from much heat.” Barnes says: “The word here used (אָנַף) properly to muzzle, and is commonly employed with reference to an animal in order to tame or subdue it. Here it means that God would restrain himself.” Cowles says: “Under great provocation, the Lord yet restrained himself from inflicting the punishment they had deserved.” ¶ In Eastern nations the motif of *saving face* is strong. I enjoyed much of the book, *Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes: Removing Cultural Blinders to Better Understand the Bible* by Randolph Richards and Brandon J. O’Brien. Because especially Isaiah’s readership at the time he lived would have really understood this issue of suffering shame, I wonder if the Lord did not use that as an explanation for His mercy toward the children of Israel.⁹ Barnes gives the motives for divine patience as God’s own character: “It was on his own account—in order to show his covenant faithfulness; his fidelity to the promises made to their fathers, his mercy, his compassion, his readiness to pardon, and his unchanging love.” This theme is picked up again in ISAIAH 48:11.

⁹ See also Jacob 5, as well as the Torah, where prophets intercede on behalf of others using these very same arguments. So it is, for instance, that we read in Exodus 32: “And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation. And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath. Thy people will repent of this evil, therefore come thou not out against them. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever. And the LORD said unto Moses, if they will repent of the evil which they have done, I will spare them, and turn away my fierce wrath [אָנַף] — Or, as Lexham Interlinear, *from the blazing of your nose*.]; but, behold, thou shalt execute judgment upon all that will not repent of this evil this day. Therefore, see thou do this thing that I have commanded thee, or I will execute all that which I had thought to do unto my people” (Exodus 32:9–14, *Inspired Version*). *Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, OT2 69 – Exodus 21:21–33:1 (OT Photo) Edited by Scott H. Faulring and Kent P. Jackson, 2011. Compare with *The Complete Joseph Smith Translation of the Old Testament: A Side-By-Side Comparison with the King James Version*. 2009, by Thomas A. Wayment; and *Joseph Smith’s “New Translation” of the Bible*, Herald Publishing House, Independence, Missouri, Edited by Paul A. Wellington, 1970.

10 For, behold, I have refined thee, ~~but not with silver;~~ I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

✓ or, for silver

The Targum (T) has, “Behold, I have refined thee, but not in the crucible of silver; I tried thee in the distress of poverty.” The LXX (G) reads, “Behold I sold thee; but not for money; and I have rescued thee out of the furnace of affliction.” The first half, the BPE (S) has, “Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tried you in the furnace of affliction.” For the last clause, the Lamsa Peshitta (S) has, “I have purified you in the furnace of affliction.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Behold I have refined thee, but not as silver, I have chosen thee in the furnace of poverty.” ¶ Cowles has: “Egypt ... was historically their ‘furnace of affliction.’” The furnace of affliction that Judah had to endure in recent times, in the 20th Century, leaves me speechless and full of anguish. Yet Barnes suggests: “Possibly this may be the idea, that their affliction had prepared them to embrace his offers and to seek consolation in him; and he may design to teach that one effect of affliction is to *prepare the mind to embrace the offers of mercy*” (emphasis added). ¶ Elder Neal A. Maxwell, speaking of the process of refinement explained, “The painful and sometimes protracted process of refining is thus necessary in order to identify, separate, and cast off the dross. Uncharitableness, for instance, is to be burned away ‘in the furnace of affliction’ (ISAIAH 48:10; see also Alma 34:29). Our mortal tours in the ‘furnace of affliction’ will vary widely as to frequency and intensity. How could our personal empathy be genuinely and lastingly established and enlarged without refining experiences in the furnace of affliction? Even so, you and I do not loiter around these furnaces waiting for extra tours in those ovens. Yet without enduring there could be no finishing or polishing. It is not only the dross impurities that must go but also coarseness of all kinds. This is necessary in order for us to develop the highest forms of personality and character. In fact, the Greek word translated as perfect in Matthew 5:48 means ‘finished,’ ‘fully developed,’ or ‘complete.’ Therefore the dross is to be steadily removed in the refining process, while the precious cardinal qualities and attributes are to be etched everlastingly into one’s soul.”¹⁰ Elder Orson F. Whitney also testified: “No pain that we suffer, no trial that we experience is wasted. It ministers to our education, to the development of such qualities as patience, faith, fortitude and humility. All that we suffer

and all that we endure, especially when we endure it patiently, builds up our characters, purifies our hearts, expands our souls, and makes us more tender and charitable, more worthy to be called the children of God ... and it is through sorrow and suffering, toil and tribulation, that we gain the education that we come here to acquire and which will make us more like our Father and Mother in heaven.”¹¹ President Brigham Young warned, speaking of the Saints, “Tell them that, in gathering, they are going to the thrashing machine—that they will then be run through the smutter, afterwards through the mill; and if they prove to be fine flour, they will be saved: if not, all their previous righteousness will be counted as nothing.”¹² ¶ Years ago I wrote in my journal: “Last Sunday, I had a very spiritual experience out of a small, even inconsequential trial. I had a plate of spaghetti in my hands, and dropped it all over the kitchen floor. The splash made a terrible greasy red mess! I was tired and frustrated, and rested my head against the wall.” I remember feeling a bit sorry for myself and wishing someone would come and help me pick up my mess—or at least keep me company while I did. A very sweet Spirit came over me and I thought how wonderful it would be to help others with their spilled spaghetti, so to speak. I continue with my journal, “As I cleaned up the mess, I was almost in tears, but this time, with the thought of how beautiful it would be to ‘Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees’ (ISAIAH 35:3, cf. Hebrews 12:12), and help someone else. I made the resolve to be quick to help others who [might] spill their mess, or be helpful where I could.”¹³ ¶ The expression, *not with silver*, does not appear in the Book of Mormon (but was not removed from the Bible in the Inspired Version). I find it interesting that Skinner, regarding the silver, says, “None of the proposed interpretations is entirely satisfactory.” Gill says: “But it is not usual to refine with silver; not silver with silver, nor any other metal with it; that itself is what is refined; this therefore cannot be the sense of the words ...” ¶ Wordsworth is here filled with love and tenderness towards Israel: “Rather, *not as silver*, but as something far more precious; and therefore to be refined with much greater care. Compare 1 Peter 1:7, ‘The trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth.’ The refiner of silver may lose some grains of the good ore in the smelting; but I will not lose a single grain of

¹¹ Quoted in Dawn Anderson, Dloria Dalton, and Susette Green, eds., *Every Good Thing: Talks from the 1997 BYU Women’s Conference*, p.22, and in turn from President Spencer W. Kimball, ‘Tragedy or Destiny,’ *Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year* (Provo, 6 Dec. 1955).

¹² Young, President Brigham. Religion of the Saints. JD 8:71b.

¹³ Billikopf, Gregorio. Journal. 18 May 2000.

¹⁰ Maxwell, Neal A. *If Thou Endure It Well*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1996. pp. 3–4.

thee, in the spiritual process of refining thee by the furnace of affliction at Babylon.”

11 For mine own sake, [even] yea, for mine own sake will I do [it] this, for how should I will not suffer [my name] to be polluted?, and I will not give my glory unto another.

For mine own sake, yea, for mine own sake will I do this, for I will not suffer my name to be polluted. The Targum (T) has, “For my name’s sake, for the sake of my Word, that it may not be profaned, I will do it, and my glory in which I have revealed myself unto you.” The LXX (G) reads, “For mine own sake I will deal with thee; because my name hath been profaned.” The BPE (S) has, “For my own sake will I do it, that it may not be profaned.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, for the last clause, “That I may not be blasphemed.” The repetition of *for mine own sake* appears not only in the Masoretic text (M), לְמַעַנִּי לְמַעַנִּי, but also in the DSS 1QIsa^a (Q), לְמַעַנִּי לְמַעַנִּי, and in 4QIsa^d (Q), לְמַעַנִּי לְמַעַנִּי. The Masoretic text (M) has *how should be polluted*,¹⁴ אֵיךְ יִחַל, while the DSS 1QIsa^a (Q) has *how should be profaned*,¹⁵ אֵיכָה אִיחַל. The DSS 4QIsa^c (Q) has a small fragment in which אִיחַל is preserved. DSS 4QIsa^d (Q) has, *how should be profaned*, אֵיךְ אִיחַל. ¶ Regarding the elliptical expression, *my name*, Lowth says: “The word שְׁמִי, *my name*, is dropt out of the text: it is supplied by a MS. which has שְׁמִי; and by the LXX.” It is also supplied by the Book of Mormon. ¶ *And I will not give my glory unto another.* The Targum (T) has, “I will not give to another people.” The LXX (G) reads, “And my glory I will not give to another.” The BPE (S) has, “That I may not give my glory to another.” ¶ Nägelsbach says: “The words: *and I will not give my honor to another*, ver. 11b, in which manifestly the thought of ISAIAH 48:9–11 culminates, is a literal repetition of ISAIAH 42:8. By this the Prophet intimates that in these words, too (ISAIAH 48:9–11), he only repeats what he had said before.” Faussett writes: “*not give my glory unto another*”—If God forsook His people forever, the heathen would attribute their triumph over Israel to their idols; so God’s glory would be given to another.” Delitzsch and Nägelsbach point us to Ezekiel 36, as a commentary on this verse: “And I scattered them among the heathen,

and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them. And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name, when they said to them, These are the people of the LORD, and are gone forth out of his land. But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went. Therefore say unto the house of Israel, thus saith the Lord GOD [or more literally, אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה]¹⁶; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name’s sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD [or rather, אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה], when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes” (Ezekiel 36:19–23).¹⁷

12 Harken unto me, O Jacob, and Israel, my called, for I [am] he; I [am] the first, and I am also [am] the last.

Harken unto me, O Jacob, and Israel, my called. The LXX (G) reads, “Harken to me, Jacob! and thou Israel whom I call.” Instead of *my called*, the Peshitta (S) has *whom I called*. The Masoretic text (M) has *hearken unto me*, שְׁמַע אֵלַי, as does DSS 4QIsa^d (Q), שְׁמַע אֵלַי, while the DSS 1QIsa^a (Q) has *hearken [unto] these [things]*¹⁸, שְׁמַע אֵלֶּה. ¶ Whitehouse well notes: “We note the friendly tone towards Israel *my called*.” This expression is parallel to that of *my people*. ¶ *For I am he; I am the first, and I am also the last.* The Targum (T) has, “I am *He*, who *was* of old, yea, ages after ages are mine, and besides me there is no God.” The LXX (G) reads, “I am the first and am forever.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, for the last clause, “I am the last.” In this clause we have something interesting to LDS. Let us first look at Table 48–1. It provides the Masoretic text (M), the literal English translation of both the Masoretic text (M) and the DSS 1QIsa^a (Q) (they are the same other than a small difference in the spelling of the word *he*) and finally, the DSS 1QIsa^a (Q). The KJV (also the AMP, ASV, DSSB, JPS and RV) render the last clause as: “I also am the last.” The

¹⁴ See Gesenius, HALOT, DBL, חָלַל.

¹⁵ See Gesenius, אִיחַל.

¹⁶ The AV version follows the Jewish tradition of pronouncing the words as Lord God.

¹⁷ This chapter in Ezekiel is preparatory for the great Ezekiel 37, wherein the groundwork is being laid in order to remind Israel about the importance of the coming forth of both the Bible and the Book of Mormon.

¹⁸ DSSB.

Book of Mormon corrected the order to read: “I am also the last.” Although either translation is appropriate, it is interesting that two very respected versions have since followed the Book of Mormon’s lead, including the HCSB and the NASB. Regarding the expression *I he*, Baltzer has “‘I am the One’ (אֲנִי הוּא), means the one who is already known.” Baltzer goes on to compare the idea to the meaning of the word Jehovah, יְהוָה. So Gill, “... the everlasting I AM, the immutable Jehovah, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending.”

Table 48–1

אֲחֵרֹן	אֲנִי	אֲף	רִאשׁוֹן	אֲנִי	אֲנִי-הוּא	מ
<i>last</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>also</i>	<i>first</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>He – I</i>	
אֲחֵרֹן	אֲנִי	אֲף	רִישׁוֹן	אֲנִי	אֲנִי הוּא	ק

From top to bottom we have (1) Masoretic text (מ), (2) literal English translation of both Masoretic text (מ) and of the DSS 1QIsa^a (ק) and finally, (3) we have the DSS 1QIsa^a (ק). Read the English from right to left.

The DSS 4QIsa^d (ק) has also been preserved, the major differences are that the word אֲחֵרֹן (last) is missing, and that a *synonym* of אֲף (also) is used, that is גַּם, אֲנִי הוּא אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן גַּם אֲנִי. Also, הוּא (he) is spelled as in the Masoretic text (מ).

13 Mine hand **hath** also ~~hath~~ laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens. [✓] [when] I call unto them **and** they stand up together.

✓ or, the palm of my right hand hath spread out

Mine hand hath also laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens. The Targum (ט) has, for the second clause, “And by my might I have suspended the heavens.” The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “My hand hath founded the earth, and my right hand hath established the heaven.” The Douay-Rheims (ϛ) has, “My hand also hath founded the earth, and my right hand hath measured the heavens.” ¶ Jennings testifies: “‘All things were created by Him, and for Him; and He is before all things, and by Him all things subsist’ (Colossians 1:16–17 summarized).” Jesus is *Jehovah!*” ¶ *I call unto them and they stand up together.* The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “Let me summon them and let them stand together.” ¶ Ibn Ezra speaks of the authority that God has over the heavens and the earth: “The literal meaning ... is: ‘I have made them, and when I call them to do My will and desire they stand both before Me like servants.’” In LDS theology the earth is alive and will someday die and be resurrected, and certainly is obedient to the word of the Lord.

14 All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; **which** **who** among them hath declared these [things] **unto them**? The LORD hath loved him; **yea, and he will fulfil his word which he hath declared by them; and he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm [shall be on] come upon the Chaldeans.**

All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; who among them hath declared these things unto them? The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “Let them all be assembled and listen. Who hath told them these things?” The Douay-Rheims (ϛ) has, “Assemble yourselves together, all you, and hear: who among them hath declared these things?” ¶ The people are called to pay very careful attention to what is about to be said. The KJV has, “Which among them hath declared &c.” The Book of Mormon corrects this to *who* instead of *which*. The AMP, BBE, DRB (based on Vulgate), DSSB (based on the DSS), LBP (based on Peshitta), LITV, Brenton (based on LXX), LHI, MKJV, NASB, Webster, and YLT all use *who*, as does the Book of Mormon. The Hebrew in the Masoretic text (מ) and in the DSS 1QIsa^a (ק) both have מִי, which is typically translated as *who*, but not always. ¶ Alexander writes: “*Who among them*, i.e. the false gods or their prophets, *hath declared* (predicted) *these things*, the whole series of events which had been cited to demonstrate the divine foreknowledge.” The *new things* and the *hidden things* would be declared: the things that idols or wise men could not reveal. The expression, *the word declared by them* seems to be an allusion to the predictions brought forth by the Lord’s righteous prophets from the beginning, as inspired by the Spirit; especially those things that have to do with the coming Messiah. *His word* which has been *declared by them*, clearly refers to the *words of Christ*, as uttered from the *mouths of the Prophets* from the beginning. By careful reading of this verse, we see that the same person whose words have been fulfilled, is also the person who God loves: Christ. Isaiah already has his eyes on the coming prophecies about Messiah, and has here just barely cracked the door for us. The beloved Son, the only begotten of the Father, is next to be revealed, especially beginning with ISAIAH 49, but with a hint of it right here in this and other verses in ISAIAH 48 (Isaiah used the same pattern, when slowly revealing Cyrus as a type of Christ). We earlier noted that when one takes a video, the frames move quite quickly to give the idea of action. But in reality, changes of scene often have a natural fade, wherein a scene that is being completed dissolves into the new one. So it is here, where Cyrus and

Babylon dissolve into the prophecies regarding the Messiah. ¶ *The LORD hath loved him. Yea, and he will fulfil his word which he hath declared by them; and he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm shall come upon the Chaldeans.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “He will do his pleasure on Babylon, and He will reveal the strength of His arm on the Chaldeans.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “I who love thee” and “Have executed thy will on Babylon, to take away the seed of the Chaldeans.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “The Lord hath loved him, he will do his pleasure in Babylon, and his arm shall be on the Chaldeans.” The Targum (Ⲯ) has the closing clause as, “hath declared these *things* ever since the Lord loved Israel?” ¶ Regarding the *loved one*, some—such as the Targum (Ⲯ), Alexander and Cowles—suggest these words speak of *Israel*. There is *no doubt* that Israel is beloved of the Lord, but this is not the main meaning of this expression. Remember what we have already said, the same person whose words have been fulfilled, is the person who God the Father loves. Even without the benefit of the Book of Mormon rendering, Kay beautifully says: “Cyrus is here alluded to in language, which seems studiously designed to prepare for the coming forward of Him who will soon occupy the whole field of vision.” Faussett likewise has: “Jehovah’s language of love is too strong to apply to Cyrus, except as type of *Messiah*, to whom alone it fully applies.” Christ is frequently mentioned as the beloved of God in the Scriptures: “And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17; also see Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22; Ephesians 1:6); “But, behold, my Beloved Son, which was my Beloved and Chosen from the beginning, said unto me—Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever” (Moses 4:2); and of course, from the boy Prophet, “When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*” (JS—History 1:17). ¶ *The Chaldeans.* Horsley suggests: “I suspect that something has been lost out of the text between the two words וְזַרְעוֹ [and his arm] and כְּשָׂרָיו [Chaldeans]. The ellipsis in this verse is filled in the KJV by *shall be on*. AMP uses *will be against*; NAS77, *shall be against*; and YLT, *is on*. The Book of Mormon renders *shall come upon* as connecting words: *and his arm shall come upon the Chaldeans*. The meaning is the same, but I find the Book of Mormon especially pleasing. There is a historical allusion regarding Babylon and the work that would be carried out by Cyrus. Ibn Ezra has: “*His pleasure*] The pleasure of God. Cyrus will perform the will of God concerning Babylon, and show ‘His arm’ against the Chaldeans.” Barnes says: “None of the astrologers, soothsayers, or

diviners of Babylon had been able to foretell the expedition and the conquests of Cyrus, and the capture of the city. If they *had* been able to foresee the danger, they might have guarded against it, and the city might have been saved. But God had predicted it a hundred and fifty years before it occurred, and this demonstrated, therefore, that he alone was God.” Although Alexander provides a different meaning as to who the beloved of the Lord is, he says: “(Jehovah’s) *arm* (shall be upon) *the Chaldees*.” Cyrus is only an extension of the Lord’s arm. It would also be the arm of Christ that would help Israel escape mystical Babylon in the latter days.

15 Also, saith the Lord; I the Lord, yea, [even] I have spoken; yea, I have called him to declare, I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous.

Also, saith the Lord; I the Lord, yea, I have spoken; yea, I have called him to declare. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “I by my Word have made a covenant with Abraham your father.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “I have spoken, I have called.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “I, even I have spoken and called him.” ¶ Barnes has, “The word ‘I’ is repeated to give emphasis, and to furnish the utmost security that it should be certainly accomplished. It means that Jehovah, and he alone, had declared this, and that it was entirely by his power that Cyrus had been raised up, and had been made prosperous.” In the Masoretic text (ⲙ) it appears as אֲנִי, אֲנִי, אֲנִי “I, I, I ...” ¶ *I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Yea, I have called him, I have brought him into the land of the place of my Shekinah, and I prospered his way.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “I have brought him, and have made his way prosperous.” Instead of *he shall make his way prosperous*, the Peshitta (ⲥ) has *I have made his way prosperous*. ¶ Westermann says that “the *hiph* ‘l of וַיַּעַל properly means ‘to make solid by treading,’ and so ‘to make a way.’ This is the same preparing of the way as is spoken of in ISAIAH 40:3 f.” Indeed, the Lord, through His expiatory sacrifice has paved the way for us, has made the way passable. It is the Lord who both prepares the way for us and prospers it for our benefit.

vv. 16–22. Come unto Christ, our Redeemer. Peace is poured out upon the Lord’s disciples—but not on the disobedient. Flee from mystic Babylon.

16 ¶ Come ye near unto me; ~~hear ye this;~~ I have not spoken in secret; from the beginning, from the time that it was

declared have there [am] I spoken; and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me.

Come ye near unto me; I have not spoken in secret; from the beginning. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Come ye near to my Word; hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Draw near to me and hear these things: from the beginning I have not spoken in secret.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “Come ye near unto me, and hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning.” ¶ Barnes suggests: “The idea here is, that he had foretold the raising up of Cyrus, and his agency in delivering his people, in terms so plain that it could not be pretended that it was conjectured, and so clear that there was no ambiguity.” Horsley brilliantly has: “In this passage, Messiah, comparing the enigmatical style and manner, the studied reserve as it were of the earlier revelations, with the clear and open manner of the Gospel, justly says, that in former times He had spoken in mystery. To us now the prophecies of the universal redemption, and even of the manner of it by our Lord’s humiliation and sufferings, seem in many parts at least sufficiently perspicuous and explicit. But if we consider the manner in which they were delivered, *in figurative language, many of them grafted upon other subjects, introduced abruptly in the midst of other things, and the clearest of them often interrupted by subordinate matter occasionally thrown in*,¹⁹ we may easily conceive that the obscurity of them must have been very great, till they were expounded by the actual accomplishment. And this we may the more easily understand by the obscurity which yet remains upon those that relate to things yet to come—the conversion of the Jews, and the fall of Antichrist—which though very perspicuous as to the general promise of final peace and prosperity to the Church, are obscure enough with respect to the detail of the events which they seem to contain. Certainly therefore the Messiah may well be supposed to say, that before his coming in the flesh He had spoken in mystery. In comparison with the clear language of the gospels, the earlier revelations had been ‘a speaking darkly’ in mystery. In comparison with the pretended oracles of the heathen, the prophecies were ‘a speaking not darkly,’ not in the disguise of equivocation” (emphasis added). The words קָרְבוּ אֵלַי, *draw near unto me* (Ⲅ, ESV, ISV, LEB, Rotherham, TLV) are trully beautiful, and a constant invitation from our Savior to do precisely that. The Lord never stops beckoning unto us, to draw near unto Him, and to

reason with Him. ¶ *From the time that it was declared have I spoken; and the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “At the time when the nations separated themselves from fearing me, at the time I brought Abraham your father (the Royal Polyglot omits אֲבִיכֶם ‘your father’) to my service. The prophet saith: And now the Lord God, and His Word, hath sent me.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “When it was doing I was there. And now the Lord Lord (Brenton, ‘and now the Lord, *even* the Lord’) hath sent me and his spirit.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “From the time before it was done, I was there, and now the Lord God hath sent me, and his spirit.” Or more literally, *Lord LORD, Adonai Yahweh* [אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה]. ¶ Even so, the expression still seems to speak of the Godhead. The author of this verse is Jehovah who is speaking through the principle of *Divine Investiture*, for the Father. I find it extremely interesting that others also believe in the principle of *Divine Investiture*, even if they do not give it this name. For instance, the Editor of the Soncino edition of the *Babylonian Talmud*, in a footnote, says that Isaiah is here speaking in first person *on behalf of the Lord* (Seder Mo’ed, Mo’ed Katan 16b, footnote 9). Alexander even uses such words as being articulated: “by *divine authority* and inspiration” (emphasis added). Westermann says: “The speaker is someone who is certain that he has been sent by God and endowed with his spirit. Precisely the same sentiments are expressed in the Servant Song in ISAIAH 49:1–6.” A song about Christ! Cheyne explains that there are two ways to look at the Hebrew: “It has been much debated ... whether the Spirit is the sender or the sent ... Grammatically, both renderings are equally admissible.” So also Lowth, quoting Origen, “Who is it that saith in Isaiah, And now the Lord hath sent me and his Spirit? in which, as the expression is ambiguous, is it the Father and the Holy Spirit who hath sent Jesus; or the Father who hath sent both Christ and the Holy Spirit? The latter is the true interpretation (Origen. cont. Cels. lib. i.)” Alexander has: “The main proposition is, *the Lord God hath sent me*. The supplementary expression *and his Spirit* may be introduced, without absurdity or any violation of the rules of syntax ...” Cowles has: “For all the difficulties [in this verse] are at once obviated by the supposition that the distinction of persons in the Godhead [is meant] ... [Christ] commissioned the prophets of the Old Testament no less distinctly than the apostles of the New. They were not only prophets of Christ, but prophets speaking *for* Christ—inspired and sent by him.” ¶ Elder Mark E. Petersen gave scriptural proof that the Prophets of old, such as Isaiah, were moved upon by the Holy Ghost and quoted Acts 8:27–39, 28:25; 2 Peter 1:20–21. Regarding ISAIAH 48:12–13, 16–17, Elder Peterson says: “Not only is this another affirmation of the Savior on the part of the Isaiah, but it

¹⁹ It had to be done this way, at least in part, in order to avoid further corruption of the Biblical text by “designing and corrupt priests” (TPJS).

also indicates the influence of the Holy Spirit which ‘hath sent me.’”²⁰ ¶ Kay, in another part of ISAIAH 48 well has: “The ‘new things’ being those that are soon to be announced in ISAIAH 49–55.”

17 And thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I [am] have sent him, the LORD thy God which who teacheth thee to profit, which who leadeth thee by the way [that] thou shouldest go, hath done it.

And thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I have sent him. The LXX (6) reads, “Thus saith the Lord who hath redeemed thee, the Holy One of Israel.” ¶ Ibn Ezra explains: “Thy redeemer, etc. The words which follow are to announce the reward of those that listen to the words of the Lord. Baltzer writes: “The formula for the prophetic oracles is of course: ‘Thus says Yahweh’ (כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה). It could well be, however, that this is indeed the same formula, but that it has been expanded by ‘your redeemer’ (גֹּאֲלְךָ) ... (Who is) ‘our redeemer?’ The answer is, ‘Yahweh Sabaoth is his name, the Holy One of Israel.’” Likewise: “Who he this King of glory? מִי הוּא זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד.” ANSWER – shout it out with joy! “The LORD of hosts, He is the King of glory, יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת הוּא מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד” (Psalm 24:10). ¶ The LORD thy God who teacheth thee to profit, who leadeth thee by the way thou shouldest go, hath done it. The Targum (7) has, “Who teacheth thee what will profit thee, who sheweth the way wherein thou shouldest walk.” The LXX (6) reads, “I am thy God. I pointed out to thee, how to find the way in which thou shouldst walk.” Instead of *to profit*, the Peshitta (5) has *not to do wrong* (Lamsa) / *that you may not exalt yourself* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (8) has, “I am the Lord thy God that teach thee profitable things, that govern thee in the way that thou walkest.” ¶ Rawlinson has: “God’s teachings are all directed to the ‘profit’ of those to whom they are addressed; and, if received in a proper spirit, actually ‘profit’ them more than anything else can do.” Rawlinson does well is quoting 2 Timothy 3:16. Wade notes: “The conception of the Lord as a teacher appears in Jeremiah 32:33²¹; Psalm 71:17; perhaps cf. also ISAIAH 30:20.” Faussett has: “teacheth ... *to profit*—by affliction, such as the Babylonish

captivity, and the present long-continued dispersion of Israel (Hebrews 12:10).” The Talmud interestingly has: “R. Huna reporting R. Eleazar said: From the Pentateuch, the Prophets and the Hagiographa it may be shown that *one is allowed to follow the road he wishes to pursue*. From the Pentateuch, as it is written, And God said to Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them (Numbers 22:12) and then it is written, [If the men came to call thee] rise up and go with them (Numbers 22:12). From the Prophets, as it is written, I am the Lord thy God who teacheth thee for thy profit, who leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go (ISAIAH 48:17). From the Hagiographa, as it is written, If he is of the scornors, he will [be allowed to] speak scorn and [if] of the meek, he will show forth grace (Proverbs 3:24)” (Makkoth 10b, *Babylonian Talmud*, Soncino, emphasis added). Rabbi Rosenberg explains this Talmudic section as one of moral agency. Using the words of the Prophet Alma, we might say to follow after the desires of our heart. As a result of such *desires* (for the true desires of our hearts will turn into action), “The one raised to happiness according to his desires of happiness, or good according to his desires of good; and the other to evil according to his desires of evil; for as he has desired to do evil all the day long even so shall he have his reward of evil when the night cometh” (Alma 41:5). There is another reason why the Talmudic quote is so interesting. Many exegetes seem to make no sense of ISAIAH 48:22, “There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.” Yet that note is exactly the same one we find in the Book of Mormon, in the very chapter of Alma we have quoted, “Do not suppose, because it has been spoken concerning restoration, that ye shall be restored from sin to happiness. Behold, I say unto you, *wickedness never was happiness*” (Alma 41:10, emphasis added). The point is this; both ISAIAH and Alma invite us to follow the Lord. Both also warn us to be careful about the desires of our heart, because these will be followed by consequences both in this life, and throughout eternity. Both Isaiah and Alma warn us to avoid *wickedness*. There is אֵין שְׁלוֹם an *absence of peace*, a *want* of *Shalom* (i.e., of true *joy*). And what does Alma tell us? Precisely the identical thing, once again, that *wickedness never was happiness*.

18 O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments—then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.

O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments. The LXX (6) reads, “And hadst thou hearkened to my commandments.” ¶ Horsley suggests that ISAIAH 48:18–19 are closely related to Matthew 23:37. Barnes points

²⁰ Petersen, Elder Mark E., *Isaiah for Today*, p.124–125.

²¹ “And they have **turned** unto me the back, and not the face: though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction” (Jeremiah 32:33, note that פָּנָה seems to be a synonym of שׁוּב [to turn towards God or away from Him, to repent, or to apostatize].

to Psalm 81: “Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. The haters of the LORD should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured forever. He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee” (Psalm 81:13–16). And Calvin well suggests the similarity in the lament found in the *Rain in Due Season*: “O that they were wise [לִי חָכְמוֹן], that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!” (Deuteronomy 32:29). Nephi’s brother, Jacob, also pleads with us: “O then, my beloved brethren, repent ye, and enter in at the strait gate, and continue in the way which is narrow, until ye shall obtain eternal life. O be wise; what can I say more?” (Jacob 6:11–12). ¶ *Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.* The Targum (ܬ) suggests that the river is the Euphrates. The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “Thy peace would have been like a river and thy righteousness like a wave of the sea.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Thy peace had been as a river, and thy justice as the waves of the sea.” ¶ Barnes says: “Rivers are often used by the sacred writers, and particularly by Isaiah, as symbolical of plenty and prosperity.” Alexander notes: “The ideas suggested by the figure of a river, are abundance, perpetuity, and freshness, to which the waves of the sea add those of vastness, depth, and continual succession.” There are similar verses in the Book of Mormon, spoken by the mouth of Lehi—who like his son Nephi—must have loved the writings of the Prophet Isaiah: “And it came to pass that he called the name of the river, Laman, and it emptied into the Red Sea; and the valley was in the borders near the mouth thereof. And when my father saw that the waters of the river emptied into the fountain of the Red Sea, he spake unto Laman, saying: O that thou mightest be like unto this river, continually running into the fountain of all righteousness! And he also spake unto Lemuel: O that thou mightest be like unto this valley, firm and steadfast, and immovable in keeping the commandments of the Lord! Now this he spake because of the stiffneckedness of Laman and Lemuel; for behold they did murmur in many things against their father, because he was a visionary man, and had led them out of the land of Jerusalem, to leave the land of their inheritance, and their gold, and their silver, and their precious things, to perish in the wilderness. And this they said he had done because of the foolish imaginations of his heart” (1Nephi 2:8–11). The context of both scriptures is quite similar. They are both *laments* for what could have been. ¶ In the last days, through the gathering this anguishing news—for any father—would be turned into unutterable joy. Keith adds: “The same illustration of divine compassion often

occurs; the same affectionate and mournful lament is often made for Israel: ‘that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever’ (Deuteronomy 5:29).” Given life’s vicissitudes and our tendency to fret, the expression שְׁלוֹם לָךְ, *peace unto thee*, “is used to encourage one who is fearful, and to assure him of peace, in this sense, There is nothing for thee (for you) to fear, thou art (ye are) in safety” (Gesenius). שְׁלוֹם means much more than the absence of war, but it includes inner *peace*, health, even joy. The link between peace and joy is found throughout. For instance, we read in Helaman: “... and they were filled with *that joy which is unspeakable* and full of glory. And behold, the Holy Spirit of God did come down from heaven, and did enter into their hearts, and they were filled as if with fire, and they could speak forth marvelous words. And it came to pass that there came a voice unto them, yea, a pleasant voice, as if it were a whisper, saying: *Peace, peace* be unto you, because of your faith in my Well Beloved, who was from the foundation of the world” (Helaman 5:44b–47). ¶ President Ezra Taft Benson testified: “Men and women who turn their lives over to God will discover that He can make a lot more out of their lives than they can. He will deepen their joys, expand their vision, quicken their minds, strengthen their muscles, lift their spirits, multiply their blessings, increase their opportunities, comfort their souls, raise up friends, and pour out peace. Whoever will lose his life in the service of God will find eternal life.”²² It makes sense, then, that the opposite would also be true, as we read in ISAIAH 48:22.

19 Thy seed also had been as the sand;
and the offspring of thy bowels like the
gravel thereof; his name should not have
been cut off nor destroyed from before
me.

Thy seed also had been as the sand; the offspring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof. The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “And thy seed would have been as the sand, and the issue of thy bowels as the dust of the ground.” The DSS 1QIsa^a (Q) has *and your offspring*, וְצִמְצִימְךָ, while the Masoretic text (M) has *and offspring [of] thy bowels*, וְצִמְצִימְךָ מִעֵיךְ. ¶ Whitehouse correctly points to promises associated with the Abrahamic covenant found in Genesis: “And I will make thy seed as the dust

²² Benson, President Ezra Taft. “Jesus Christ—Gifts and Expectations,” Christmas Devotional, Salt Lake City, Utah, 7 December 1986.

of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered” (Genesis 13:16); and “That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies” (Genesis 22:17). Jenour explains: “Great increase in their numbers was one of the blessings frequently promised to the Israelites if they continued obedient; and on the contrary, diminution in their numerical strength, was one of the curses threatened against their disobedience. Compare Deuteronomy 28²³ throughout.” ¶ *His name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before me.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The name of Israel should not have ceased nor have been destroyed from before me for ever.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Still however thou shalt not be utterly cut off; nor shall thy name perish from before me.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “His name should not have perished, nor have been destroyed from before my face.” Without apostasy, the name of Jehovah would have been always honored.

20 Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it ~~it~~ ^{even} to the end of the earth; say ye: The LORD hath redeemed his servant Jacob.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, for the last clause, “The Lord hath redeemed His servants from the house of Jacob.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Haste out of Babylon! flee from the Chaldeans: proclaim the joyful news: and let this be published. Proclaim even to the end of the earth— Say ‘The Lord hath delivered his servant Jacob.’” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “Come forth out of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, declare it with the voice of joy: make this to be heard, and speak it out even to the ends of the earth. Say: The Lord hath redeemed his servant Jacob.” ¶ We have additional words of invitation—*go ye out of Babel, flee ye from Chaldeans:* **צֵאוּ מִבָּבֶל בְּרַחוּ מִכַּשְׁדִּים**. ¶ Regarding former times, Rawlinson observes: “It might have seemed that no exhortation would be needed; that, as soon as the prison-doors were set open, there would be a general rush to escape. But, when the time came, it was not so. Those only availed themselves of the edict of Cyrus ‘whose spirit God had raised to go up and build his house’ (Ezra 1:5). The wealthier classes, Josephus tells us (‘Ant. Jud.’ 11:1), remained... Motives of various kinds detained others. The result was that probably a larger number elected to continue in the country than to return to Palestine.” Delitzsch has: “They are to go out

of Babylon, and with speed and joy to leave the land of slavery and idolatry far behind.” Birks says, “The message closes with a direct command to the exiles of Israel to set out joyfully on their way to Zion.” Horsley likewise writes: “It is a mystical Babylon therefore that is here intended (compare Revelation 18:4).” Indeed, and the message in the latter-days is to all of scattered Israel—leave mystical Babylon and come unto Zion. Come unto Christ! ¶ *With a voice of singing,* **בְּקוֹל רִנָּה**. Or, with a voice of rejoicing, of joy, of gladness, shouting, proclamation. This is the voice with which we are to share the gospel with others. ¶ *Utter to the end of the earth.* Israel has been scattered to the ends of the earth, and we are to proclaim the *good news* to the ends of the earth (Deuteronomy 30:1–6) through the Book of Mormon (Ezekiel 37:15 ff, including 37:21). What is the good news? The LORD hath redeemed his servant Jacob. Our Savior has paid the price of redemption.

21 And they thirsted not; ~~when~~ he led them through the deserts; he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them; he clave²⁴ the rock also and the waters gushed out.

And they thirsted not; he led them through the deserts. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “He will not suffer them to thirst in the desert; He will guide them.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And if they shall thirst (for he will lead them through a desert).” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “They thirsted not in the desert, when he led them out.” ¶ Wordsworth observes: “God always connects the mercies of the Anodus (or return from Babylon) with those of the Exodus from Egypt ...” Birks has, in part, “This verse may be explained either as a memorial of the mercies of the Exodus, called afresh to mind by the later deliverance, or as a prediction of blessings in that later redemption. In this case the words must be figurative. ... The whole series of mercies, from the Exodus onward, are thus summed up in one song of triumphant praise. The God of Israel was the same through every age, the unfailing Friend and Deliverer of His people. His earlier mercies might be varied in their form, but their substance would be the same in every successive age. He opens evermore ‘streams in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.’ But these blessings belong to the faithful alone.” Waters are symbolic of blessings to be poured out upon the Saints. ¶ *He caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them; he clave the rock also and the waters gushed out.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “He will cause water to flow for them from the rock: Yea, he will

²³ Rain in Due Season.

²⁴ Divided, broke open.

cleave the rock, and the waters shall gush out.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “A rock shall be cleft and water shall gush forth, that my people may drink.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “He brought forth water out of the rock for them, and he clove the rock, and the waters gushed out.” ¶ At the time of the exodus the waters flowed out of the rock. Now there is an allusion, once again, to the waters of baptism, but this time, in righteousness and not in hypocrisy. Horsley says, as a summary of his thoughts on this verse: “It is true it describes the spiritual deliverance, which is its real object, in allusions to the deliverance from Babylon.” Keith says: “If it be regarded as a continuation of the previous verse, it does not appear from anything recorded to have received a literal fulfilment in the return from Babylon. It may, therefore, receive, like the previous verse, a yet future accomplishment. That such events as it describes will yet take place in connexion with Israel’s final return is often stated very clearly.” Govett beautifully says: “Did not the Lord open the rock for them in the wilderness in the days of Moses? Is it too difficult for him now?” ¶ Wordsworth suggests *we liken these words unto ourselves*: “In a spiritual sense, let us regard these words of the Prophet as spoken to ourselves. Let us quit the Babylon of error and confusion. Let us flee from the Chaldeans. Christ has redeemed us with His blood, and leads us through the wilderness of this world, and brings forth water from the Rock—which is Himself (1 Corinthians 10:4).” ¶ Throughout this chapter, Jennings tells us that God has not forgotten His people Israel. Regarding present-day Christendom, Jennings laments, “We see the avalanche of apostasy that is sweeping the great mass of professing Christians ...” Benson says of the people: “... they were exceeding prone to cry, *Peace, Peace*, to themselves, when there was no solid ground of peace.” Luther warns that arrogance is not only found in the people of Israel, but also of within the Christian community, “We are Christians, therefore we are safe.” As Latter-day Saints, we also are warned that we need to be humble followers of Christ: “And others will he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well—and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell” (2 Nephi 28:21). After reciting the usual scriptures associated with “For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel” (Romans 9:6b and others), Jennings wonderfully says, “But it is a serious error to distort such texts into the denial of the national recovery of Israel ... [for the day will come in which] joyous and willing missionaries go, with feet beautiful, to tell of what God hath done for the final deliverance of His people, the children of Jacob.” Amen, see ISAIAH 18.

22 And notwithstanding he hath done all this, and greater also, [there is] no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.

And notwithstanding he hath done all this, and greater also. There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked. The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “There is no peace, saith the Lord, for the wicked.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “There is no peace to the wicked, saith the Lord.” ¶ The invitation to go out of Babylon is to partake of the *plan of happiness* as the Gospel of Jesus Christ is sometimes called. Those who will not partake of this plan may have moments of gladness, but not the deep powerful peace and joy that come from living the gospel. In Doctrine and Covenants we read: “But learn that he who doeth the works of righteousness shall receive his reward, even *peace* in this world, and *eternal life* in the world to come” (D&C 59:23, emphasis added). ¶ *Unto the wicked*, לְרָשָׁעִים. Keith writes: “The concluding assertion (ISAIAH 48:22) may be regarded as in contrast with that in ISAIAH 48:18; while peace, like a river, is promised to hearkening to God’s commandments—to those who do not there is no peace.” In ISAIAH 57 we likewise read: “But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked” (ISAIAH 57:20–21). ¶ Rawlinson, leaning on Cheyne, has: “This warning phrase occurs again, ‘in the manner of a refrain’ (Cheyne), at the close of what most commentators regard as the second section of this portion of Isaiah’s work (ISAIAH 57:21). The third section closes with a still more solemn warning (ISAIAH 66:24).” ¶ Delitzsch has: “From this time forth the name Koresh (Cyrus), and also the name Babel, never occur again; the relation of the people of Jehovah to heathenism, and the redemption from Babylon, so far as it was foretold and accomplished by Jehovah, not only proving His sole deity, but leading to the overthrow of the idols and the destruction of their worshippers. This theme is now exhausted, and comes into the foreground no more. Wordsworth observes: “... and we now pass on from the type to the Antitype, till at length the magnificent scenery of Universal Redemption and Everlasting Glory is fully revealed to the eye.” The type was Cyrus, as a type of the Messiah, and the Antitype is Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

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Isaiah 49

Jennings has: “This brings us to the very heart of this book of Isaiah, to the very heart of ‘the Salvation of God,’ nor surely do we need to be told whom we may expect to find there! For the very ‘heart of the heart’ is the 53rd chapter with which we are all familiar, and yet of which we never weary. Hitherto, we may say, we have trodden the ‘court,’ now we shall enter the ‘Holy Place,’ and soon we shall be conducted into the ‘Holy of Holies!’” Christ takes an active role in gathering Israel on both sides of the veil, but He also *delegates* the work to His servants. Nephi explains ISAIAH 49, after his brothers ask if these things were to be understood physically or spiritually: “And I, Nephi, said unto them: Behold they were manifest unto the prophet [Isaiah] by the voice of the Spirit; for by the Spirit are all things made known unto the prophets, which shall come upon the children of men according to the flesh. Wherefore, the things of which I have read [ISAIAH 48–49] are things pertaining to things both temporal and spiritual; for it appears that the house of Israel, sooner or later, will be scattered upon all the face of the earth, and also among all nations. And behold, there are many who are already lost from the knowledge of those who are at Jerusalem [especially the Ten Tribes taken away captive by Assyria]. Yea, the more part of all the tribes have been led away; and they are scattered to and fro upon the isles of the sea; and whither they are none of us knoweth, save that we know that they have been led away [as warned in *Rain in Due Season*]. And since they have been led away, these things have been prophesied concerning them, and also concerning all those who shall hereafter be scattered and be confounded [both Ephraim and her companions and Judah and her companions], because of the Holy One of Israel; for against him will they harden their hearts [allusion to rejection of the Christ in the meridian of times]; wherefore, they shall be scattered among all nations and shall be hated of all men. Nevertheless, after they shall be nursed by the Gentiles [gathered principally by Ephraim and her sister Manasseh from among the Gentile nations], and the Lord has lifted up his hand upon the Gentiles and set them up for a standard [in other words, restored the Gospel upon the earth], and their children have been carried in their arms [that is, the children of Israel will be carried—principally by the arms of Ephraim and Manasseh but with the help of other tribes, also], and their daughters have been carried upon their shoulders, behold these things of which are spoken are temporal; for thus are the covenants of the Lord with our fathers; and it meaneth us in the days to come [or the descendants of Lehi and other Book of Mormon peoples], and also all our brethren who are of the house of Israel [this will include a physical gathering to Zion]. And it meaneth that the time cometh that after all the house of Israel have been scattered and confounded, that the Lord God will raise up a mighty nation among the Gentiles [especially the USA, but perhaps other nations in the American Continent are also included], yea, even upon the face of this land; and by them shall our seed be scattered [speaking most especially of the Lamanites who would be scattered throughout the American continent]. And after our seed is scattered the Lord God will proceed to do a marvelous work among the Gentiles [the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the Gospel restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith], which shall be of great worth unto our seed; wherefore, it is likened unto their being nourished by the Gentiles and being carried in their arms and upon their shoulders [the sharing of the Gospel is then looked at from a spiritual perspective]. And it shall also be of worth unto the Gentiles [descendants of Israel, mostly, within the *Gentile nations*]; and not only unto the Gentiles but unto all the house of Israel [and to the house of Israel wherever they be], unto the making known of the covenants of the Father of heaven unto Abraham, saying: In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed [so that Abraham’s covenant would be re-established beginning with Ephraim and Manasseh]. And I would, my brethren, that ye should know that all the kindreds of the earth cannot be blessed unless he shall make bare his arm in the eyes of the nations [which would be done through the appearing of the Father and the Son to the boy Prophet and the coming forth of an angel bearing the *everlasting Gospel*, as prophesied in the book of Revelation]. Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to make bare his arm in the eyes of all the nations, in bringing about his covenants and his gospel unto those who are of the house of Israel [including the gathering through the preaching of the Word]. Wherefore, he will bring them again out of captivity [so the gathering begins to take place with much power], and they shall be gathered together to the lands of their inheritance [including the American continent and Israel]; and they shall be brought out of obscurity and out of darkness [obscurity in so many ways, so that the house of Israel had not only lost the Gospel but also, for the most part, with the notable exception of Judah, and then only parts of Judah, knowledge of their heritage in the house of Israel]; and they shall know [not just *believe*, but *know*, they will have a strong testimony of it] that the Lord is their Savior and their Redeemer, the Mighty One of Israel” (1Nephi 22:1–12).

vv. 1–6. The Savior is commissioned by the Father to gather Israel. In turn, Israel, a personification of the Lord's disciples, is commissioned to gather the children of Jacob and raise up the Standard of Christ as the light to the nations. Messiah and a servant speak about the gathering. The servant is discouraged and is rebuked for the same. Although we have used the singular, it is clear that all of the Lord's disciples and servants are subsumed under the name of Israel. Israel was scattered because she did not heed the warnings in *Rain in Due Season*.

1 ¶ AND again: Hearken, O ye house of Israel, all ye that are broken off and are driven out because of the wickedness of the pastors of my people; yea, all ye that are broken off, that are scattered abroad, who are of my people, O house of Israel. LISTEN, O isles, unto me, and hearken ye people from far; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.

Christ is the speaker. When he says, "The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother he made mention of my name," Christ is speaking of the Father's commission to the Son from the preexistence, and does so through Divine Investiture. ¶ AND again: Hearken, O ye house of Israel, all ye that are broken off and are driven out because of the wickedness of the pastors of my people. Yea, all ye that are broken off, that are scattered abroad, who are of my people, O house of Israel. In *Rain in Due Season* we read of the scattering of Israel as well as the eventual gathering of the same from the four quarters of the earth. The words *my people* constitute an elliptical expression utilized by the Lord to speak of the Abrahamic covenant and *Rain in Due Season*. ¶ Birks well says: "The prediction was fulfilled in the double message to Joseph and Mary, Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:28. The mother here named is the same with the Virgin, mentioned before, ISAIAH 7:14, and plainly confines the words to one definite Person. Thus neither 'the prophetic order,' nor the nation of Israel, nor 'the better part of them,' nor 'the Church of Christ,' can be here intended; but one Person alone, marked off from every other by features which none can share, the Son of the Virgin, the Messiah of God." ¶ Christ speaks the words of the Father about Himself through the principle of *Divine Investiture*. Our beloved KJV translation—in contrast to the Hebrew text—obscures

the more literal language. Instead of "The LORD hath called me from the womb," יהוה נִבְּטֵן קִרְאָנִי for the Hebrew we have: "Jehovah from the womb hath called me" (YLT). The Spanish has: "Jehová me llamó desde el vientre" (RV1960, RV2009). The LORD is Jehovah as represented by the Tetragrammaton (יהוה). When we read "The LORD hath called me from the womb," it gives the false impression that Christ is saying that He called Himself from the womb. We must comprehend, then, that Christ is speaking the words the Father has asked Him to speak. Our Redeemer was foreordained from the preexistence. ¶ The wickedness of the pastors of my people, reminds us of warnings in Jeremiah and Ezekiel.¹ ¶ LISTEN, O isles, unto me, and hearken ye

¹ For instance, we have: "The priests said not, Where is the LORD? and they that handle the law *knew me not*: the pastors also transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit" (Jeremiah 2:8, emphasis added); "For the pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the LORD: therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered" (Jeremiah 10:21, emphasis added); "Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard, they have trodden my portion under foot, they have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness" (Jeremiah 12:10, emphasis added); "Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD. Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 23:1–2, emphasis added). Note that none of these are called *my pastors* by the Lord. Such pastors have not known the Lord neither have they sought Him, have preached falsely, have transgressed themselves, are involved in priestcraft and have helped scatter God's people. They shall not be scattered forever: "And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 23:3–4, emphasis added). Note that the Lord will replace the wicked pastors with righteous shepherds who will help gather Israel from their scattered condition. And immediately following these words Jeremiah announces the coming of the Great Shepherd, even Jesus Christ: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David [Christ] a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land" (Jeremiah 23:5–8, emphasis added). These verses are intimately related to the gathering of Israel and to ISAIAH 49. ¶ So also Ezekiel, who exquisitely warns against the false shepherds who feed themselves but not the flocks: "And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither

have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them” (Ezekiel 34:1–4). False pastors fed themselves on the fat of their sheep, but did little for the flock. What happened as a result? Ezekiel continues: “And they were *scattered*, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. *My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them*” (Ezekiel 34:5–6, emphasis added). So we see that Israel was scattered in part because those who should have looked after the people did not. Continuing with Ezekiel, we have: “Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock; Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them” (Ezekiel 34:7–10). The Lord makes it clear that the true flock will leave the false pastors for the true Shepherd: “For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick ...” (Ezekiel 34:11–16a). Can it be more wonderful? For the Lord God will Himself seek out His scattered sheep and they will know His voice! He Himself will be their Shepherd. He Himself will bind their broken limbs and heal their sickness. I solemnly testify of these wondrous truths. The Savior is intimately involved in the gathering of Israel from the four corners of the earth. Ezekiel then speaks of the fat cattle [the nations of the world] and the lean cattle [Israel]. The last scattered by the former. Finally, in words of joyful triumph, we see that this Shepherd is none other than Christ Himself, even the Holy One of Israel: “And I will set up *one shepherd* over them, and *he shall feed them*, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David a prince [Christ] among them; I the LORD have spoken it. And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the *shower to come down in his season*; there shall be *showers of blessing*. And the tree of the field shall *yield her fruit*, and the earth shall *yield her increase*, and they shall be safe in their land, and *shall know that I am the LORD*, when I have *broken the bands of their yoke*, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them. And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them; but they shall *dwell safely*, and *none shall make them afraid*. And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, *neither bear the shame* of the heathen any more. Thus shall they know that I the LORD *their God am with them*, and that they, even the house of Israel, are *my people*, saith the Lord GOD. And ye *my flock*, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord GOD” (Ezekiel 34:23–31, emphasis added). So it is, then, that the *broken off and driven* of Israel will be gathered back by the Good Shepherd. Is this not a *marvellous work and a wonder*? The restoration of the Gospel

people from far. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “my Word” rather than “unto me.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “HEARKEN to me, isles; and ye nations attend!” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “Give ear, ye islands, and hearken, ye people from afar.” ¶ Who are these people from afar? The very scattered flocks mentioned in ISAIAH 49:1a. Regarding ⲓⲙⲓⲛ, Calvin suggests: “he [the Prophet Isaiah through Divine Investiture] introduces Christ as speaking, and addresses not only the Jews but nations that were beyond the sea, and foreign nations who were at a great distance from Judea, to whom, as we have formerly remarked, he gives the name of ‘*Islands*.’” Terry B. Ball convincingly argues that the word *isles*—in Isaiah’s Servant Songs—is associated with “scattered covenant Israel” as shown in 1 Nephi 21:1.² ¶ *The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The Lord called me before I was; He hath made mention of my name from the bowels of my mother.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “(After a long time one will stand up saith the Lord.) From my mother’s womb he mentioned my name.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has *been mindful* instead of *mention*. ¶ Elizabeth bore witness of the Christ, while the unborn child was still in Mary’s womb. Mary went off to visit her cousin Elizabeth and the scriptures tell us: “And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother³ of my Lord⁴ should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she⁵ that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord” (Luke 1:39–45).

2 And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand

through a boy-Prophet, even Joseph Smith, and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon would play a huge role in the gathering of Israel back to the Lord as we see in *Rain in Due Season*.

² Terry B. Ball, Dean of Religious Education, 38th Annual Brigham Young University Sidney B. Sperry Symposium: The Gospel of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament, “Isaiah’s other servant songs.” BYU Broadcasting, 14 March 2010 (see notes on ISAIAH 42:4).

³ Mary.

⁴ Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

⁵ Mary. Gill contrasts Mary’s belief with Zechariah’s (Elizabeth’s priestly husband) unbelief.

hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me;

Christ is the speaker. He continues to declare the Father's commission to the Son, and does so through Divine Investiture. ¶ *And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, "And he hath put His words in my mouth like a sharp sword." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "And made my mouth like a sharp sword." ¶ These words are descriptive of our Savior. All those around Him were surprised by the strength of His oratory. And not just oratory, but that of one filled with the spirit of God to which He had a right, "And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them *as one having authority*, and not as the scribes" (Matthew 7:28–29, emphasis added); "And they were astonished at his doctrine: *for his word was with power*" (Luke 4:32, emphasis added); "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46b). And not just power to speak, but power to heal: "And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out" (Luke 4:36). Also see ISAIAH 50:4, "The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned." ¶ Birks suggests: "The hiding of the polished shaft in the hand of God is a striking figure of the thirty years of humility and silence, before the Son of God began His prophetic ministry." Lowth well says, in applying these to Christ: "'He hath made my mouth a sharp sword,' 'to reprove the wicked, and to denounce unto them punishment,' says Jarchi [i.e., Rashi], understanding it of Isaiah; but how much better does it suit him, who is represented as having 'a sharp two-edged sword going out of his mouth' (Revelation 1:16), who is himself the Word of God? which 'Word is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart' (Hebrews 4:12)." Luther said: "He does not say simply *an arrow* but *polished*, to persuade us that the matter is true. For that reason he calls Him sword and arrow. This is a selected arrow, without any fault, that accomplishes its purpose ... It is an Hebraism." ¶ *In the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, "In the shadow of His power hath He protected me, and He hath made me like a choice arrow, which is hidden in the quiver (literally, 'the place of armor.'" The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "And hid me under the cover of his hand. He made me like a chosen shaft, and in his quiver kept me concealed." Instead of *polished*

shaft, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *chosen arrow*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) also has *chosen arrow*, and has *protected* instead of *hid me*. ¶ The Lord's disciples can likewise become *polished shafts*. The Prophet Joseph Smith was an example of one of the greatest polished shafts, who became "a smooth and polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty."⁶ Elder Orson Hyde taught: "It is true that God generally calls upon the illiterate or unlearned to bear his name and testimony to the world. In this, the policy of our Heavenly Father differs materially from that of the world. Under his policy, none can say that the important truths which the servant of God is required to declare are the result of his great or superior learning. But the question with me is, Must the servant of God always remain an unpolished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty? I answer, No. The Spirit of God directs improvement in everything that is good and useful. If any doubt this, consider what our leading men were when called, and then consider what they now are! The inspiration of God sometimes furnishes the words, but more generally the thoughts only. Then a flow of correct language is highly useful to convey those thoughts clearly and distinctly to others."⁷ ¶ President Brigham Young taught: "Continue to preach, study, and learn, by faith and prayer, until your minds and mouths are opened,⁸ and you understand most perfectly the love of Christ ... Preach the simple, unadorned truth; work out your salvation with diligence, and do that which will guarantee you a warranted deed, an undeniable title to eternal lives. If you feel prayer in you, pray; and if you feel the spirit of preaching in you, preach; call in your brethren, and read the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Book of Covenants, and the other revelations of God to them; and talk over the things contained in those

⁶ *History of the Church* 5:401. Also see TPJS, Section Six 1843-1844.

⁷ Hyde, Elder Orson. English Grammar. Delivered before his Class at the Social Hall, Great Salt Lake City, JD 7:68b. 14 December 1858.

⁸ I remember one time around 2002 being at the home of my brother Nicolás and his wife María Inés. Several of her extended family members were there for lunch. The conversation turned to religion and whether priests should marry. For a while, I remained silent but eventually said something to the effect of, "I am a priest and I am married." All eyes turned to me and I suspect I must have embarrassed my dear brother. He proceeded to say that I was not a *real* priest. Then he asked how long I had studied for the ministry. My mother defended me in an effort to make peace and said something to the effect that I studied the scriptures. My brother continued to insist that I was not a real priest. The spirit bid me to be silent and hold my peace. This continued for a while. At one point Nicolás asked something to the effect: "Is it not true that in your Church *any* uneducated man can be baptized this week, and within a week or so receive the Priesthood?" I said that this was true, and then the moment had finally arrived for me to speak as a polished shaft, and I responded something along the lines of, "Where not Christ's disciples simple men, fishermen, none of which studied for the ministry?" I had spoken by the Spirit, which was greatly felt at that moment. Thus the scripture in D&C 100:5b was fulfilled in me that day: "... speak the thoughts that I shall put into your hearts, and you shall not be confounded before men." See D&C 100:1-8.

books, and deal them out to your brethren and neighbors; pray with them, and teach them how to control themselves; and let your teachings be sustained by your own example. Teach your families how to control themselves; teach them good and wholesome doctrine, and practice the same in your own lives. This is the place for you to become polished shafts in the quiver of the Almighty.”⁹

3 And said unto me: Thou [art] my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.

A disciple of Christ, personified by latter-day Israel, is speaking and quoting Christ as saying to the servant: “Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.” This is, then, the Son’s commission to the disciple. ¶ The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And said to me, ‘Thou Israel art my servant, and by thee I shall be glorified.’” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, for the last clause, “For in thee will I glory.” The AMP includes the elliptical expression: “And [the Lord] said to me ...” ¶ Keith H. Meservy, of Brigham Young University, writes: “As the seed of Abraham, Israel was called to bless, that is, to serve, the nations of the earth. Israel would perform this service by virtue of holding God’s priesthood (ministry) and receiving his revelation, that is, by extending God’s work throughout the world. (Genesis 12; Abraham 2:11.) Within the book of Isaiah, the Lord sees Israel in this light: ‘Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified’ (ISAIAH 49:3; 48:20; 43:10).”¹⁰ It has elsewhere beautifully said that Israel was chosen, *chosen to serve*.

4 Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought and in vain; [yet] surely my judgment [is] with the LORD, and my work with my God.

✓ or, my reward

The same disciple of Christ—mentioned in ISAIAH 49:3—continues speaking. He is feeling despondent although still faithful, for he says: “Surely my judgment is with the LORD, and my work with my God.” This disciple is *responding* to the Lord after being commissioned to help bring souls unto Christ. ¶ Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength

for nought and in vain. The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Whereupon I said, I have laboured in vain; for vanity and for nought I have spent my strength.” Instead of *I said*, the Peshitta (Ⓔ) has *I have not said*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, *in vain* instead of *for nought*. ¶ The words, “I have labored in vain” are a complaint, as well as, “I have spent my strength for nought and in vain.” The personification of latter-day Israel—especially of Ephraim and Manasseh—has him despondently speaking of the results of his efforts. Some have misguidedly thought it was Christ who is here complaining.¹¹ ¶ It is clearly a human tendency to so complain. Alma the younger exclaimed: “O that I were an angel, and could have the wish of mine heart, that I might go forth and speak with the trump of God, with a voice to shake the earth, and cry repentance unto every people!” (Alma 29:1). While most of us have thought of this desire as a virtue, it has been pointed out that Alma himself realized that he had sinned in this desire. Indeed, each one of us plays a small but important part in helping gather the children of Israel. It is easy to become discouraged because we do not see the bigger picture.^{12 13} ¶ Truly, it makes no sense to impute Christ

¹¹ Some exegetes incorrectly assign these words to the *human side* of the *mortal Messiah*. They offer scriptural examples in an attempt to prove their point. Cheyne points the *לֵאמֹר אֵלֵי אֵלֵי לָמָּה עָזַבְתָּנִי* of Psalm 22:1 and Matthew 27:46, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani (σάβαχθαυ)?” that is to say, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*” Rawlinson points to the: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” (Matthew 23:37). I find the statements in Matthew 27:46 and Matthew 23:37 to be of an *entirely different nature* than that of ISAIAH 49:4. Both of the Matthew statements have seemed so natural to me. In the first instance we find the Savior in unspeakable pain and, so the scriptures could be fulfilled, He had to bear the weight of our sins, for a moment on the cross, when the Father had to remove His presence. It was a cry of anguish with perhaps a twinge of fright. Nothing could have prepared Him for the pain He was to experience. In the second example from Matthew we find a sadness born of love for us. With a tenderness comparable to motherly love the Savior speaks of gathering His Father’s children as a hen gathers her chicks, if only they would hearken. But in the ISAIAH 49:4 statements we come across something altogether different. It was a complaint that would receive a rebuke from the Lord. I spoke to my daughter-in-law, Terry Billikopf, and asked her to interpret each of these statements. When I came to the third, she gasped. “Did the Savior say that?” she asked in disbelief. “I feel I sort of know a little bit about Him and He would not have said such a thing.” I said, “It sounds a bit whiny whiney doesn’t it?” Indeed. It shows discouragement, lack of faith, and even a lack of understanding of the eternal nature of His work. (Notice that in ISAIAH 49:14 we again see complaining, this time from the mouth of *Zion*.) Ancient Israel as a nation, or Zion, knew that she would play a key role in the gathering of all of the tribes of Israel from under the heavens (ISAIAH 18). Christ *never* complained. He was *always* ready to do the will of the Father. The Savior *never* gave the Father reason for the smallest rebuke. His whole life, every step and every word, was an effort to please His Father.

¹² Terry Billikopf gave a Sacrament talk in 2015 in which she quoted Elder W. Christopher Waddell, of the Seventy, regarding a former

⁹ Young, President Brigham. JD 1:47b, Great Salt Lake City, 9 April 1852.

¹⁰ Meservy, Keith H. Chapter 10, ISAIAH 53: The Richest Prophecy in the Old Testament on Christ’s Atonement. In, *A Witness of Jesus Christ: The 1989 Sperry Symposium on the Old Testament* (Richard D. Draper, ed.), p.169.

with the words “I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought and in vain.” Our Redeemer knew that His expiatory sacrifice would have eternal reaches. ¶ Young well notices “The word תִּהְיֶה

missionary who had become inactive, in part out of the discouragement of a “failed mission.” The Lord brought together this disheartened former missionary, who had been inactive for years, and an Elder Misiego from Madrid, Spain. After years of inactivity this former missionary was attending (invited by a friend) a fireside in Arizona, where he met Elder Misiego. He turned out to be the son of the only person he baptized during his mission. Elder Misiego’s father had married in the temple, his three boys had served missions as well as one of his daughters. All of his married children had been sealed in the temple. “Through his efforts, he now learned, scores of lives had been blessed, and the Lord had sent an elder from Madrid, Spain, all the way to a fireside in Arizona to let him know that he had not been a failure.” Waddell, Elder W. Christopher. The Opportunity of a Lifetime, October 2011 General Conference.

¹³ I remember one time years ago going out with the Sister Missionaries, and complaining about a particular family who I had tried to reach again and again to no avail. “Awww, President Billikopf” (at that time I was the Branch President), one of the Sisters said. “Do you want a sticker?” And she gave me one. I put that sticker in my car’s dashboard. Over the years it changed colors many times. It was a reminder of that moment, and of that family. One day, long after the family had moved out of the Branch boundaries and I was no longer the Branch President, I saw the father at the temple! His only daughter had served a mission for the Lord. And I had *nothing* to do with either of these things. In yet another case, a childhood friend in San Javier, Chile to whom I had given the Book of Mormon after I joined the Church, was baptized in 2014. He called to give me the good news. But he was quick to add, “You had *nothing* to do with it, it was the wonderful Sister Missionaries.” I chuckle a bit at this. I often wonder about the Elder who gave *me* the Book of Mormon in Santiago in 1970. I had approached the mission home in order to do a school-required report. Did this Elder think that he labored in vain? Or was he very successful? Either way, he has no idea—if he even remembers—that the teenager he gave the Book of Mormon and Liahonas to joined the Church. I wonder if he struggled with the decision to give me the Book of Mormon. It was not the magazines but the Book of Mormon that touched my heart. Things happen on the Lord’s timetable. Yes, it is human nature to complain. When we are in the service of the Lord and things seem difficult, He reminds us, “The Son of Man hath descended below them all [i.e., had to withstand an infinitesimally greater adversity]. Art thou greater than he?” (D&C 122:8). If we turn away from our complaining and work hard—we still are *unprofitable servants*—the Lord says, “fear not what man can do, for God shall be with you forever and ever” (D&C 122:9b). We truly do not know what impact we have, if any, about bringing others to drink of the living waters. I should end with a positive example. For over ten years I taught and testified and invited a woman to hear the word and join the Church. I remember, towards the end, weeping as I pleaded with her to pray to the Father about the Book of Mormon. This was a faithful virtuous woman, a member of another religion, but someone who was often willing to listen to my testimony. This time she agreed to pray. Her answer came. She was told to join the Church, but wait for her husband—who had shown little interest in the Church. I immediately knew by the Spirit that her answer had come from God, and I readily and gladly sustained her in that decision to wait. The change in her husband was prompt and miraculous. I had the great privilege of baptizing her and her two children, while a good friend baptized the husband. This good sister was soon serving as the Relief Society President of the Branch and her husband served as a Branch President. Yes, we must never be discouraged. We must never think we labor in vain. Finally, Many of the prophets had varying degrees of success during their lifetimes, yet their words live on and have fortified millions.

(*desolation*)¹⁴ is a favorite of Isaiah’s, and in this context simply points out that the toil of the servant was fruitless.” ¶ *Surely my judgment is with the LORD, and my work with my God.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “But my cause is known to the Lord, and the reward of my work is before my God.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Therefore my cause is with the Lord; and my labour is before my God.” Once again, we know that the person who is discouraged is a disciple of Christ who is here given as a representative of Israel, for this individual has faith in God as he says: “*Surely my judgment is with the LORD, and my work with my God.*” NOTE: I have found *very little* support for my perspective among the Gentile exegetes. Namely, only in Cowles who suggests, almost timidly, that perhaps the first disciples of Christ may be here included in these words of discouragement. Ibn Ezra correctly attributes the “And said” in ISAIAH 49:3 to God; but ISAIAH 49:4 to the Prophet Isaiah¹⁵: “*Then I said.* Then I, the prophet, said ...” IN SUMMARY, the words of discouragement come, at times, from the Lord’s disciples who desire the work to move at a faster pace. Yet, the glorious principle of moral agency has to be respected in this work, permitting each person to make the decision to follow Christ without any compulsion. Let us always remember that Satan is the source of our discouragement and remember to move forward in faith and joy in this marvelous work.

5 And now, saith the LORD—that formed me from the womb **that I should [tə be]** his servant, to bring Jacob again to him—though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I^c be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength.

✓ or, *That Israel may be gathered to him, and I may, &c.*

Christ is again speaking of His own commission from the Father to gather Israel and continues to speak through *Divine Investiture*. The Lord speaks again of being *formed from the womb* as He did in ISAIAH 49:1, code for His foreordination from the pre-existence. The words, “Though Israel be *not* gathered,” might include an elliptical lament, “Though Israel be not gathered in great numbers,” or “for such a long time,” or “at the meridian of time,” when the mortal Messiah walked upon the earth. Something seems amiss with the text here. ¶ The translators of the KJV offered an alternative as we see in the margin ¶ which is based on the *Keri* or *Qere* (קִרְיָה) of the Masoretic text (ⲙ), that which is to

¹⁴ Here, *vain*.

¹⁵ The Prophet Isaiah here well may stand for the Lord’s disciples in general. There are plenty of exegetes who attribute ISAIAH 49:4 to Isaiah, but who *deny* it to God for ISAIAH 49:1–3.

be *read* rather than what was *written* (the *ketiv* or כְּתִיב). The Masoretes were troubled by the many changes in the Hebrew text and wished to preserve the latest text as they had it but so they indicated the corrections to the text via these קרי notations. Most translations, including many of the ancient manuscripts in other languages, preserve the קרי. So also a large number of translations into English are also based on the קרי in this instance, or the marginal reading ||, “That Israel may be gathered to him, and I may, &c.” The ASV has: “... to bring Jacob again to him, and that Israel be gathered unto him.” Leeser likewise has: “...to bring Jacob again to him, that Israel may be gathered unto him.” Similar translations are also found in the AMP, BBE, HCSB, ISV, JPS, NASB, RV, LTV, CEV, CJB, ERV, ESV, GNB, GW, WEB, WEBA and Reina Valera 1960. ¶ Barnes explains this vital matter: “The reading in the text is לו' lo' ('not'); but instead of this the marginal reading ||, or the Keri [קרי] of the Masoretes is, לו' lô, ‘to him.’ ‘Five manuscripts (two ancient),’ says Lowth, ‘confirm the Keri’, or marginal construction of the Masoretes; and so read Aquila, and the Chaldee, Septuagint, and Arabic.’ Gesenius and Rosenmüller adopt this, and suppose that לו' lo' is only a different form of writing לו' lô. ... To me it seems that the parallelism demands that we should adopt the reading of the Keri [קרי], the Septuagint, the Chaldee, and the Syriac, and which has been adopted by Lowth.” ¶ And now, saith the LORD—that formed me from the womb that I should be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him. The Targum (ܬ) has, “And now, saith the Lord, that formed me from the womb (literally, ‘bowels’) to be a perfect (literally, ‘a servant, he served’ expressing a superlative degree)¹⁶ servant before Him, to make the house of Jacob to return to His service.” The LXX (Ϟ) reads, “And now thus saith the Lord who formed me from the womb. To be his servant to gather Jacob to him.” The Douay-Rheims (Ϟ) has, for the last clause, “That I may bring back Jacob unto him.” ¶ Once again, these words speak of Christ our Redeemer, who atoned for our sins, for without Him there would be no purpose in gathering Israel. His calling is from the pre-existence. ¶ So that Israel might be gathered to Him (For I am honored in the sight of the LORD. And My God is My strength) NASB (follows margin ||) . The Targum (ܬ) has, “And Israel shall be brought to fear Him and we shall be glorious before the Lord (the Royal Polyglot reads יִקְרֶינִי, ‘he shall glorify him’); and the Word of

my God shall be my support.” The LXX (Ϟ) reads, “And Israel. I shall be gathered and glorified before the Lord. And my God will be my strength.” As in the margin ||, the Peshitta (ܫ) has Israel being gathered. The Douay-Rheims (Ϟ) has, “And Israel will not be gathered together: and I am glorified in the eyes of the Lord, and my God is made my strength.” The DSS 1QIsa^a (א) has *my help*, עֲזָרִי, while the Masoretic text (מ) has *my strength*, עֲזָרִי. ¶ Christ exults in the Father and knows of the glory that awaits Him. In Matthew 12:18 we have: “Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.” Or better, AMP, “Behold, My Servant Whom I have chosen, My Beloved in and with Whom My soul is well pleased and has found its delight. I will put My Spirit upon Him, and He shall proclaim and show forth justice to the nations.”

6 And he said: It is a light thing that thou shouldst[✓] be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved^{✓✓} of Israel. I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

✓ or, Art thou lighter than that thou shouldst, &c.

✓ ✓ or, desolations

These words are Christ’s loving rebuke to the servant’s complaint (voiced in ISAIAH 49:4). Just as the Father commissions the Son, so the Son commissions the disciple. The job of the disciple is to help gather Israel and bring the light of Christ to the nations. ¶ And he said: It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel. The LXX (Ϟ) reads, “Moreover he said to me, Is it a great thing for thee to be called my servant to reestablish the tribes of Jacob and bring back the dispersion of Israel?” The Douay-Rheims (Ϟ) has, “And he said: It is a small thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to convert the dregs of Israel.” ¶ The *raison d’être* of every disciple is to help gather Israel. We become the Lord’s helpers in this matter as we open our mouths to testify of Christ and also, as we shall see, work on our *family history*. We should each be content with our lot in the work. ¶ I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. The LXX (Ϟ) reads, “Behold I have given thee for the covenant of a race—for the light of nations; that thou mayest be for salvation to the farthest part of the earth.” The Douay-Rheims (Ϟ) also has, “Farthest part of the earth.” ¶ Baltzer suggests: “‘Light’ (אֹר) is the

¹⁶ In Hebrew, a repetition of a word helps us understand its strength. This is why Pauli translates that this will be a perfect servant.

quintessence of justice and righteousness, and means ‘deliverance, help, *salvation*’ (יְשׁוּעָה) for the nations too.” The heading of 1 Nephi 21 makes it clear that it is *Messiah* who is the Light to the Gentiles, or *Light to the nations* (לְאֹרֶךְ נְיִים) as I would prefer to translate it.

¶ Upon seeing the babe at the Temple of Jerusalem, Simeon exclaimed: “For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel” (Luke 2:30–32). Both in ISAIAH 42:6–7 and ISAIAH 49 so we see that this *Light* is intimately associated with the freeing of the prisoners—both from spirit prison in the spirit world as from the shackles of prison for those in mortality. Both require saviors (with lower case) on Mount Zion, preachers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ—who in turn are also a *light* to the nations, with a lower case. In D&C 86:8–11 we have, “Therefore, thus saith the Lord unto you, with whom the priesthood hath continued through the lineage of your fathers— For ye are lawful heirs, according to the flesh, and have been hid from the world with Christ in God—Therefore your life and the priesthood have remained, and must needs remain through you and your lineage until the restoration of all things spoken by the mouths of all the holy prophets since the world began. Therefore, blessed are ye if ye continue in my goodness, *a light unto the Gentiles*, and through this priesthood, a savior unto my people Israel. The Lord hath said it. Amen.” Again, note the *How Beautiful are the Feet* principle, wherein the Lord loves to share His titles with His servants. ¶ President Joseph F. Smith taught: “And as I wondered, my eyes were opened, and my understanding quickened, and I perceived that *the Lord went not in person among the wicked and the disobedient* who had rejected the truth, to teach them; But behold, *from among the righteous, he organized his forces and appointed messengers, clothed with power and authority, and commissioned them to go forth and carry the light of the gospel to them that were in darkness*, even to all the spirits of men; and thus was the gospel preached to the dead. And the chosen messengers went forth to declare the acceptable day of the Lord and *proclaim liberty to the captives who were bound*, even unto all who would repent of their sins and receive the gospel. Thus was the gospel preached to those who had died in their sins, without a knowledge of the truth, or in transgression, having rejected the prophets. These were taught faith in God, repentance from sin, *vicarious baptism for the remission of sins*, the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, And all other principles of the gospel that were necessary for them to know in order to qualify themselves that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. And so it was made known among the dead, both small and great, the

unrighteous as well as the faithful, that redemption had been wrought through the sacrifice of the Son of God upon the cross. Thus was it made known that our Redeemer spent his time during his sojourn in the world of spirits, *instructing and preparing the faithful spirits of the prophets who had testified of him in the flesh*; That they might carry the message of redemption unto all the dead, unto whom he could not go personally, because of their rebellion and transgression, that they through the ministration of his servants might also hear his words” (D&C 138:29–37). ¶ Just as the Lord delegated this work in the spirit world, so does He delegate it to servants in mortality. President Uchtdorf told a moving story about a statue representing the *Christus* that was damaged in World War II. The people decided *not* to have a sculptor re-build the missing hands, as a reminder of the awful days of war. Yet, the “people of the city added on the base of the statue of Jesus Christ a sign with these words: ‘You are my hands.’”¹⁷ ¶ In the Book of Mormon we read the words of Nephi, son of Lehi: “And now, I would prophesy somewhat more concerning the Jews and the Gentiles. For after the book of which I have spoken shall come forth [the Book of Mormon], and be written unto the Gentiles, and sealed up again unto the Lord, there shall be many which shall believe the words which are written; *and they shall carry them forth unto the remnant of our seed*. And then shall the remnant of our seed know concerning us, how that we came out from Jerusalem, and that they are descendants of the Jews. And the gospel of Jesus Christ shall be declared among them; wherefore, they shall be restored unto the knowledge of their fathers, and also to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, which was had among their fathers. And then shall they rejoice; for they shall know that it is a blessing unto them from the hand of God; and their scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes; and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a pure and a delightsome people. And it shall come to pass that the Jews which are scattered also *shall begin to believe in Christ*; and they *shall begin to gather* in upon the face of the land; and as many as shall believe in Christ shall also become a delightsome people. And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall commence his work among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, *to bring about the restoration* of his people upon the earth” (2 Nephi 30:3–8).

vv. 7–12. Christ is to be despised for a time. At the meridian of time He will offer salvation and also visit those in spirit prison. Israel shall be gathered from all the nations.

¹⁷ Uchtdorf, President Dieter F. “You Are My Hands” April 2010 General Conference.

7 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, [and] his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, [✓] to him whom the nations abhorreth, to a servant of rulers: Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, [and] the Holy One of Israel, and ~~he shall choose thee.~~

✓ or, that is despised in soul

Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nations abhorreth, to servant of rulers: The Targum (Ⓢ) has, for the second half, “To them that are despised among the nations, to them that are scattered among the kingdoms, to them that are the servants to rulers.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Thus saith the Lord who delivered thee—the God of Israel, ‘Hallow him who despised his life, him who was abhorred by the nations, the slaves of the Archons.’” Instead of *whom man despiseth*, the Peshitta (Ⓟ) has, as in the margin ||, *to him whose soul is despised*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “To the soul that is despised, to the nation that is abhorred, to the servant of rulers.” ¶ Kay says that Christ was “an object of contempt to the sensual mind ... subjecting Himself to the despotic will of ‘the rulers of this world’ (1 Corinthians 2:6), even to the extent of enduring the death of a slave.” Wordsworth has: “Literally, *who is despised by the soul*, Heb. *nephesh* [נֶפֶשׁ]; i.e., despised by the mere *animal* passion of man, which judges according to the outward appearance; and is therefore carnal, and *not spiritual*.” Jenour has: “Christ was, and still is, *despised* by the world at large.” Barnes writes: “The same idea is more fully expressed in ISAIAH 53:3–4, that the Messiah would be rejected and treated with abhorrence by the nation [of Israel] as such.” ¶ Many of the exegetes speak of the abhorrence that Jews have for Christ. In my lifetime I have seen a profound change in this area, where many Jews have nothing but positive things to say about Jesus. This change began more than a century ago, after the publication of the Book of Mormon. Elder Joseph Fielding Smith shared how this change had taken root: “Perhaps that is all I need to read in regard to this question, but I wish to say something now about the Jews and see if they are beginning to believe in Christ or not, and if they are now commencing to gather to their promised land in fulfillment of these predictions. One hundred years ago if the name of Jesus Christ had been favorably mentioned in a Jewish synagogue, the entire congregation would have been greatly offended. If you have the *History of the Church*, Volume 3, turn to page

356, and you will find a letter written by Rabbi Landau to his son who had become a Christian. It is a letter from a heart-broken father to a wayward son, and the father says that this is the hardest blow that he ever received and the punishment was almost more than he could bear. We have seen that the Book of Mormon states that in the last days the Jews will begin to believe in Christ. You know that some of the critics of the Book of Mormon declare that it is a stupid work written by Joseph Smith or by someone for him, but how could Nephi say that in the last days the Jews would be gathered again and they would begin to believe in Christ? How could Joseph Smith say it, even, one hundred years ago, when the Jews so bitterly rejected all things that were Christian? I have several statements here depicting the present day attitude of the Jews concerning Jesus Christ. Isaac K. Funk, of the publishing house of Funk & Wagnalls, got out an edition of George Croly’s work on the ‘Wandering Jew,’ in 1901. The first edition of this work was published in 1827. Dr. Funk gathered from leading Jews their opinions concerning Jesus and published them in this work, which he gave the title ‘Tarry Thou Until I Come.’ Some of these expressions I will read. Rabbi Henry Berkowitz of Philadelphia: ‘This Jew, Jesus, is the greatest, noblest rabbi of them all.’ Isadore Singer, Ph.D.: ‘I regard Jesus of Nazareth as a Jew of the Jews, one whom all Jewish people are learning to love. His teaching has been an immense service to the world in bringing Israel’s God to the knowledge of hundreds of millions of mankind. The great change in Jewish thought concerning Jesus of Nazareth, I cannot better illustrate than by this fact: ‘When I was a boy, had my father who was a very pious man, heard the name of Jesus uttered from the pulpit of our synagogue, he and every other man in the congregation would have left the building and the rabbi would have been dismissed at once. Now it is not strange in many synagogues, to hear sermons preached eulogistic of this Jesus, and nobody thinks of protesting—in fact, we are all glad to claim Jesus as one of our people.’ Morris Jastrow, Jr., Ph.D.: ‘From the historic point of view Jesus is to be regarded as a direct successor of the Hebrew prophets. His teachings are synonymous with the highest spiritual aspirations of the human race. Like the prophets, He lays the chief stress upon pure conduct and moral ideas, but He goes beyond the prophets in His absolute indifference to theological speculations and religious rites. It has been commonly said that the Jews rejected Jesus. They did so in the sense in which they rejected the teachings of the earlier prophets, but the question may be pertinently asked, Has Christianity accepted Jesus? ... The long hope-for reconciliation between Judaism and Christianity will come when once the teachings of Jesus shall have become the axiom of human conduct.’ Max Nordau, M.D.: Jesus is soul of

our soul, as He is flesh of our flesh. Who, then, could think of excluding Him from the people of Israel? St. Peter will remain the only Jew who said of the son of David, 'I know not the man.' If the Jews up to the present time have not publicly rendered homage to the sublime moral beauty of the figure of Jesus, it is because their tormentors have always persecuted, tortured, assassinated them in His name. The Jews have drawn their conclusions from the disciples as to the Master, which was wrong; a wrong pardonable in the eternal victims of the implacable, cruel hatred of those who called themselves Christians. Every time a Jew mounted to the source and contemplated Christ alone without his pretended faithful, he cried with tenderness and admiration, putting aside the Messianic mission, 'This man is ours. He honors our race, and we claim Him as we claim the Gospels—flowers of Jewish literature, and only Jewish.' This shows the changed feelings of the Jews today, and we see that Nephi's prophecy is being fulfilled."¹⁸ ¶ *Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, "Kings shall look at them; and princes shall rise and fall prostrate, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and He shall delight in thee." The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "Kings shall see him and chiefs shall rise up and they shall worship him for the sake of the Lord; because the Holy One of Israel is faithful, therefore I have chosen thee." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, "Kings shall see, and princes shall rise up, and adore for the Lord's sake, because he is faithful, and for the Holy One of Israel, who hath chosen thee." ¶ Keith says: "A contrast is drawn between the treatment which [Christ] would long experience, and the honour which would be paid him when in the end he would come to take unto himself the kingdom."

8 Thus saith the LORD: In an acceptable time have I heard thee, **O isles of the sea,** and in a day of salvation have I helped thee; and I will preserve thee, and give thee **my servant** for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, **✓** to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;

✓ or, raise up

Thus saith the LORD: In an acceptable time have I heard thee, O isles of the sea, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee. The Targum (ⲧ) has, "Thus saith the Lord, at the time when ye do my will, I hear your prayer, and

in the day of distress I uphold you with salvation and support." The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "Thus saith the Lord, 'In an acceptable time I have hearkened to thee, and in a day of salvation helped thee.'" ¶ Redak points our attention to the Targum (see above), where there is a connection between *our doing* the will of God and *He hearing* our prayers. Elder Gene R. Cook likewise shared: "A repentant heart and good works are the very conditions required to have grace restored to us. When someone pleads fervently in prayer for an answer, the answer may be more conditioned on repentance of personal sins than on any other factor."¹⁹ ¶ Whitehouse says about *an acceptable time*, "The 'time of favour' means the time when God's compassion and deliverance of His people begins to dawn." As Wade mentions, Paul likened this to his own times: "(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation)" (2 Corinthians 6:2). The Savior's expiatory sacrifice took place in the meridian of time and after His death, the Savior visited spirit prison (see ISAIAH 49:9). The New Testament mentions baptism for the dead, but it would not be until after the restoration of the Gospel that such would be carried out at a grander scale. ¶ Elder Bruce R. McConkie suggests that *an acceptable time* is in relation to the coming of the Lord: "Isaiah spoke of the Messiah coming 'in an acceptable time' (ISAIAH 49:8), and Daniel named the very time, but he used imagery and figurative language that can only be understood by the spirit of revelation. He said that 'from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks.' He said that after that period 'shall Messiah be cut off.'"²⁰ *Cut off* is an expression of the Hebrew Bible, meaning to die, especially used of a weaver being cut off or disconnected when finished. The Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary (11th ed.) has: "to bring to an untimely end." So we have in ISAIAH 38:12: "Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent: I have cut off like a weaver my life: he will cut me off with pining sickness: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me." The Savior's life was cut off when He was still in His prime. It was at this point, when He was cut off, that the Savior went as a spirit to the Spirit World, as we see in ISAIAH 49:9. ¶ Once again, recall ISAIAH 49:1, about the *isles of the sea* representing "scattered covenant Israel."²¹ We have a

¹⁹ Cook, Elder Gene R. Receiving Divine Assistance through the Grace of the Lord. April 1993 General Conference.

²⁰ McConkie, Elder Bruce R. *The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ*, p.459.

²¹ Terry B. Ball, Dean of Religious Education, 38th Annual Brigham Young University Sidney B. Sperry Symposium: The Gospel of Jesus

¹⁸ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Signs of the Times*. "Restoration of Israel and Judah." Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News Press, 1952. Talk delivered 28 October 1942, Barratt Hall, pp. 58 ff.

similar idea represented in the Book of Mormon: “And these will I place in the nethermost part of my vineyard” (Jacob 5:13a). Then would come the restoration of the Gospel and the gathering of Israel.

¶ *And I will preserve thee, and give thee my servant for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages.* The Targum (ܬ) has, “For I will maintain thee, and I will give thee for a covenant with the people, to raise up the righteous that lie in the dust, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages.” The LXX (Θ) reads, “And have formed thee and given thee for the covenant of nations that thou mayst reduce the earth to order and possess desolate heritages.” Instead of *to establish the earth*, the Peshitta (ܣ) has *a light to the Gentiles* (Lamsa) / *a light to the nations* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And I have preserved thee, and given thee to be a covenant of the people, that thou mightest raise up the earth, and possess the inheritances that were destroyed.” The DSS 1QIsa^a (Q) has *and I will preserve thee* (וַאֲצִירְךָ, Gesenius, *watch, keep*) *and give thee* (בָּתֵּן, *give*),

וַאֲצִירְךָ וְאֶתְּנֶנְךָ, while the Masoretic text (M) has *and I have preserved thee* (וַאֲצִירְךָ, Gesenius, *watch, keep*) *and given thee* (בָּתֵּן, *give*), *וַאֲצִירְךָ וְאֶתְּנֶנְךָ*, as does, at least partially, the DSS 1QIsa^b (Q), *וַאֲצִירְךָ וְאֶתְּנֶנְךָ*.

¶ Regarding the *desolate heritages*, several exegetes speak of the land of Israel as it was found during the period of the Babylonian captivity. In the latter-days both Israel as well as Zion could well be included here. So also the spirit world could well be termed *desolate heritages*. ¶ Faussett suggests, regarding לְבְרִית עָם: “*covenant of the people*—(see on ISAIAH 42:6). ‘The *people*,’ in the singular, is always applied exclusively to Israel ... *cause to inherit* ... *desolate heritages*—image from the desolate state of Judea ... Literally, Judea lying desolate for ages shall be possessed again by Israel (compare ISAIAH 61:7), ‘in their land’).” Barnes says: “The ‘people’ (עָם) refers doubtless primarily to the Jews ... To them he was first sent, and his own personal work was with them ... *To establish the earth*. Marg. as in the Hebrew, ‘to raise up.’ The language is derived from restoring the ruins of a land that has been overrun by an enemy, when the cities have been demolished, and the country laid waste.” Kay makes two observations in this verse: “Obs. 1. Mr Cheyne, who follows Rückert in grouping together ISAIAH 49–52, gives as the title of the whole section; ‘VICARIOUS ATONEMENT.’ Obs. 2. In ISAIAH 58:5, the Day of Atonement is referred to as ‘the day of acceptance.’ Compare the same noun in ISAIAH 56:7, 10; 61:2;

Exodus 28:38.” A remnant would be preserved and the Savior—the Father’s Servant—would be given for her redeemer.

9 That thou mayest say to the prisoners: Go forth; to them that [are] sit in darkness: Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures [shall be] in all high places.

That thou mayest say to the prisoners: Go forth; to them that sit in darkness: Shew yourselves. The Targum (ܬ) has, “Saying to them who are prisoners among the nations, Go forth to them who are kept back in darkness among the kingdoms; shew yourselves to the light.” The LXX (Θ) reads, “Saying to them who are in bonds, Go forth; and to them who are in darkness, ‘Come into light.’” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “That thou mightest say to them that are bound: Come forth: and to them that are in darkness: Shew yourselves.” ¶ Of the Gentile authors, a few seem surprisingly correct in their exegetical observations. Kay has: “*to the prisoners*] in the dungeon of spiritual darkness; in the prison-house of Hades (ISAIAH 24:22).” Cowles, and several others, point to the similarity with ISAIAH 42:7: “Figures accumulate to express the joyful change. The people are as prisoners coming forth from their prison-houses (see ISAIAH 42:7); as men long in darkness, now coming forth to the light of day.” The Geneva notes include: “To them who are in the prison of sin and death.” Rawlinson says: “‘The prisoners’ here are not the captives in Babylon, but the servants of sin throughout the world. Christ would say to them, ‘Go forth.’ He would summon them by his messengers to repent and be converted, and quit the service of sin, and ‘go forth’ from the kingdom of darkness, and ‘show themselves’ as lights of the world (Matthew 5:14; Philippians 2:15), walking as children of the light (Ephesians 5:8).” ¶ We would need the light of latter-day revelation to begin to understand these scriptures (including ISAIAH 24:22; 42:7). The Prophet Joseph Smith replaces an elliptical *are* for *sit*, so it should rather read, *and to them that sit in darkness*. The Hebrew word יָשָׁב, may be translated into English with such words as *sit*, *remain*, *inhabit*, *dwelt* (Gesenius, DBD, HALOT). Those who *sit*, *remain* or *dwelt* in darkness are those spirits in prison. ¶ Elder John Morgan explained: “During the three days that the body of Jesus lay in the tomb, then, where was the spirit that formerly inhabited the body? According to the testimony of Peter, as recorded in the 3rd Chapter of the first epistle of Peter, it was preaching to the spirits in prison (1 Peter 3:18–19) and Isaiah tells us that it was for this that Jesus was to come; it was to loose the bonds of the prisoners; it was to open the

Christ in the Old Testament, “Isaiah’s other servant songs.” BYU Broadcasting, 14 March 2010 (see notes on ISAIAH 42:4).

prison door.”²² Elder Charles W. Penrose likewise taught: “What is to become of the myriads that have passed into the spirit world without even having heard the name of Jesus Christ? What is to become of all the Jews—numbers of good men and good women amongst them—what is to become of the millions of Jews who have passed away into the spirit world from every land—and some of them in a great hurry too, driven by the hands of ‘Christians’—who have never obeyed any Gospel at all? ... The Prophet Joseph Smith, previous to his death, obtained from the Almighty a knowledge in regard to the condition of the dead ... the Prophet Joseph Smith saw that the Gospel of the Kingdom could be preached not only to people in the flesh, but to people out of the flesh; that when people depart this life they retain their identity; that they can be informed; that they can receive and reject; and he was also shown that the time must come when all shall hear the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, because by that they shall be judged ... Everyone must hear the Gospel and be judged by it ... This was a part of the mission of Christ. He was not only sent to preach good tidings to the meek, but it seems he had a mission to some that were in captivity ... In the 49th chapter of Isaiah, we find some remarks of the same kind: ‘That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves.’ I ask, were these predictions which it is generally admitted were uttered concerning Jesus Christ, fulfilled? ... Where did the ... spirit of Christ go to after it left the body? ... Says one, ‘it went to heaven, of course.’ Stay a moment. Three days after this we find this same Jesus, whose body was placed away in the tomb, walking in the garden ... Jesus, while walking in the garden, met Mary; and Mary, supposing him to be the gardener, asked where they had laid Jesus. Making himself known to her, she sprang towards him. Whereupon he said to her, ‘Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.’ Now, there were three days between the placing of Christ’s body in the tomb and the raising of it. Where was Jesus, the real Jesus, the living Jesus, while his body was lying in the tomb? ... We read in the third chapter of the first epistle of Peter, 18th to the 20th verses: ‘Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.’ Where was he? Where did he go? ‘Put to

death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, he went and preached unto the spirits in prison.’ That is where Christ was between the time of his death and his resurrection, preaching deliverance to the captives, the opening of the prison to them who were bound ... Christ went and preached the Gospel to the dead ... So [also] we learn from the revelations of God, through the Prophet Joseph Smith, that when the servants of God depart from this stage of action they follow the footsteps of the illustrious captain of our salvation, they preach deliverance to the captives, they publish the Gospel of peace in the regions of the departed ... all people whoever dwelt on the earth will have the privilege of hearing the Gospel of Christ ... according to the revelations of this great Prophet, Joseph Smith—one of the greatest Prophets that ever breathed the breath of life ... those who receive the Gospel in the spirit world can have the necessary earthly ordinances attended to for them by proxy, that is, the living can be baptized for the dead ... Did you ever think of the principle of one dying for another? Did not Jesus suffer for all on the principle of a vicarious atonement? On this principle of proxy rests the whole scheme of human redemption. Without that principle of proxy, everyone must pay the penalty of blood and death, for the wages of sin is death.”²³ ¶ *Darkness*. Leaning on Elder Bruce R. McConkie, Robert L. Millet wrote: “With but few exceptions, outer darkness²⁴ refers to hell, the place of suffering and sadness and confrontation in the spirit world (see Alma 34:33; 40:13–14; 41:7; D&C 38:5; 138:22, 30, 57; ISAIAH 49:9).²⁵ ¶ *They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “They shall dwell in all the paths, and by all the rivers *shall be* the place of their dwelling.” The LXX (Ⲙ) reads, “In all the highways they shall be fed, and there shall be pasture for them in all the paths.” Instead of *high places*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *highways* (Lamsa) / *paths* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, for the second clause, “And their pastures shall be in every plain.” ¶ *And their pastures shall be in all high places*. Barnes writes: “In the remainder of this verse, and in the following verses, the Messiah is represented under the image of a shepherd, who leads forth his flock to green fields, and who takes care that they shall be guarded from the heat of the sun, and shall not hunger nor thirst.” In ISAIAH 58:14b we have: “I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of

²² Morgan, Elder John. *Salvation for the Dead*. Discourse delivered in the Assembly Hall, Salt Lake City, 20 January 1884.

²³ Penrose, Elder Charles W., *Divisions of Modern Christendom*, delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 17 July 1881.

²⁴ The *outer darkness* in spirit prison of those who await the resurrection, in contrast to outer darkness as the abode of those who do no inherit a kingdom of glory.

²⁵ Millet, Robert L. *The Power of the Word: Saving Doctrines from the Book of Mormon*, p.168.

the LORD hath spoken it,” this speaks of spiritual blessings.

10 They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor sun smite them; for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.

They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor sun smite them. The LXX (⚡) reads, “They shall not hunger nor shall they thirst, nor shall the burning wind nor the sun smite them.” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has *strike* instead of *smite*. ¶ In this context, it seems we are speaking of spiritual hunger and thirst, as in Amos 8:11. Isaiah sees a time when those thirsty and hungry are fed and liberated—and thus gathered. Wordsworth has: “That all these promises are fulfilled in Christ, appears from the adoption of these words in the Apocalypse, and from the application of them to Him.” In the Book of Revelation we have: “After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes” (Revelation 7:9–17). The Prophet Joseph Smith, after quoting some of these beautiful verses, and calling the 144 thousand “Saviors on Mount Zion,” associated these happenings with the winding up scenes and exhorted all to partake of these joys: “Oh! I beseech you to go forward, go forward and make your calling and election sure.”²⁶

²⁶ TPJS, p. 366, also see 347.

¶ Elder George Q. Cannon said: “There will be no time in the vast future when our cause for thanksgiving and for gratitude will cease; for the more we know and the more we comprehend the purposes of God, the more gratitude we will have. The angels who surround his throne indulge in thanksgiving and praise to God and the Lamb to a greater extent than we can do, because their causes for thanksgiving are greater; they have attained to a glorious exaltation, and they bask in the sunshine of the presence of the great Eternal. Although they are there, they still have cause to sing Hosannah to God and the Lamb; though they are in possession of such great blessings, dwelling as they do in a state of immortality, and freed from the power of Satan, sin, and death, they, nevertheless, see causes for thanksgiving to God our Father; and the nearer we approximate to them and to their perfection, the more we shall have of this feeling in our hearts, the more causes of thanksgiving we will perceive, and the more frequently we will express these feelings.”²⁷ This idea of the sun not hurting also reminds us of ISAIAH 33:14b. ¶ *For he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.* The LXX (⚡) reads, “But he who hath compassion on them will comfort them and lead them to bursting springs of water.” Instead of *guide them*, the Peshitta (⚡) has *bring them* (Lamsa) / *take them* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, “For he that is merciful to them, shall be their shepherd, and at the fountains of waters he shall give them drink.” ¶ The Talmud tradition (Seder Nezikin, Sanhedrin 92a) here has something close to the LDS belief that in the Spirit world righteous Priesthood holders will be given an assignment related to the Priesthood office and authority held in this life: “Rabbi Eleazar said: Every leader who leads the community with mildness will be privileged to lead them in the next world [too], as it is written, for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them; even by the springs of water shall he guide them” (Talmud, Soncino).

11 And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted.

The Targum (⚡) has, “And I will make all the mountains trodden paths like a way before them, and the foot-paths shall be cast up.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “And I will make every mountain a highway, and every path a pasture for them.” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has *paths* (*sémitæ*, Vulgate, ⚡) instead of *highways*. Cheyne notes: “*My mountains*] Not merely the mountains of Canaan (as ISAIAH 14:25), but those of the whole earth; it is an assertion of Jehovah’s universal lordship.”

²⁷ Cannon, Elder George Q. The Saints’ Causes of Gratitude. JD 11:70a. 1 January 1865.

Rawlinson explains: “I will make all my mountains a way. No obstacles shall prevent the return of the wanderers. Mountains shall be as roads, and as highways lifted up.” The Lord will prepare the paths for the remnant of Israel to gather back to Zion.

12 And then, O house of Israel, behold, these shall come from far; and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim.

The Targum (ܬ) has, “South” rather than *Sinim* and other than that parallels the Masoretic (מ) text. The LXX (Θ) reads, “Behold they from afar shall come, some from the north and the west and others from the land of the Persians.” Instead of *west*, the Peshitta (ܣ) has *islands of the sea* (Lamsa) / *sea* (BPE); instead of *land*, the Peshitta (ܣ) has *coast* (Lamsa) / *sea* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Behold these shall come from afar, and behold these from the north and from the sea, and these from the south country.” ¶ Rawlinson explains, regarding the north and the west,

מִצְפּוֹן וּמִיָּם, “literally, *from the north and from the sea*, which generally means ‘the west,’ but which, in one enumeration of the points of the compass (Psalm 107:3), is certainly ‘the south.’”²⁸ ¶ A number of interesting suggestions have been made by the scholars about *Sinim*, the most frequently being that of the land of *China*. The vital point is that the lost tribes are included in this description of the world, and that these would be gathered back into the fold.²⁹

vv. 13–17. Jerusalem will not be forsaken by the Lord. President Wilford Woodruff spoke about these verses of Isaiah, also applying them to the early Saints: “The Lord, in His mercy and wisdom, has led this people to these valleys of the mountains. It is ordained of God that Zion is to be established here. Here is the Tabernacle that the Prophet spoke of as a covering from the storm and the wind, etc. These temples are here in fulfillment of prophecy. We have four of them in this

²⁸ In Psalm 107:3 we have מִצְפּוֹן וּמִיָּם: “And gathered them out of the lands, from the east [i.e., from the rising of the sun], and from the west [i.e., from the setting of the sun], from the north, and from the south.” Some render it “from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the sea” (Leeser, but also see ABP {LXX (Θ)}, AMP, CJB, YLT, ERV, ESV, FDB, GLB, JPS, RV1865, SRV, SSE, TLV). In order to make it *south*, in Psalm 107:3, the AMP Bible specifically means the *Red Sea* for the *sea*: “And gathered them out of the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the [Red] Sea in the south.”

²⁹ I love the following from the Prophet scribe, President Joseph Fielding Smith: *The Way to Perfection: Short Discourses on Gospel Themes*. 9th ed. Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1951, pp. 129–135.

State. President Young was honored of God in the establishment of these things. He lived long enough to dedicate the corner stone of this Temple on this block, into which the Latter-day Saints go and deliver their friends who are in the prison house, and attend to the ordinances of the house of God for them, in fulfillment of the ancient Prophets, who spake as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost, to the effect that saviors should be raised up on Mount Zion in the latter days while the kingdom is the Lord’s. Zion has got to arise”³⁰

13 ¶ Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; for the feet of those who are in the east shall be established; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for they shall be smitten no more; for the LORD hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.

Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; for the feet of those who are in the east shall be established. The LXX (Θ) reads, “Rejoice heavens; and let the earth be glad.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Give praise, O ye heavens, and rejoice, O earth.” As LDS we often speak of Zion in the American Continent (and the gathering to the Rocky Mountains) as well as Zion in Jerusalem. For instance, Elder Wilford Woodruff beautifully testified, full of gratitude for what the Lord had done for the early Saints: “This is how I feel, this is my faith. I read the Bible, the Book of Mormon and the Book of Covenants, and I look for everything contained in them to be fulfilled. We are making history day by day, and we are fulfilling the events which they predicted would transpire in the latter days. Isaiah, when he saw in vision this people in the mountains, exclaims: ‘Sing, O heavens &c. [quotes ISAIAH 49:13–15]. In the own due time of the Lord all things spoken by the prophets will be literally fulfilled.”³¹ From the words of Elder Woodruff, it is clear that he is speaking—and giving these scriptures the context in likening them to the Saints—of the pioneers moving into Utah and surrounding territories. The very act of gathering Israel from the four corners of the earth is proof that God has not forgotten His people. The gathering of Israel begins with Ephraim but shall encompass the whole earth until Judah is also brought in. The Book of Mormon clarifies, however, that this particular verse deals with *the east* or those in the land of Israel, of the house of Judah. The

³⁰ President Wilford Woodruff, General Conference, April 1898, pp. 31–32.

³¹ Woodruff, Elder Wilford., *Revelation, Prophesying, Predictions of the Servants of God, Etc.*, 1 August 1880.

Lord here is speaking about blessing the Jews, *for the feet of those who are in the east shall be established*. I rejoice in anticipation to this day. Joseph Fielding Smith declared: “The Jews have remained a distinct people from the beginning of their history. They have been spoken of as the great miracle, bearing evidence of the divinity of the scriptures. A great miracle they have been and are. Why have they remained intact and a distinct people while scattered among the nations? The fact that they have remained a distinct race, maintaining their customs and religious beliefs, while scattered over all the earth, is evidence of the truth of prophecy ... They are today a standing miracle in their scattered condition, silently testifying to the covenant to Israel and of the divinity of Jesus Christ, yet, themselves, not believing in him. A better day is dawning for the Jew and for the Lamanite. The time is now at hand spoken by ancient prophets when the Lord shall feel after them ... The purposes of the Father are being filled rapidly and in the near future great events shall take place in relation to the fulfillment of these promises made to Judah and Ephraim, in which the Lamanite on this Land shall also be considered.”³² ¶ *And break forth into singing, O mountains: for they shall be smitten no more*. The Targum (ⓧ) has, “And be glad, O mountains, with praise.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “Let the mountains resound with bursts of joy; for God hath compassionated his people.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “Ye mountains, give praise with jubilation.” ¶ Elder Wilford Woodruff said: “He has promised to sustain Zion, and when the Prophet saw this Zion of God in the mountains [seems to imply the Rocky Mountains—GB], his soul was filled with joy and he cried, ‘Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.’”³³ This part of the prophecy has been fulfilled. They will also come when the mountains of Judea shall shout for joy, too. ¶ *For the LORD hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted*. The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “And comforted those of his people who were afflicted.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has *poor ones* instead of *afflicted*. ¶ This is an allusion to ISAIAH 40:1–2a,

נִחְמוּ נִחְמוּ עַמִּי יֵאמֶר אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:
דִּבְרוּ עַל-לֵב יְרוּשָׁלַם

14 But, behold, Zion hath said: The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me--but he will show that he hath not.

But, behold, Zion hath said: The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. The Targum (ⓧ) has, “But Zion said, The Lord hath taken His Shekinah from me, and the Lord hath cast me away.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “Hath Sion then said, ‘The Lord hath quite forsaken me,’ and, ‘Why hath the Lord forgotten me?’” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has *the Lord* instead of *my Lord*. ¶ Regarding צִיּוֹן, Henderson tenderly says, “To interpret *Zion*, as meaning the Christian church, would do violence to the remaining portion of the chapter. No language could more pathetically and tenderly describe the feelings of the Jewish church, or the love of God towards her, than that here employed.” The latter-day Gathering of Israel and Judah has begun, and the Lord has not forgotten her. Whitehouse has: “It is a characteristically Semitic conception that it is not the individuals who constitute the nation, but that the nation or town brings forth individuals. It is likewise an ancient idea that the exiles when withdrawn from the tribe are no longer regarded, properly speaking, as children of their original native country, but as the offspring of a foreign woman.” Barnes writes: “The *object* of the prophet is to furnish the assurance that, whatever might be the trials and the sufferings of his people, God had not forgotten them, and he neither could nor would forsake them.” ¶ Elder Wilford Woodruff testified: “Now this Zion of God has been before his face from before the foundation of the world, and it is no more going to fail in the latter days than any of the purposes of God are going to fail, hence I look upon this work as the work of God, and it makes no difference to the Lord Almighty, nor to his Saints, what the world may think or do about it, or what course they may pursue with regard to it; they cannot stop its progress, because it is the work of God ... for as the Lord God Almighty lives, so true will the work, the foundation of which has been laid in these latter days, increase and continue until its consummation is effected, and the great Zion of God is established in beauty, power and glory, and the dominion of the kingdom of our God extends over the whole earth. Joseph Smith laid the foundation of this work; he was chosen by the Lord for that purpose, and was ordained by prophets and inspired men who formerly held the keys of the kingdom of God upon the earth. They laid their hands upon his head and ordained him to the Priesthood, and gave him power to unlock the heavens and to administer the ordinances of the house of God

³² Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Way to Perfection: Short Discourses on Gospel Themes*. 9th ed. Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1951, pp. 129–135.

³³ Woodruff, Elder Wilford. Woodruff, delivered in the Salt Lake Assembly Hall, at the Semi-Annual Conference, of the Salt Lake Stake of Zion, Saturday Afternoon, 3 July 1880.

upon the earth. This work he performed in the face of difficulty, persecution, opposition and oppression; but the hand of God sustained him. He knew what few men or people on the whole face of the earth know—that God lives, and he also knew that the work whose foundations he laid was the work of God.”³⁴ ¶ *But he will show that he hath not.* In the next verse, we see how intimately the Lord cares for Israel and will never forget her.

15 For can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion[✓] on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee, O house of Israel.

✓ from having compassion

For can a woman forget³⁵ her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? The Targum (ⲧ) has, for the first half, “Is it possible that a mother can forget her child.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Can a woman forget her child? or not have compassion on the offspring of her womb?” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “Can a woman forget her infant, so as not to have pity on the son of her womb?” ¶ Jennings poetically writes: “God has made one earthly relationship more irrefragable than any; for it is quite independent of any responsive affection. The mother holds to her breast her new-born babe, so dependent on her as it is for everything that shall sustain life, this affects every maternal emotion. With a tenderness no words can depict she yearns over that frail little creature, unconscious as it is of all her tendernesses. Can she actually forget it? Is it not a law of nature, for her at least, though none other care for her infant? It is hers, and she can think of little else. Nor does Jehovah here compare His thoughtful love to that of some callous debased woman of earth, who may forget, and indeed has all too frequently forgotten and forsaken her infant. No; that we altogether refuse. It would be little for His love to exceed such callousness. It is mother-love at its purest, its strongest, and its best.” ¶ *Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee, O house of Israel.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “The congregation of Israel answered and said: If there is no forgetfulness with Him, perhaps He will not forget that I have made a calf of gold? The prophet said to her, Yea, these things shall be forgotten. And she said to him, If there is forgetfulness with Him, perhaps it will be forgotten that I said in Sinai: We will

do and obey? He answered and said to her: My Word shall not cast you off.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Grant that a woman may forget even these, but I will not forget thee, said the Lord.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “And if she should forget, yet will not I forget thee.” ¶ It is the house of Israel that the Lord will not forget, regardless of where in the world she had been scattered to. ¶ Elder George Q. Cannon had these interesting words about our own responsibility in the matter of redemption: “Zion will be redeemed. Many will fall by the wayside, many will lose their faith, many will be led away by false and seducing spirits; but there will be those who will be saved and exalted, and all of us who are here tonight have this privilege if we will accept of it; we can be saved each of us and crowned with glory in the presence of God and the Lamb.”³⁶

16 Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of [my] hands; thy walls [are] continually before me.

Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Behold, as upon the hands thou art engraven before me.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Behold I have engraven thy walls on my hands.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “Behold, I have graven thee in my hands.” ¶ Wordsworth beautifully has: “The names of the tribes of Israel were graven by God’s command on the precious stones of the breast-plate worn by the High Priest when he presented himself before the Lord; and they were engraven also on the two onyx stones which clasped the breast-plate to his shoulders. Christ, our great Universal and Everlasting High Priest, bears His people on His shoulders and at His heart, when He presents Himself before God (see Exodus 28:9, 17) ... This is fulfilled in a mysterious manner in the Blessed Hands of Christ Himself, pierced by the nails, the instruments of His death; and thus the evidence of His love is engraven for ever there. They are written on Him, Who is the Rock,—the Rock of Ages.” Keith finds an affinity between this verse and ISAIAH 54:10. ¶ Terry Billikopf shared this from Sister Linda S. Reeves, “Sisters, I do not know why we have the many trials that we have, but it is my personal feeling that the reward is so great, so eternal and everlasting, so joyful and beyond our understanding that in that day of reward, we may feel to say to our merciful, loving Father, ‘Was that all that was required?’ I believe that if we could daily remember and recognize the depth of that love our Heavenly Father and our Savior have for us, we would be willing to do anything to be back in Their presence again, surrounded by Their love

³⁴ Woodruff, Elder Wilford. “The Work of God, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 14, No. 6, May 6, 1870, pp. 31–37.

³⁵ President Spencer W. Kimball quoted this phrase in Isaiah to indicate that the Lord will also have compassion upon all who will repent with great sincerity. *The Miracle of Forgiveness*, p.339.

³⁶ Cannon, Elder George Q. Delivered in the 14th Ward Meetinghouse, Sunday Evening, 25 July 1880.

eternally. What will it matter, dear sisters, what we suffered here if, in the end, those trials are the very things which qualify us for eternal life and exaltation in the kingdom of God with our Father and Savior?”³⁷

¶ *Thy walls are continually before me.* The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And thou art continually before me.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “Thy walls are always before my eyes.” ¶ Dr. Weir, as mentioned in Cheyne, compares *Thy walls* to Exodus 13:9, 16.” Cheyne himself observes: “With touching condescension, Jehovah inverts the usual order. A worshipper needs a consecrating mark to remind him at all times of his relation to his God. Zion’s God, though not in need of such a reminder, has condescended, as it were, to ‘grave Jerusalem on the palms of his hands.’”

17 Thy children shall make haste **against** thy destroyers; and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee.

¶ *Thy children shall make haste against thy destroyers.* The BPE (Ⲯ) has, “Thy sons make haste; those who devastated and desolated thee march from thee. The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲯ) has, “Your sons who caused your destruction and those who laid you waste shall make haste to go forth from you.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “Thy builders are come: they that destroy thee and make thee waste shall go out of thee.” The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Those that shall build thy desolate places shall make haste.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And thou shalt be speedily rebuilt by them who destroyed thee.” ¶ Kay observes regarding מְהֵרָה: “The word for ‘make haste’ is the one used in ISAIAH 8:1, 3. Then it was, ‘Plunder speedeth;’ now they who had been carried away are hastening homewards (cp. ISAIAH 51:14; 58:8).” ¶ *And they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Thy destroyers and they that made thee waste, shall go forth of thee.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And they who laid thee waste shall become thine offspring.” ¶ The tables are turned so that those who were feared now attempt to escape and run with fear.

vv. 18–21. Wordsworth notes: “The following prophecy is repeated with further enlargements and amplifications in ISAIAH 60:4–14, which is to be compared with the present section.” Whitehouse suggests (as do McFadyen and Wade): “These verses (ISAIAH 49:20–21) are best understood by reverting to the custom whereby slave-girls—e.g. Hagar, Bilhah, and Zilpah—are employed by their mistresses when barren to raise up offspring.

³⁷ Reeves, Sister Linda S., Second Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency, Worthy of Our Promised Blessings, October 2015 General Conference.

Compare with this passage Sarah’s ... remark in reference to Hagar, ‘Perhaps I shall be built up from her’ (Genesis 16:2; cf. 30:3). Zion is the unfruitful wife. The strange woman who has borne the children is the land of exile in which the Jewish exiles have grown up.” Wade says: “Zion’s exiles are to be brought back with tender care by the peoples amongst whom they have been scattered.”

18 ¶ Lift up thine eyes round about and behold; all these gather themselves together, **[and] they shall** come to thee. **And [as]** I live, saith the LORD, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them **[on thee] even** as a bride **[doeth]**.

Lift up thine eyes round about and behold; all these gather themselves together, [and] they shall come to thee. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Lift up thine eyes round about, O Jerusalem, and see; all the children of the people of thy captivity are gathered together and come unto thee.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Look up with thine eyes all around and view them all; behold they are gathered together and coming to thee.” ¶ Faussett has: “As Zion is often compared to a bride (ISAIAH 54:5), so the accession of converts is like bridal ornaments (‘jewels,’ ISAIAH 62:3; Malachi 3:17). Her literal children are, however, more immediately meant, as the context refers to their restoration; and only secondarily to her spiritual children by conversion to Christ. Israel shall be the means of the final complete conversion of the nations (Micah 5:7; Romans 11:12, 15).” ¶ *And as I live, saith the LORD, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on even as a bride.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “As I live, saith the Lord, all these shall be unto thee as a vesture of glory, and their works in the midst of thee as the ornament of a bride.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “As I live saith the Lord, Thou shalt clothe thyself with them all, as with raiment, and wrap them about thee as a bride doth her dress.” Instead of *bind them on*, the Peshitta (Ⲯ) has *adorned*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt be clothed with all these as with an ornament, and as a bride thou shalt put them about thee.” ¶ Nägelsbach says regarding *as I live*, “But the LORD assures her of the important fact with an oath (אֲנִי־חַי, first, Numbers 14:21, 28; Deuteronomy 32:40; only here in ISAIAH; Jeremiah 22:24; 46:18; most frequent in Ezekiel 5:11; 14:16, etc. Compare ISAIAH 45:23).” ¶ Barnes explains: “The sentence here is manifestly incomplete. It means, as a bride binds on her ornaments.” The Book of Mormon also makes that ellipsis clear. Barnes continues: “The sentiment is, that the accession of the

large number of converts under the Messiah to the true church of God, would be the real ornament of Zion and would greatly increase her beauty and loveliness.” Henderson explains: “The inhabitants of a city are its beauty; and, cities being regarded by the Hebrews as females, the metaphor of a bride is the more appropriate.”

19 For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants; and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away.

For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants. The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “Because thy waste and desolate and ruined places will now be too narrow for the inhabitants.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has *deserts* instead of *waste*. ¶ Nägelsbach says: “Zion, forsaken and repudiated by her husband, and thus supposing herself debarred from bearing children, is in a wonderful way suddenly surrounded by the most numerous fresh growth, the richest blessing of children and ornament of children ... And then what is a great multitude to do in a desert? In reply, the LORD persists in His assertion that Zion is to regard this crowd as her blessing of children ... that now thou shalt be too contracted to dwell in [i.e., thou shalt hardly fit in the land].” This theme continues in the next verse, where it is clear that the territory is not big enough for all the inhabitants. ¶ *And they that swallowed thee up shall be far away.* The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “And they who devoured thee shall be removed far from thee.” Instead of *be far away*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *flee away* (Lamsa) / *flee* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “And they that swallowed thee up shall be chased far away.” ¶ The Lord’s people would be safe from her enemies.

20 The children ~~which~~ **whom** thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the ~~other~~ **first**, shall say again in thine ears **say**: The place **[is]** too strait for me; give place to me that I may dwell.

The children whom thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the first, shall again in thine ears say: The Targum (Ⲫ) has, “Henceforth shall each of the children of thy captivity in the midst of thee say.” The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “Therefore thy sons whom thou hast lost will say in thine ears.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “The children of thy barrenness shall still say in thy ears.” ¶ Jenour has: “There is no English word that exactly answers to

the Hebrew **שָׁכַל**, which signifies **the state of a woman who has lost all her children**³⁸; (Latin, *orbitas*) we are obliged consequently to translate it by a periphrasis.” Barnes suggests: “HEB. ‘The sons of thy widowhood.’ That is, after thou hast lost those that have been killed in the wars, and those that have died in captivity in a distant land, there shall be again a great increase as if they were given to a widowed mother. And perhaps the general truth is taught here, that the persecution of the people of God will be attended ultimately with a vast increase; and that all the attempts to obliterate the church will only tend finally to enlarge and strengthen it.” ¶ *The place is too strait for me; give place to me that I may dwell.* The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “This place is too strait for me: make room for me, where I may dwell.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, for the second clause, “Make me room to dwell in.” ¶ Elder B. H. Roberts said: “In 1846, they drove our parents from a single city and its surroundings; they came to the wilderness, and founded a *Territory* which we possess; and we are spreading over into the surrounding States and Territories, and today the cry of Zion’s children is—‘Give us room that we may dwell!’ We have prevailed against every obstacle—the prophecy so far has been fulfilled; and if we will but hearken to the counsels of God, we shall never cease to triumph, until the kingdoms of this world are the kingdoms of our God and His Christ.”³⁹ So also Elder Orson Pratt, writing about 32 years after the Saints entered the Salt Lake basin: “We have stretched forth the gardens of our habitation (ISAIAH 54:2) several hundred miles in the south especially, and one or two hundred miles in the north, into the Territory of Idaho. Utah does not seem sufficient for us, hence we have built many large towns and villages in Idaho. We have spread forth our towns, our villages and our settlements to the south for some 300 or 400 miles, and even after doing this we find the place is too strait, and the saying is: ‘Give place to me that I may dwell.’ We would scarcely suppose that a work of this great and important magnitude would have been accomplished in so short a time as scarcely one-third of a century, when all this great basin—nearly all with the exception of one or two small portions of the country traversed by Fremont and a few of his followers—was explored and considered an unprofitable desert, considered unfit for the habitation of man, in consequence of the dryness and parched condition of its soil. But the Lord when He begins to fulfill and accomplish a work among His people does so by degrees. He did not convert this great American

³⁸ Gesenius has: “שָׁכַל fut. שָׁכַל. TO BE BEREAVED of children, to be childless.”

³⁹ Roberts, Elder Brigham H. Delivered Under the Auspices of the Mutual Improvement Association, in the Fourteenth Ward Assembly Rooms, Salt Lake City, Monday Evening, 28 January 1884.

desert, several hundred miles in extent, into a fruitful garden in one day, nor in one year; but in a few years, comparatively speaking, He has accomplished this work and has done it too with an eye to the predictions that were uttered by His servant Isaiah, the Prophet, and His servant, David, the Psalmist.”⁴⁰ ¶ I particularly like these words from President Brigham Young: “These are the mysteries of the kingdom of God upon the earth, to know how to purify and sanctify our affections, the earth upon which we stand, the air we breathe, the water we drink, the houses in which we dwell, and the cities which we build, that when strangers come into our country they may feel a hallowed influence and acknowledge a power to which they are strangers, ‘For all is dedicated to the Lord and consecrated to him, and the Spirit and power of God reigns there and the power of the enemy can find no place.’ When the people of the Saints have attained to this happy state, then will they say, ‘Give us more room to dwell,’ and they will never be driven from such ground. All hell may then give up the chase, for they never can drive the Saints from a spot that is hallowed by the faith of the Saints, through the medium of Jesus Christ by the power of the Father, for that place is dedicated and sanctified to him. Let every man and woman sanctify themselves and their possessions, dedicating all unto the Lord ...”⁴¹ ¶ These prophecies are now taking place in the Holy Land, where the settlers there are crying for more room.

21 Then shalt thou say in thine heart: Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? And who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where [hæd] have they [been]?

Then shalt thou say in thine heart: Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? The LXX (6) reads, “Whereupon thou wilt say in thy heart, Who hath begotten these for me? I indeed was childless and a widow.” The Douay-Rheims (1) has, “And thou shalt say in thy heart: Who hath begotten these? I was barren and brought not forth, led away, and captive.” ¶ Alexander speaks “... of a childless mother finding herself suddenly surrounded by the clamour of a multitude of children, and asking in amazement whence they came and who they are ... She asks how it is that

she was so long desolate and childless, when she sees so many children round her now.” Nägelsbach writes: “Since the children stand before her, not as new born, but as grown up, she asks further: Who hath brought them up for me?” ¶ Horsley correctly suggests: “Does not this 21st verse allude to a future unexpected restoration of the ten tribes?” And we might well add, the *Lamanite nation*. Govett, a Gentile, has: “All her scattered sons shall return to their land:—a promise which refers to the restoration of the ten tribes, as is evident from the surprise expressed by Jerusalem at their numbers, and from her ignorance of her locality. ‘These, where have they been?’ For wither the ten tribes have been removed, is a question which has baffled ancient tradition and modern research; though perhaps we may venture to affirm that some are in those countries to which they were led captive at the first, and Mr. Simons has rendered it probable that the American Indians constitute the majority of the lost tribes of Israel.” As LDS our views are a bit different but at the same time very close, as we do believe that the American Indians are of Israel, just not of the lost tribes. ¶ *And who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where have they been?* The LXX (6) reads, “Who then hath brought up these for me? I was abandoned and alone; whence then have I these?” The Douay-Rheims (1) has, “And who hath brought up these? I was destitute and alone: and these, where were they?” ¶ In the *spirit world* and in the *resurrection*, Judah would be amazed to find that God had indeed glorified His Name and greatly increased the nation of Israel (Revelation 7:9). No wonder Abraham was promised that all of the land would be given him: “Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever” (Genesis 13:14b–15).

vv. 22–26. Jacob, brother of Nephi, spoke about these verses: “And now, behold, I would speak unto you concerning things which are, and which are to come; wherefore, I will read you the words of Isaiah. And they are the words which my brother has desired that I should speak unto you. And I speak unto you for your sakes, that ye may learn and glorify the name of your God. And now, the words which I shall read are they which Isaiah spake concerning all the house of Israel; wherefore, they may be likened unto you, for ye are of the house of Israel. And there are many things which have been spoken by Isaiah which may be likened unto you, because ye are of the house of Israel” (2 Nephi 6:4–5). Notice here that Jacob does not claim that his interpretation of the words of Isaiah is the only one, but rather, that it is one of the interpretations as the words of Isaiah are likened unto the Book of Mormon peoples. We have also seen in how many of the words of Isaiah

⁴⁰ Elder Orson Pratt, “Exhortation from Isaiah, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 24, No. 4, 26 October 1879, pp. 20–32.

⁴¹ Young, President Brigham. Remarks made in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 24 May 1863.

were likened unto the Saints by the early Brethren of the restored Church. (This is an important prophetic principle, where certain words of Isaiah are said to have been fulfilled in a specific historical context. This does not mean that the words could not refer to other contexts.) We also read of the gathering: “And behold, according to the words of the prophet, the Messiah will set himself again the second time to recover them; wherefore, he will manifest himself unto them in power and great glory, unto the destruction of their enemies, when that day cometh when they shall believe in him; and none will he destroy that believe in him. And they that believe not in him shall be destroyed, both by fire, and by tempest, and by earthquakes, and by bloodsheds, and by pestilence, and by famine. And they shall know that the Lord is God, the Holy One of Israel.” (2 Nephi 6:14–15, also see 6:8–13). ¶ Elder W. Woodruff in 1871 said, “... Christ would not come until the Jews had returned to their own land and had rebuilt the City of Jerusalem and the temple there; they would have known that all these and many other prophecies must have been fulfilled as a preparatory work for the coming of the Messiah.”⁴² These words were given almost 50 years before the Balfour Declaration, which was signed 2 November 1917. ¶ Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, in 1942, gave a very powerful talk of which I only partly quote: “The Lord said to Israel, when you repent, when you get ready to do My will, I will bring you back from your long dispersion ... ‘And it shall come to pass that they shall be gathered in from their long dispersion, from the isles of the sea, and from the four parts of the earth; and the nations of the Gentiles shall be great in the eyes of Me, saith God, in carrying them forth to the lands of their inheritance. Yea, the kings of the Gentiles shall be nursing fathers unto them, and their queens shall become nursing mothers, wherefore, the promises of the Lord are great unto the Gentiles, for He hath spoken it, and who can dispute?’ (2 Nephi 10:7–9) ... In December, 1917, General Allenby, the British general, took his forces into Palestine and captured it almost without opposition, and this land fell into the hands of the British where it has been ever since. I forgot to say something I intended to say earlier, but it fits better here. When I read the Book of Mormon and the Book of Isaiah and learn that the Lord predicted that the kings of the Gentiles would be nursing fathers to the House of Israel I am greatly impressed. Have they not been nursing fathers to scattered Israel? Have they not carried them in their ships both to this land and to Palestine? After England got possession of Palestine and after the armistice they received the mandate of Palestine, they sent a Jew down there to be governor of that land, Sir Herbert Samuel ... From the days of our

Lord until Sir Herbert Samuel was sent to Palestine, there had never been a ruler in that land who was a Jew. This was a sign to us that the words of the Lord were about fulfilled, and the days of the Gentiles were coming to their close ... When England received the mandate of Palestine, Mr. Balfour, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, sent this written communication to Lord Rothschild: ‘I have much pleasure in conveying to you on behalf of His Majesty’s Government the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionists aspirations, which has been submitted to and approved by the Cabinet: His Majesty’s Government views with favor the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.’ ... The American Congress ratified this act a short time later ... The land of Palestine was dedicated for the return of the Jews, October 24, 1841, by Orson Hyde, but the time had not come, then, for the return of the Jews. President George A. Smith again dedicated the land, in March, 1873. In 1878 an organization of Jews was formed called the Lovers of Zion, the purpose being to establish the Jews in Palestine. The Zionist Federation was commenced in 1896, and the first conference of this organization was held in Basel, Switzerland, in 1897, and the old nationalistic spirit was revived. To return to the saying that the Gentiles should be nursing fathers to the Jews, do you know that Great Britain has spent well, I do not know how much, but up until some ten years ago, that nation had spent upwards of 50,000,000 pounds ... The Jews are returning only partly believing in Jesus Christ. They are willing to accept Him as a great prophet among the prophets of Israel and Judah, but not as their Deliverer, or Messiah. When our Lord shall come to them in the calling of Deliverer, the whole land will be in siege. Jerusalem will be at the mercy of its enemies. There will be a great earthquake and the Mount of Olives will cleave in twain forming a great valley into which the oppressed people will flee from the city for safety. At that time the enemies of the people will be destroyed Christ will appear to the Jews and show them His hands and His feet and then they will accept Him as their Messiah. Then, as Zechariah has predicted, every family will mourn apart, and there will be weeping and wailing because they rejected their King. After those days there will come peace and Israel will come back into his own.”⁴³

⁴² Elder Wilford Woodruff, *Journal of Discourses*, Volume 14, January 1, 1871, p. 2.

⁴³ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Signs of the Times*. “Restoration of Israel and Judah.” Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News Press, 1952.

22 Thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in [their] arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon [their] shoulders.

✓ bosom

The Targum (ܬ) has, beginning with the second clause, “Behold, I will reveal my power among the Gentiles, and unto the kingdoms I will raise my standard, and thy children shall come in palanquins (‘sedan-couch’), and thy daughters shall be carried upon the shoulders.” The LXX (6) reads, “Thus saith the Lord, Lord, Behold I will lift up my hand to the nations, and I will erect my standard for the isles. And they shall bring thy sons in their bosoms and carry thy daughters on their shoulders.” ¶ Regarding אֶל-נְּוִים יָדַי, Ibn Ezra has, “Behold, I will lift up My hand, etc. As a man lifts up his hand, that he may be seen.” Horsley (1733–1806), who was born before the Gospel was restored, explained: “These Gentiles and peoples who are to bring the sons of Zion in their bosoms, and carry her daughters on their shoulders, are certainly different persons from the sons and daughters of Zion, who are to be so borne. And yet they must bear good will to the sons and daughters of Zion, and therefore must be of the true religion: which is still more evident from this consideration, that it will be in obedience to the express command of God, upon his lifting up his hand, and raising his signal, that they will be thus zealous for the service of the sons and daughters of Zion. And again, these sons and daughters of Zion, in whose behalf God will thus interpose, by lifting up his hand to the nations, and raising his signal to the peoples, must also be of the true religion. Hence it is manifest that this prophecy cannot be expounded simply of the calling of the Gentiles, but it must be understood of the conversion and restoration of the Jews [and of the rest of the house of Israel—GB], and of the good offices that the converted Jews will receive from their brethren of the Gentiles.” Henderson, likewise, has: “These verses [ISAIAH 49:22–23] describe the readiness, zeal, and liberality, with which, in the providence of God, the nations and their rulers should promote the restoration of the Jews to their own land ... the *bosom* of a garment, or, that part of it which opens about the bosom. The metaphor is taken from the practice, still common in the East, of carrying young children in such aperture. That of carrying on the shoulders is also very common.”

Talk delivered 28 October 1942, Barratt Hall, pp. 58 ff. Emphasis added. The whole of this talk is highly recommended.

Wordsworth writes: “Rather, in their *bosom*,—the bosom of their dress. See Nell. V. 13. Palm 129:7, where the same word is used. Cp. below, ISAIAH 60:4; 66:12; and Numbers 11:12, where Moses says, ‘Have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me. Carry them in thy *bosom*’ (Heb. בֶּטֶן, the *lap of the robe*), ‘as a nursing father beareth the sucking child’ ... — upon their shoulders] The young children of both sexes are usually carried by their mothers and nurses, not in the arms, but on the shoulder, seated astride, and sometimes, for a short distance, on the hip (Lane, *Modern Egypt*, p. 55).” Rashi in Rosenberg suggests that הִצֵּן refers to the *armpit*, and suggests Nehemiah 5:13, הִצֵּנִי, where we have *my lap* and where Rashi reads *my armpit*. Alexander has: “the word הִצֵּן, which seems most probably to signify either the *bosom* or the *arm*, when spoken of in reference to carrying, and especially the carrying of children. Strictly perhaps the word expresses an idea intermediate between *arm* and *bosom*, or including both, viz. the *space enclosed by them in the act of grasping or embracing*.” Nägelsbach has: “הִצֵּן is the *sinus* formed by the wide upper garment, in which one may even carry small children.” Barnes explains: “These children hold by the head of him who carries them, whether he be on horseback or on foot, and do not hinder him from walking or doing what he pleases.” This augments the import of the passage in Isaiah, who speaks of the Gentiles bringing children thus; so that distance is no objection to this mode of conveyance, since they may thus be brought on horseback from among the people, however remote.’ — Paxton. ‘Children of both sexes are carried on the shoulders. Thus may be seen the father carrying his son, the little fellow being astride on the shoulder, having, with his hands, hold of his father’s head. Girls, however, sit on the shoulder, as if on a chair, their legs hanging in front, while they also, with their hands, lay hold of the head. In going to, or returning from heathen festivals, thousands of parents and their children may be thus seen marching along with joy.’ — Roberts.” Rabbi Mezudath David (in Rosenberg) suggests this verse speaks “of the great honor the nations will confer on the Jews when they bring them back to the Holy Land.” ¶ In 1855 Orson Pratt declared: “Isaiah, in his 49th chapter has informed us that this work should commence, not among the Jews first, but among the Gentiles ... Here we perceive, that when the great day shall come for the house of Israel to be restored to their own lands, the very first work He accomplishes in relation to that restoration will be to lift up His hand to the Gentiles and set up a standard among them ... it is a work which the Lord Himself has to perform ... when He undertakes to gather them from the nations of the earth ... The Lord did not send these messengers

[missionaries] to declare His glory among Israel first, why? Because a certain work had to be done among the Gentiles first; they were to carry this sign, ensign, or standard, proclaiming the doctrines of Jesus Christ so as not to be misunderstood; they have to carry it to the isles afar off, and declare His glory first among the Gentiles ... [and after] these same missionaries ‘shall bring all your brethren (Israel) for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations [see ISAIAH 18].’⁴⁴

23 And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with [their] face towards the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I [am] the LORD: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.

✓ nourishers

✓ ✓ princesses

And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers. The LXX (6) reads, “And kings shall be thy foster fathers; and their queens thy nursing mothers.” Instead of *nursing fathers*, the Peshitta (5) has *foster fathers* (Lamsa) / *tutors* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (2) has, “And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nurses.” ¶ Kay suggests regarding אֲמִנִּי [root אָמַן]⁴⁵: “*thy nursing* (or, foster fathers)— ... to take care of thy children. So in 2 Kings 10:1, Ahab’s ‘foster-fathers’ (s.w.) were those to whom he had entrusted his children.” ¶ Elders Heber C. Kimball, George Q. Cannon and Spencer W. Kimball teach that *Church members* must take upon themselves the role of nursing fathers and mothers. Elder Heber C. Kimball taught: “You Elders of Israel are the very men that will have to bring the sons and daughters of Israel from afar, and nurse them at your side; and you mothers will have to be those very queens that will have to take care of them when they are gathered, if you will honor your calling.”⁴⁶ ¶ I am simply not able to find the exact quote at this time (and almost 40 years have passed), but when President Spencer W. Kimball was asked about President Richard Nixon during some of the latter’s darker days, President Kimball said something to the effect that he supported President Nixon *in all his*

righteous endeavors. One of Nixon’s righteous endeavors took place in relation to the *Yom Kippur War*. It is reported that Nixon ignored Secretary of State Henry Kissinger’s views and helped send arms to Israel at a very critical point. Golda Meir, the Israeli Prime Minister felt that without that, Israel would have lost that war. It is also reported that Nixon, at that critical moment, remembered what Hannah Milhous Nixon, his mother, had told him as a boy: “Richard, someday if you are in the position to help Israel, do it.” While the spiritual nurturing will come from the members of the Church, especially Ephraim and Manasseh, there will be much help from others—as in the example given of President Nixon. In the establishing of the Jewish nation, especial help came from Great Britain and the United States. ¶ Elder Cannon speaks especially of the Lamanite nation: “... we have an immense work to do in these mountains. This is the foundation of that which is to be. The Lamanites must be brought into the covenant; they must receive the Gospel from us. We must be their ‘nursing fathers and their nursing mothers.’ This, among other things, is a labor devolving upon us. We are here for this purpose; not to become rich ourselves, that when we shall pass away we may bequeath to our children large possessions for them to enjoy the good things of this world to spend upon their lusts and to gratify their carnal desires.”⁴⁷ ¶ So also Elder Spencer W. Kimball: “The brighter day has dawned. The scattering has been accomplished; the gathering is in process. May the Lord bless us all *as we become nursing fathers and mothers* unto our Lamanite brethren and hasten the fulfillment of the great promises made to them, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.”⁴⁸ ¶ Now, how are the Saints kings and queens?

⁴⁷ President Cannon, George Q. Delivered at Meadow Creek, Millard County, 31 October 1881.

⁴⁸ Kimball, Elder Spencer W. *Conference Report*, October 1965, pp. 65-72. Elder Spencer W. Kimball would give many a moving talk about the injustices the Lamanite people have had to endure and the importance of Church members doing their part: “How I wish you could go with me through the Indian reservations and particularly Navajo Land and see the poverty, want, and wretchedness, and realize again that these are sons and daughters of God; that their miserable state is the result, not only of their centuries of wars and sins and godlessness, but is also attributable to us, their conquerors, who placed them on reservations with such limited resources and facilities, to starve and die of malnutrition and unsanitary conditions, while we become fat in the prosperity from the assets we took from them. Think of these things, my people, and then weep for the Indian, and with your tears, pray; then work for him. Only through us, the ‘nursing fathers and mothers’ may they eventually enjoy a fulfillment of the many promises made to them. Assuming that we do our duty to them, the Indians and other sons of Lehi will yet rise in power and strength. The Lord will remember his covenant to them; his Church will be established among them; the Bible and other scriptures will be made available to them; they will enter into the holy temples for their endowments and do vicarious work; they will come to a knowledge of their fathers and to a perfect knowledge of their Redeemer Jesus Christ; they shall prosper in the land and will, with our help, build up

⁴⁴ Pratt, Elder Orson, “The Ancient Prophecies.” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, No. 45, 7 January 1855, pp. 284–298. *Also see*, Pratt, Elder Orson, “The Restoration of the Jews, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 14, No. 9, May 26, 1871, pp. 58–70; Pratt, Elder Orson, *Journal of Discourses*. Orson Pratt, 15 June 1873, Delivered in the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday afternoon. The rise of Zion in the last days, p. 85–86.

⁴⁵ Gesenius, “one who carries and cares for a child.”

⁴⁶ Kimball, President Heber C. Delivered in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 7 April 1861.

Elder Heber C. Kimball answers that question: “Then who is to gather the people of God? You all say that we are to become a kingdom of kings and priests, of queens and priestesses; and the Bible supports this doctrine. Now, the truth is, you are the very kings and priests that have got to gather the Saints, and your wives have got to school them and nurse them.”⁴⁹ ¶ *They shall bow down to thee with their face towards the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet.* The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And on the face of the ground they shall pay thee homage, and lick the dust of thy feet.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has *worship* instead of *bow down*. ¶ The Prophet Jacob, brother of Nephi, explained this clause: “Wherefore, they that fight against Zion and the covenant people of the Lord shall lick up the dust of their feet” (2 Nephi 6:13a). Those who fight against Zion and the Saints of the Lord would be defeated and humiliated. ¶ Faussett explains as: “It is well known, that expressions of submission, homage, and reverence, always have been, and are still, carried to a great degree of extravagance in the eastern countries. When Joseph’s brethren were introduced to him, ‘they bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth’ (Genesis 42:6).” ¶ I love what Luther suggests in this place—the feet that shall be kissed are those of the Lord Jesus Christ for no disciple of our Savior would permit such reverence, as shown through example by Peter (Acts 10:26; 14:14): “... for this honour and worship belongs to Christ.” Indeed, *until* we can reverently fall at His feet and bathe them with tears of joy and gratitude (Luke 7:38), we can meanwhile worship the Father and the Son as we are obedient to the commandments. ¶ *And thou shalt know that I am the LORD: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.* The Targum (Ⲯ) adds, “the righteous” to the last clause. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, for the second half, “For they shall not be confounded that wait for him.” ¶ We continue with Jacob’s explanation: “... and the people of the Lord shall not be ashamed. For the people of the Lord are they who wait for him; for they still wait for the coming of the Messiah. And behold, according to the words of the prophet, the Messiah will set himself again the second time to recover them; wherefore, he will manifest himself unto them in power and great glory, unto the destruction of their enemies, when that day cometh when they shall believe in him; and none will he destroy that believe in him. And they that believe not in him shall be destroyed, both by fire, and by tempest, and by earthquakes, and by bloodsheds, and by pestilence, and by famine. And they shall know

a holy city, even the New Jerusalem, unto their God.” Kimball, Elder Spencer W. “Weep O World, for the Indian,” *Conference Report*, April 1947, pp. 144–152.

⁴⁹ Kimball, Elder Heber C. “Gathering of the People of God, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 8, No. 85, 17 February 1861, pp. 348–351.

that the Lord is God, the Holy One of Israel.” (2 Nephi 6:13b–15).

vv. 24–26. Nägelsbach explains this as a simile in which “a strong man will not allow his plunder or captives to be taken from him.” Or rather, Satan will do everything in his power to avoid returning the captives, but at the end, the Lord will triumph.

24 ¶ For shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captives delivered?

✓ captivity of the just

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, for the second clause, “And shall that which the just have taken captive be delivered?” A different Targum (Ⲯ) paraphrase (see C. W. H. Pauli on this verse) has, “Jerusalem says, Is it possible, that the prey shall be taken from Esau the wicked, which he took from me? concerning who it was said, By thy sword thou shalt live. Or the captive whom Ishmael led captive, concerning whom it has been said, That which belongeth to the righteous shall he deliver?” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Can anyone take spoils from a giant? And if any one captivate unjustly shall he be safe.” For the second clause, the BPE (Ⲯ) has, “Or the captives of the powerful liberated?” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “Shall the prey be taken from the strong? or can that which was taken by the mighty be delivered?” The Masoretic text (ⲙ) has *and or [the] lawful captive*, **וְאִם-צַדִּיק**, **שְׁבִי**, while the DSS 1QIsa^a (ⲙ) has *or [the] captive [of the] tyrant*, **אִם שְׁבִי עֶרִיץ**. The word **עֶרִיץ** is again used in ISAIAH 49:25, in both the ⲙ and the ⲙ, where **עֶרִיץ** is translated as the prey of the *tyrant*, *mighty* or of the *terrible*. ¶ So what does *lawful* mean in this context? HCSB renders the phrase: “Can the prey be taken from the mighty, or the captives of the righteous be delivered?” Several exegetes allude to the problem with the expression *captives of the righteous*. Young writes: “The first Qumran Scroll [1Q] has a reading that has long been proposed as a substitute for *righteousness*, namely *despot*.” So it is that ISV has: “Can they seize plunder from warriors, or can the captives of *tyrants* be rescued?” NASB renders it: “Can the prey be taken from the mighty man, Or the captives of a *tyrant* be rescued?” As does the Spanish LBLA and NBLH, “al cautivo del *tirano*.” LITV has, “righteous captive.” According to Alexander, “Symmachus, Jarchi, Ibn Ezra, and Hitzig, understand the phrase to mean the *righteous captives* ...” Geneva uses “iust captiuitie.” JPS instead, renders it “captives of the victorious.” BDB suggests that in this instance, the meaning is *right* or *correct*, thus *lawful*. The LDS RV2009 uses “los cautivos legítimos,” that is, the *legitimate* captives

following closely the SRV (i.e., RV 1909). ¶ Barnes suggests: "... we should interpret it of those who were made captive by those who were indisposed to clemency, and who were severe and rigid in their treatment of their prisoners. The idea is, that it was difficult or almost impossible to rescue captives from such hands, and that therefore it was a matter of wonder and amazement that that could be accomplished which God here promises." Cowles suggests this refers to Satan and his hold on man. We might also ask, "Where is thy sting, oh death?"

25 But thus saith the LORD, Even the captives[✓] of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered; **For the mighty God shall deliver his covenant people. For thus saith the Lord, I will contend with him* that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children.**

✓ captivity

* JST: *Them*, Book of Mormon and KJV, *him*.

But thus saith the LORD, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "For thus saith the Lord, I will surely restore the captivity of the mighty, and I will deliver the prey of the terrible." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "For thus saith the Lord, When one captivateth a giant he shall take spoils. But can one take from a mighty man and be safe?" The Peshitta (ܣ) switches *captives* for *prey* and *prey* for *captives*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, "For thus saith the Lord: Yea verily, even the captivity shall be taken away from the strong: and that which was taken by the mighty, shall be delivered." The Masoretic text (Ⲁ) has *Even [the] captives of*, **וְגַם-שְׁבִי**, while the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲅ) has *even [the] prey of*, **גַּם מִלְקָח**. Next, the Masoretic text (Ⲁ) has *and [the] prey of [the] terrible*, **וּמִלְקָחַ הַרְעָה**, while the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲅ) has *and [the] captives of [the] terrible*, **וּשְׁבִי עֲרִיץ**.

¶ Cowles writes: "When God undertakes, even the captives of the mighty conquerors are rescued from their grasp. Satan holds this world in his chains no longer. God enters the lists to give battle against those that war against Zion. He will save her children." Keith beautifully says: "The reply of the Lord to the doubting question [ISAIAH 49:24] is, that they would be delivered, for he would *himself* accomplish it" (emphasis added). Before I read the Book of Mormon I needed to be delivered from the despot's grips. The words from the Book of Mormon prophets—written

centuries earlier—had so touched my heart, as predicted, as voices from the ground, so that my heart was changed during those four days into one that desired to become a disciple of the Lord. It was only then that the Lord Himself beckoned me with his open arms extended toward me to follow Him. I believe that the Lord has an intimate role in inviting each one of us to both *come and see* and to follow him (ISAIAH 46:4; 50:4). ¶ *For the mighty God shall deliver his covenant people. For thus saith the Lord, I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "Surely the captivity of the mighty I will restore, and the prey of the terrible I will deliver, and I will take vengeance for thee, and I will save thy children." An alternate Targum (Ⲯ) reading has (see Pauli again), "For thus saith the Lord: Yea, the prey, which the mighty Esau hath taken of thee, shall be taken from him, and the captivity, which the proud Ishmael led captive (concerning whom it has been said: He shall be a conqueror (the Royal Polyglot reads **עָרִיד**, 'Ishmael is a *wild ass*') among men) be delivered? and I will save thy children." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "But it is I who vindicateth thy cause, and I will deliver thy children." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, "But I will judge those that have judged thee, and thy children I will save." ¶ Kay explains: "*For I Myself will contend* before the tribunal of justice (ISAIAH 50:8), *with him that contendeth with thee*, maintaining thy cause against the accuser; and 'who will contend with Me' (ISAIAH 50:8)? 'It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?' (Romans 8:32–33). Cp. John 12:31; 16:11; 2 Timothy 2:26." So also Birks: "The order of the prophecy points here to something nobler in itself, and later in time, than the Return from Babylon, when Israel had 'a little reviving in their bondage.' It announces the final deliverance of God's ancient people from sin and Satan, from death and the grave." The Savior rescues us, then, from the grips of Satan. ¶ Elder Russell M. Nelson reassured: "You faithful Saints do not have to fight life's battles alone. Think of that! The Lord declared, 'I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children.' Later came this promise to His faithful people: 'I, the Lord, would fight their battles, and their children's battles, and their children's children, ... to the third and fourth generation.'"⁵⁰ Nephi, continues his exegetical review of ISAIAH 49: "And every nation which shall war against thee, O house of Israel, shall be turned one against another, and they shall fall into the pit which they digged to ensnare the people of the Lord. And all that fight against Zion shall be destroyed ..." (1 Nephi 22:14a). And then speaking of the Millennium, "For

⁵⁰ Nelson, Elder Russell M. Face the Future with Faith. General Conference, 6 April 2011.

behold, saith the prophet, the time cometh speedily that Satan shall have no more power over the hearts of the children of men; for the day soon cometh that all the proud and they who do wickedly shall be as stubble; and the day cometh that they must be burned. For the time soon cometh that the fulness of the wrath of God shall be poured out upon all the children of men; for he will not suffer that the wicked shall destroy the righteous. Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fulness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire. Wherefore, the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the prophet, they shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire. Behold, my brethren, I say unto you, that these things must shortly come; yea, even blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke must come; and it must needs be upon the face of this earth; and it cometh unto men according to the flesh if it so be that they will harden their hearts against the Holy One of Israel. For behold, the righteous shall not perish; for the time surely must come that all they who fight against Zion shall be cut off ... And because of the righteousness of his people, Satan has no power; wherefore, he cannot be loosed for the space of many years; for he hath no power over the hearts of the people, for they dwell in righteousness, and the Holy One of Israel reigneth” (1 Nephi 22:15–19, 26). We have a similar sentiment in the book of Numbers, through the words that the Lord spoke through Balaam, where we read about the people of Israel: “Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee” (Numbers 24:9b).

26 And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; ~~and~~ they shall be drunken with their own blood as with sweet[✓] wine; and all flesh shall know that I, the LORD [am] thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

✓ or, new

And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; they shall be drunken with their own blood as with sweet wine. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, for the second half, “For food to every fowl of the heavens, and as the drunken with new wine, so the beasts of the field shall be drunk with their blood.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And they who afflicted thee shall eat their own flesh, and drink like new wine their own blood and be made drunk.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “And I will feed thy enemies with their own flesh: and they shall be made drunk with their own blood, as with new wine.” ¶ New wine is sweeter than fully fermented wine, as not all of the sugars have been transformed into alcohol.

Baltzer has: “To ‘eat meat and drink wine’ is really a sign of good living (see ISAIAH 22:13; cf. Daniel 10:3; Nehemiah 5:18). The rich can afford this. But here [the prophet] does not use the word for ‘wine’ (ⲓⲛ), as we should expect. According to 55:1, wine is poured out without payment at the final feast. But here the rare word ⲓⲛⲥⲓ is used instead. It is generally translated as ‘sweet wine’ or ‘grape juice.’ In the context the root ⲓⲛⲥ is more important for an understanding of the text. It means ‘tread down’ (Malachi 3:21). Thus what they are drinking is what has been ‘pressed out.’” Redak suggests (in Rosenberg): “This may refer to grape wine or pomegranate wine, both extracted from the fruits by pressing. Compare Amos 9:13; Malachi 3:21.” ¶ Cowles writes: “The persistent foes of the church and of her Messiah must meet this fearful doom—to eat their own flesh and be drunken with their own blood as men who drink sweet wine.” ¶ Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: “Truly, in the last days men ‘shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine.’ All these things have begun; they are now underway, and they shall increase in intensity and in horror until that dreadful day when the God of battles himself shall descend from heaven with a shout and with the trump of the archangel.”⁵¹ This verse, then, seems to be a reversal of the cursing mentioned in *Rain in Due Season*, in Deuteronomy 30:7: “And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee.” Nephi explains (1 Nephi 22:13, 14b): “And the blood of that great and abominable church, which is the whore of all the earth, shall turn upon their own heads; for they shall war among themselves, and the sword of their own hands shall fall upon their own heads, and they shall be drunken with their own blood ... and that great whore, who hath perverted the right ways of the Lord, yea, that great and abominable church, shall tumble to the dust and great shall be the fall of it.” ¶ *And all flesh shall know that I, the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.* In the Targum (Ⲯ) notes, Pauli explains that the Royal Polyglot has, “ⲓⲛⲥⲓ ⲃⲣⲏⲥ,” that is, *sons of flesh*. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And all flesh shall know that it is I the Lord who delivered thee. And who uphold the strength of Israel.” Instead of *redeemer*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *helper*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “And all flesh shall know, that I am the Lord that save thee, and thy Redeemer the Mighty One of Jacob.” ¶ *All flesh shall know ...* reminds us of ISAIAH 40:1–8. Finally, Nägelsbach has: “There occurs a repetition of ISAIAH 26b in ISAIAH

⁵¹ McConkie, Elder Bruce R. *The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man*, p.373-374.

60:16.” Nephi writes: “And the Lord will surely prepare a way for his people, unto the fulfilling of the words of Moses, which he spake, saying: A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that all those who will not hear that prophet shall be cut off from among the people. And now I, Nephi, declare unto you, that this prophet of whom Moses spake was the Holy One of Israel; wherefore, he shall execute judgment in righteousness. And the righteous need not fear, for they are those who shall not be confounded. But it is the kingdom of the devil, which shall be built up among the children of men, which kingdom is established among them which are in the flesh—For the time speedily shall come that all churches which are built up to get gain, and all those who are built up to get power over the flesh, and those who are built up to become popular in the eyes of the world, and those who seek the lusts of the flesh and the things of the world, and to do all manner of iniquity; yea, in fine, all those who belong to the kingdom of the devil are they who need fear, and

tremble, and quake; they are those who must be brought low in the dust; they are those who must be consumed as stubble; and this is according to the words of the prophet. And the time cometh speedily that the righteous must be led up as calves of the stall, and the Holy One of Israel must reign in dominion, and might, and power, and great glory. And he gathereth his children from the four quarters of the earth; and he numbereth his sheep, and they know him; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd; and he shall feed his sheep, and in him they shall find pasture. And now behold, I, Nephi, say unto you that all these things must come according to the flesh. But, behold, all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people shall dwell safely in the Holy One of Israel if it so be that they will repent” (1 Nephi 22:20–28).

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Isaiah 50

The Lord loves Israel despite her unfaithfulness. The Savior has not lost His power. Our Redeemer's special relationship with the Father is here alluded to. Messiah is resolute in His obedience to the Father and suffered much for us. We can choose to walk in the light of Christ or in the darkness, but this election is not without consequences.

vv. 1–3. The Lord has not put away Israel forever. Nor has He sold her. Israel has broken her covenants.

1 ¶ **Yea, for thus saith the LORD, Have I put thee away, or have I cast thee off for ever? For thus saith the Lord, Where [is] the bill of your mother's divorcement? To whom I have I put thee away, or to which of my creditors [is it] to whom I have I sold you?; yea, to whom have I sold you?** Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away;

Yea, for thus saith the LORD, Have I put thee away, or have I cast thee off for ever? The Targum (T) has, “Thus saith the Lord, Where is the bill of divorcement, which I gave your congregation, that she is cast off.” The LXX (G) reads, “Thus saith the Lord, Of what sort was the bill of your mother’s divorce.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Thus saith the Lord: What is this bill of the divorce of your mother, with which I have put her away?” ¶ The essence of this is the *temporary* nature of the separation between the Lord and His chosen people. Certainly there were enough reasons that Israel (speaking globally of the twelve tribes) merited a divorce, but the *love of God* is so immense: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved” (John 3:16–17). ¶ *For thus saith the Lord, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement?* The LXX (G) reads, “With which I divorced her?” There are strong allusions to the law of divorce in the Mosaic Law. ¶ **ESSENTIAL BACKGROUND.** We read in Deuteronomy: “When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man’s wife. And if the latter husband hate

her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife; Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, *after that she is defiled*; for that is abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance” (Deuteronomy 24:1–4, emphasis added). To summarize, under the Law of Moses, there were some circumstances under which a man could divorce his wife, but this was *not* to be a game. Once divorced, when the wife *married another*, the first husband could not get her back. The process of divorce required a bill of divorcement or a written note to the effect. Barnes explains that this easy divorce was not to God’s liking: “It originated probably from the erroneous views which then prevailed of the nature of the marriage compact. It was extensively regarded as substantially like any other compact, in which the wife became a purchase from her father, and of course as she had been purchased; the husband claimed the right of dismissing her when he pleased.” The Savior, in Matthew 19:8b tells us: “Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.” ¶ **FIRST**, let us consider what this passage in Isaiah tells us. Barnes says: “God here speaks of himself as the *husband* of his people ... denoting the tender affection which he had for his people.” Nägelsbach suggests: “[The LORD] does not deny that in a certain sense Zion is a divorced wife, her children sold into captivity. But He denies that Zion is definitively divorced by a writing of divorcement, and that the children are sold to a creditor as equivalent for a debt.” The Lord here challenges the children of Israel to produce the bill of divorcement that would justify Israel’s feelings of abandonment. There seems to be an allusion to: “But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me” (ISAIAH 49:14). I like what Whitehouse says: “The interrogative form of the sentence is often employed in Hebrew as a rhetorical mode of expressing a negative. This is the actual force of the interrogative here, ‘Where is ...?’ [Nowhere].” ¶ **SECOND**, let us consider Jeremiah. Elsewhere in the Scriptures we have another figure. In Jeremiah 3:8 we read that Ephraim (northern tribes) was divorced for her wicked conduct: “And I saw, when for

all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also.” From this scripture and others it is clear that Judah (southern tribes) did *not* do much better than her sister Ephraim, although we do not have any supporting evidence that Judah was also *divorced* from the Lord. ¶ The *Hosea Principle*, we have said, is one where the Lord follows strong comments against His children with tender ones. And so we read in ISAIAH 54:6 ff., that the Lord is taking back the wife of His youth. Here are some renditions that put the point forward strongly: “You were like a young wife, brokenhearted and crying because her husband had divorced her. But the LORD your God says, ‘I am taking you back!’” (CEV); “For the LORD hath called thee as a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit; and a wife of youth, can she be rejected? saith thy God” (JPS); and “For as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit did the Lord call thee back, and as a wife of youth, that was rejected, saith thy God” (Leeser). Alexander, in ISAIAH 54, points out: “Reduced to a prosaic form and order, this verse seems to mean, that Jehovah had espoused her in her youth, then cast her off for her iniquities, and now at last recalled her from her solitude and grief to be his wife again.” And from the Jewish Study Bible we have: “God assures Zion that He has not divorced her (cf. ISAIAH 50:1–3). God’s anger was brief and brought about a temporary separation; the reconciliation *will last forever*.”¹ ¶ THIRD, one may properly ask, “Can the rejected—even divorced adulterous wife—be taken back by her husband?” For that is precisely what we see in ISAIAH 54:6 ff., as we shall see there. The answer is a resounding *yes*, The Lord may take her back because as unfaithful as she was, Israel (speaking globally of both *Judah* and *Ephraim*, i.e., the twelve tribes) never took upon herself another *covenant* husband.² As we underscored above, a husband could not take a wife back *after that she is defiled* (Deuteronomy 24:4). In this case, Israel did not take upon another *covenant* relationship with someone else. As a result, the Lord can take her back. ¶ *To whom have I put thee away, or to which of my creditors have I sold you; yea, to whom have I sold you?* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Or who is the man, who has a debt against me, unto whom I sold you?” The LXX (Ⲙ) reads, “Or to what creditor have I sold you?” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “Or who is my creditor, to whom I sold you.” ¶ Horsley explains that

God has not divorced nor sold Israel: “God, therefore, still retains the right of a husband over their mother, whom He has turned out of doors for her perverseness; and the right of a father over the children, whom He has not sold, though they have offended. And inasmuch as He retains these rights, it is implied, that upon their submission He will take both the mother and the children home again.” Whitehouse once again reminds us: “*which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you?*] again anticipates, like the preceding interrogative, a negative answer: ‘To none.’ The form of the question is based on ancient Oriental custom.” Lowth has: “And fathers, being oppressed with debt, often sold their children; which they might do, for a time, till the year of release: Exodus 21:7. That this was frequently practiced, appears from many passages of Scripture; and that the persons and the liberty of the children were answerable for the debts of the father. The widow, 2 Kings 4:1 complains, ‘that the creditor is come to take unto him her two sons to be bondmen.’ And in the parable, Matthew 18:25. ‘The lord, forasmuch as his servant had not to pay, commands him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.’” Numerous exegetes point out, however, that the Lord had no debts and no creditors, so that the creditor argument would not fly in court. ¶ *Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Behold, for your sins ye were sold, and for your rebellion your congregation was put away.” The LXX (Ⲙ) reads, “Behold you were sold for your transgressions; and for your iniquities I divorced your mother.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has, “for your *iniquities* (Lamsa) / *sins* (BPE) were you sold.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “Behold you are sold for your iniquities, and for your wicked deeds have I put your mother away.” ¶ The idea then is not that the Lord divorced His wife Israel, but rather, that the latter was unfaithful to Him and thus expelled from His presence. Kimhi (in Rosenberg) has: “You were sold because of your iniquities, and your ransom is repentance.” This repentance only is efficacious because of the atonement of Christ. ¶ “In the scriptures,” explains Elder Dallin H. Oaks regarding such estrangement from the presence of God, “this separation is called spiritual death.”³ Also Elder Russell M. Nelson: “But there is another type of separation known in scripture as spiritual death. It ‘is defined as a state of spiritual alienation from God’ (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*). Thus, one can be very much alive physically but dead spiritually.”

¹ Berlin, A., Brettler, M. Z., & Fishbane, M. (Eds.). (2004). *The Jewish Study Bible* (p. 893). New York: Oxford University Press. Emphasis added.

² Christian Attorney Douglas J. del Tondo wrote: “Since there was no remarriage, Israel is like an abandoned wife whom a husband may indeed reconcile with.” (<http://www.jesuswordsonly.com/books/351-israel-a-wife-divorced-question.html> URL accessed: 2 January 2016).

³ See, for instance, Helaman 14:16.

2 Wherefore, when I came [~~was there~~] ~~was~~ no man?; when I called [~~was there~~] ~~was~~ none to answer?. O house of Israel, is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem?; or have I no power to deliver? Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make ~~their~~ rivers a wilderness; and their fish to stinketh, because [~~there is~~] ~~no~~ the waters are dried up, and they dieth ~~for~~ because of thirst.

Wherefore, when I came there was no man; when I called there was none to answer. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Wherefore have I sent my prophets, and they have not repented. They prophesied, but they obeyed not.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Why, when I came, was there no man? And why, when I called, did none answer?” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “Because I came, and there was not a man: I called, and there was none that would hear.” ¶ Several translators use the same word order than the Prophet Joseph Smith for the *ellipsis*, “there was.” This includes ABP, Darby, DRB (Ⲯ), and Geneva (partially). Cowles suggests: “Wherefore did I come and there was no man? Yet the point of the question is *not* to ask why the Lord came, but why, *when he came to his people*, there was none to meet him, none to greet him? Why, when he came home as a husband to his household, was there no loving wife to greet his return? Why was it that when he spake, there was none to answer, and that not even his wife would reply a word to his call?” (different emphasis). Likewise Keith has: “The universal depravity of the nation is expressed by the assertion, that when God came to them he found none (waiting for him); when he called, none answered. That this is the import of these expressions, that they refer to the sin of the nation, appears from parallel texts. Thus, ‘Therefore will I number you to the sword; because when I called ye did not answer, when I spake ye did not hear, but did evil before mine eyes,’ (ISAIAH 65:12; 66:4). This state of things did not arise, it is said, from the inability or unwillingness of the Lord to save them. His hand was not shortened.” ¶ Nägelsbach suggests that Israel’s sin was best expressed by the piercing words found in John 1:11: “He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” The D&C has: “In that day *when I came unto mine own*, no man among you received me, and you were driven out.” (D&C 133:66, emphasis added). *Unto my own* is an allusion to Israel, “And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be *my people*” (Leviticus 26:12). *You were driven out* speaks to the scattering of Israel. As a nation, she had failed to heed to the warnings in *Rain in Due Season*. ¶ *O house of*

Israel, is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem; or have I no power to deliver? Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make their rivers a wilderness. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, for the first half, “Is my power altogether deficient, so that I cannot save?” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Is my hand unable to save? Or have I no power to rescue? Behold with my rebuke I can dry up the sea, and make the rivers a desert.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “Is my hand shortened and become little, that I cannot redeem? or is there no strength in me to deliver? Behold at my rebuke I will make the sea a desert, I will turn the rivers into dry land.” ¶ The Masoretic text (ⲛ) has a **vav** before the **interrogatory particle** ⲁⲗ—the **ⲁ** acts as a *marker of contrast* (DBL) such as the word *or*. Brother Sidney B. Sperry writes: “[The Book of Mormon reading in 2 Nephi 7:2, *their rivers*]⁴ is really remarkable from the angle of textual criticism. The King James and Hebrew versions read: ‘Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea. I make the rivers a wilderness: their fish stinketh because there is no water, and dieth for thirst.’ The Book of Mormon reads ‘*their* rivers’ [ⲛⲓⲣⲏⲗⲏⲙ] as against ‘rivers’⁵ [ⲛⲓⲣⲏⲗⲏⲙ]. This is readily explained on the basis that the letter *mem* (‘*their*’) [regular *mem* ⲙ and final *mem*, ⲙ] which was attached originally to ‘rivers’ accidentally dropped out of the Hebrew text because the very next word (‘wilderness’ [ⲙⲓⲃⲣⲏⲗ]) begins with the same letter [would have been, ⲛⲓⲣⲏⲗⲏⲙ ⲙⲓⲃⲣⲏⲗ]. Such accidents are well-known to textual critics. Furthermore, in the next clause the reading is ‘their fish’ [ⲛⲓⲣⲏⲗⲏⲙ] which argues well for the correctness of ‘their rivers.’ The ancient Greek reads: ‘And their fish shall be dried up because there is no water, and shall die for thirst.’ It will be noted that the Hebrew omits dried up while the Greek on the other hand omits stinketh. The Book of Mormon retains both, indicating that the Hebrew and Greek each lack elements that were in the original text of Isaiah. On the basis of the Book of Mormon reading the textual critic can reconstruct what happened to the original text. By a most peculiar coincidence the words stinketh [ⲛⲓⲣⲏⲗⲏⲙ] and dried up [in Joshua 2:10 we have ⲛⲓⲣⲏⲗⲏⲙ from ⲛⲓⲣⲏⲗⲏⲙ] in this Hebrew context have nearly the same sound and look very much alike ... The accidental dropping of one of

⁴ In D&C the Savior uses the Masoretic and KJV, “Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea. I make the rivers a wilderness; their fish stink, and die for thirst” (D&C 133:68).

⁵ *Rivers*, and not *the rivers*, because the word *the* is often added in English for ease in reading.

⁶ I could not reconstruct the exact Hebrew intended by Sperry from the transliteration offered in the article.

these verbs from the original text, or a misreading of either, would occasion considerable difficulty and cause scribes to reconstruct the text in different ways. The present Greek and Hebrew readings illustrate the processes of reconstruction.”⁷ ¶ Regarding the expression **יָדוֹ קְצוּרָה**, Faussett explains: “*hand shortened*” the Oriental emblem of weakness, as the long *stretched-out hand* is of power (ISAIAH 59:1).” Birks explains: “‘*Wholly shortened*.’ This is the true force of the question, to shew their aggravated sin. They received Him as if He had no power, not as if it were slightly diminished, but as if He were quite unequal to the task of redeeming them ... But His power, though veiled in the flesh, was not really diminished. He was still the same Lord, who rebuked the sea, and it was dry, and who led them through the deep as through a wilderness.” The Rabbis Slotki/Rosenberg suggest, as do several others, that *at my rebuke I dry up the sea* is a reference to the drying up of the Red Sea during the Exodus (Exodus 14:29). Kimhi (in Rosenberg) again suggests: “It is your fault that you are not yet redeemed, for you have not yet repented ... for God accepts the penitent whenever they call to Him wholeheartedly and sincerely. Then He is near to them and ready to accept them.” Cheyne suggests, “‘Rebuke’ is the term for the opposite of the creative word. Instead of calling into existence, it sends into non-existence, or at least *confines within bounds*” (emphasis added). ¶ *And their fish to stinketh, because the waters are dried up, and they dieth because of thirst.* The LXX (6) reads, “So that the fishes thereof shall shrivel for want of water, and die for thirst.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “The fishes shall rot for want of water, and shall die for thirst.” ¶ Faussett points us to the power shown by God associated with the exodus from Egypt: “*fish stinketh*] the very judgment inflicted on their Egyptian enemies at the first exodus (Exodus 7:18, 21).”

3 I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering.

The LXX (6) reads, “I can clothe the heaven with darkness, and make its covering like sackcloth.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has *darkness* instead of *blackness*. ¶ Ibn Ezra suggests that this is much like “when the sky becomes obscure in the middle of the day, and appears as if covered with sackcloth, which is usually black.” When did the day turn this black in the middle of the day? Wade writes: “The expressions in this verse are probably metaphors for the darkening of the sky with storm clouds (cf. 1 Kings 18:45), though there may be a reference to the plague of darkness in Egypt (Exodus

10:21).” Theodoret (Θεοδώρητος Κύρρου) suggests this darkness of the time associated with the crucifixion: “He has done this and will do it. For he did it when he was crucified: ‘From the sixth hour to the ninth the shadows covered the whole earth’ (Matthew 27:45). And he will do it again at the time of the fulfillment [i.e., in the last days—GB], for it says, ‘The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give off its light’ (Matthew 24:29).”⁸ From the Book of Mormon we see that the period of darkness associated with the Lord’s death would, in the New World, seem an eternal three days (see 3 Nephi 8–10). This truly was a time of mourning and sackcloth: “And it came to pass that there was thick darkness upon all the face of the land, insomuch that the inhabitants thereof who had not fallen could feel the vapor of darkness; And there could be no light, because of the darkness, neither candles, neither torches; neither could there be fire kindled with their fine and exceedingly dry wood, so that there could not be any light at all; And there was not any light seen, neither fire, nor glimmer, neither the sun, nor the moon, nor the stars, for so great were the mists of darkness which were upon the face of the land. And it came to pass that it did last for the space of three days that there was no light seen; and there was great mourning and howling and weeping among all the people continually; yea, great were the groanings of the people, because of the darkness and the great destruction which had come upon them” (3 Nephi 8:20–23). Brother Hoyt W. Brewster, Jr. points us to modern day revelation: “The Lord proclaimed that one sign of his second coming will be to ‘clothe the heavens with blackness’ and to ‘make sackcloth their covering’ (D&C 133:69; 2 Nephi 7:3).”⁹ Rawlinson beautifully says: “God means to assert his power of leaving all nature in absolute darkness, if he so choose—a power necessarily belonging to him who said, ‘Let there be light; and there was light’ (Genesis 1:3).” ¶ Regarding *sackcloth*, in Hastings we find: “(שַׂק) *sak*, σάκκος, *saccus*) was a coarse material woven from goats’ and camels’ hair, and hence of a dark colour, as we see from Revelation 6:12: ‘the sun became black as sackcloth of hair’ (σάκκος τρίχινος); cf., for the colour, ISAIAH 50:3, Sir 25:17 ‘her countenance darkeneth like sackcloth,’ reading σάκκος with B.”¹⁰ ¶ In Parry, Parry and Peterson we have: “Elder Bruce R. McConkie [*Millennial Messiah*, p. 39] gave another interpretation: “‘I clothe the heavens with blackness’ (ISAIAH 50:3),

⁸ *Commentary on Isaiah* 16.50.3. [SC 315:106.] ACCS.

⁹ Brewster, Hoyt W., Jr., *Doctrine and Covenants Encyclopedia*, p.483.

¹⁰ Kennedy, A. R. S. (1911–1912). SACKCLOTH. In J. Hastings, J. A. Selbie, A. B. Davidson, S. R. Driver, & H. B. Swete (Eds.), *A Dictionary of the Bible: Dealing with Its Language, Literature, and Contents Including the Biblical Theology* 4:327.

⁷ Sperry, Sidney B. The “Isaiah Problem” in the Book of Mormon. *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 4/1 (1995): p. 148–149.

and there is no more revelation ... Thus saith our God. Such is his promise, spoken prophetically of our day. And here, given in modern times, is his announcement that as he spake, so has it come to pass: ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, darkness covereth the earth, and gross darkness the minds of the people, and all flesh has become corrupt before my face’ (D&C 112:23).”¹¹

vv. 4–9. The expression “Lord GOD” is repeated four times in these five verses, following the Jewish tradition. The more literal translation would render it **Lord LORD**, or **Adonai Jehovah**, אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה. ASV, LEB, LITV, Rotherham, WEB, WEBA and YLT have “**Lord Jehovah** [or **Yahweh**],” as do most of the Spanish versions. A few have Lord LORD (e.g., ABP+ and GLB, Der HERR HERR). At any rate, in each of these instances Christ is speaking, through *Divine Investiture*, the words of His Father. Messiah speaks of God’s gifts to him. Christ is in continual communication with, and obedient to, the Father. Some of the sufferings of Messiah are mentioned. Christ was resolute in His obedience and is justified by the Father. Christ is represented at the judgment bar. Those who oppose Him will fail.

4 ¶ The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season unto thee, O house of Israel, when ye are to [him that is] weary. He wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.

The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season unto thee, O house of Israel, when ye are weary. The Targum (ܬ) has, “The Lord God hath given me a tongue to teach, to give knowledge, and to instruct the righteous with wisdom, who weary themselves with the words of the law.” The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “The Lord Lord¹² giveth me an instructed tongue, to know when it is proper to speak a word.” The Peshitta (ܫ) does not have the clause, *in season*. The Douay-Rheims (ܕ) has, “The Lord hath given me a learned tongue, that I should know how to uphold by word him that is weary.” ¶ Leeser has: “The Lord Eternal hath given me a tongue for teaching, that I should know how to strengthen the weary with the word.” Kimhi, in Slotki/Rosenberg

explains that *the learned* are those “of cultivated and fluent speech.” Barnes explains: “HEB. *the tongue of those who are instructed*; i.e., of the eloquent.” Nägelsbach suggests: “The tongue of a disciple is a docile tongue, willing and capable of learning. The Prophet, therefore, sees in the Servant of God one who must learn, and who likes to learn.” ¶ This is not contradictory to what we read in Holy Writ: “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man” (Luke 2:52). Wordsworth has: “Not only was Christ mighty in Divine power, and gracious in Divine love, as He showed himself to the Hebrew Nation at the Exodus, and at the return from Babylon, but, as Man, He stooped to their weaknesses, and became His Father’s disciple, in order to teach them Divine wisdom. As He Himself says, ‘As My Father hath taught Me, I speak’ (John 8:28).” ¶ *A word in season*: Barnes has: “The Hebrew here is, ‘that I might know how to strengthen with a word the weary;’ that is, that he might sustain, comfort, and refresh them by his promises and his counsels.” This the Messiah has done. And Christ also today reveals to us words through the Comforter, or the Holy Ghost. And we ought to speak by the same spirit when we are one with Him. “The ability to speak suitable words, timely, wise, and helpful, is God’s gift, and one of his best gifts, which we should covet earnestly. ‘A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in baskets of silver’ (Proverb 25:11). We are often pleasantly, and often sadly, reminded how words which we spoke years ago lie in the memories of those who heard, and have exerted continuous influence for weal or woe. And there are few of us who look back over life without regret that golden opportunities for speaking helpful words were missed” (R. Tuck in *Isaiah Pulpit Commentary*). I will never forget the day when, decades ago, I thanked a woman who helped me as I turned in my recycle cans (money which I used to purchase my theological library). She turned to me and said, “Those are the only kind words I have heard today.” And recently I was shocked when a Church member stopped me to say that some kind words spoken had made him want to continue to improve his skills as a teacher. And I believe that sometimes, even more than a word spoken is a word *not* spoken. It is the gift of listening with empathy to what others have to say.¹³ ¶ Regarding the *word*, Elder Gene R. Cook, formerly of the First Quorum of the Seventy, explained: “Since the scriptures come from the mind of Christ, they help us to have the Spirit, which brings us to a oneness of mind and heart with the Lord. Therefore, as you read and study and assimilate the words of the Lord through the scriptures, you are in the process of absorbing the mind of Christ. You begin to think as he thinks. You begin to feel as he feels. You begin to speak

¹¹ Parry, Donald W.; Parry, Jay A., and Peterson, Tina M., *Understanding Isaiah*, p.439–441.

¹² See also, Septuaginta, SESB Apparatus Criticus, κυριος + κυριος B^{LC}

¹³ See *Party-Directed Mediation*, chapter 4, Empathic Listening.

as he speaks. How can we know how well we are doing in our scripture reading? We can know we are doing well when we hear his voice (both in the scriptures directly and through revelation), when our hearts burn within us at hearing his word, when we receive the words of Christ into our bosoms, and when we receive them into our minds (and thus we learn how to feel as he feels and think as he thinks.)”¹⁴ ¶ Before we can offer a word in season to another we must be filled with the Spirit, “And the Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith; and if ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach” (D&C 42:14). ¶ *He wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Each morning rising up early to send His prophets, that perhaps the ears of the sinners might be opened, and they might receive instruction.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “He gave it me in the morning; he gave me in addition an ear to hear.” Instead of *the learned*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *the teaching* (Lamsa) / *the instruction* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, “He wakeneth in the morning, in the morning he wakeneth my ear, that I may hear him as a master.” ¶ From the beginning of day, each day, *in morning in morning* [ⲡⲉⲛⲉⲣ ⲡⲉⲛⲉⲣ], i.e., *continually*, the Father spoke to His beloved Son—and He *never ceased* to communicate with Him. Alexander notes: “The present tense (*he wakeneth*)¹⁵ asserts a claim to constant inspiration.” ¶ This is why at that supreme moment in the cross, the absence of the Father was so very painful.¹⁶ “The Servant,” as Cheyne calls the Lord in this instance, was not limited to dreams or other forms of revelation, but rather, “the spirit of prophecy abides constantly upon him.” Cheyne also goes on to say that many of the words found in ISAIAH 50 “are only appropriate in the mouth of an individual.” That is, in contrast to those who would make Israel as a nation stand for the servant in this instance. The title of servant has been applied to many individuals (Cheyne of Jeremiah; Skinner to a martyr; Baltzer to Moses). These certainly may be *types*. Yet it is Jesus the Christ of whom Isaiah here testifies. ¶ Barnes has: “To awaken the ear is to prepare one to receive instruction. The expressions to open the ear, to uncover the ear, to awaken the ear, occur often in the Scriptures in the sense of preparing to receive instruction, or of disposing to receive divine communications. The sense here is plain. The Messiah would be taught of God, and would be inclined to receive all that he imparted.” Jennings writes: “For the ear has a strange faculty; sounds may

be quite audible, but with the attention elsewhere, they are not really heard at all. Our very hearing, although all the delicate mechanism of the ear is in perfect order, depends still upon our will. In a room full of people, many of whom may be speaking at the same time, we have the power of directing our ear to one particular speaker, and be practically deaf to all the rest. Thus today, a hundred voices in this world are crying, but amid them all is One who says: ‘If any man hear My voice I will come in to him, and will sup with him and he with Me.’”

5 The Lord GOD hath opened appointed mine ears, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The Lord God hath sent me to prophesy, and I did not refuse, neither turned away back.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And the instruction of the Lord, Lord¹⁷ (Brenton, ‘the Lord, even the Lord’) openeth mine ears and I am not rebellious, nor do I gainsay.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, “The Lord God hath opened my ear, and I do not resist: I have not gone back.” The Masoretic text (ⲙ) has *Adonai YHWH*, אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה, while the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⲙ) has *Adonai Elohim*, אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהִים. ¶ In Jeremiah 2:27b we have the opposite thought: “... for they have turned their back unto me, and not their face: but in the time of their trouble they will say, Arise, and save us.” Similarly, we have Zechariah 7:11–13: “But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts. Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the LORD of hosts.” So also ISAIAH 59:1–2: “Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.” In modern-day scripture we have: “They were slow to hearken unto the voice of the Lord their God; therefore, the Lord their God is slow to hearken unto their prayers, to answer them in the day of their trouble. In the day of their peace they esteemed lightly my counsel; but, in the day of their trouble, of necessity they feel after me” (D&C 101:7–8). ¶ The Savior always was obedient to His Father and so we read: “And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

¹⁴ Cook, Elder Gene R. *Searching the Scriptures: Bringing Power to Your Personal and Family Study*, p.122–123.

¹⁵ עֵר from root, עָרָה.

¹⁶ See Elder Jeffrey R. Holland’ April 2009 General Conference talk, “None Were with Him.”

¹⁷ See Septuaginta Apparatus Criticus, κυριου] + κυριου BS

And I knew that *thou hearest me always*” (John 11:41b–42a, emphasis added). So it is, that Christ, even in the darkest hour of Gethsemane was obedient to His Father. Jenour says: “He finished the work [the Father] had given him to do, and his cry in his deepest agony was; ‘Not my will but thine be done.’” Rawlinson notes: “... it is perhaps better to regard it as intended to mark a contrast between the true Servant and the professed servants, or children of Israel. They ‘did not hear; their ear was *not* opened; they were treacherous and rebellious from the womb’ (ISAIAH 48:8). His ear [in contrast] was opened to receive God’s word perpetually ...” The JST *appointed* my ears, speaks to the pre-mortal calling of the Savior. We also have “Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me” (ISAIAH 1:2).

6 I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. I hid not my face from shame and spitting, {for the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded:}*

* KJV keeps this clause with the next verse. Verses 5–8a constitute only one verse in the JST.

I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. The LXX (Ϟ) reads, “My back I have given to scourges, and my cheeks to be slapped with an open hand.” Instead of *plucked off the hair*, the Peshitta (ܣ) has *slapped the face*. The Douay-Rheims (Ϸ) has, “I have given my body to the strikers, and my cheeks to them that plucked them.” ¶ Kimhi, in Rosenberg, says that “Perhaps Isaiah suffered humiliation although *we do not find any evidence* of it in Scriptures” (emphasis added). See similar comments by Rashi also here under ISAIAH 50:6 (50:7 in the Hebrew scriptures). Cheyne, speaks of several Biblical personages as types of Christ: “So the type Jeremiah, ‘I have been in derision continually, everyone mocking me’ (Jeremiah 20:7). So the pious sufferer, also (to say the least) a type, in Psalm 22:7, ‘All they that see me laugh to scorn.’ So the typical righteous man in the Book of Job (30:10), ‘They abhor me, they flee far from me, and withhold not spittle from my face.’” Once again, these are *types* of Christ. ¶ Barnes says: “I submitted willingly to be scourged, or whipped. This is one of the parts of this chapter which can be applied to no other one but the Messiah.” Wordsworth has: “*I gave my back to the smiters—spitting*” As our Lord Himself declares (Luke 18:31): ‘Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the Prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished. For He shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be

mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: and they shall scourge Him, and put Him to death.’ Our Lord is there referring to this place of Isaiah, and is applying it to Himself (Hengstenberg).” ¶ Kay says: “*Spitting* was an expression of contemptuous abhorrence (Job 30:10).—As in other prophecies, so eminently in those of ISAIAH 50–53, many of even the lesser details (which might have seemed only pictorial imagery) had a literal fulfilment (see Matthew 26:67; 27:30; Luke 18:31–33).” Cowles notes: “Jesus submitted to insult and abuse. Scourging is specially named (Mark 15:15); smiting with the hand (Matthew 26:67; John 19:3); spitting in the face (Matthew 26:67 and 27:30). Plucking off the hair of the cheek [the beard] was, in the view of the Orientals, the grossest insult.” Regarding this last point, Poole says: “*Plucked off the hair*” which was a contumely or punishment inflicted upon malefactors, Nehemiah 13:25.”¹⁸ Alford, speaking of Matthew 5:39b [but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also], says, “our blessed Redeemer obeyed it; ‘He gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, and hid not his face from shame and spitting.’”¹⁹ Plumer has, “We can never have fiercer, more cruel, or more brutal enemies than had our blessed Lord, Stevenson: ‘Mockery accompanied the Saviour from the garden of Gethsemane till he expired on Calvary. Judas set the example with his insidious kiss. The men, that apprehended him, mocked him. The officers at the several courts mocked him. The chief priests, scribes and Pharisees mocked him. The high-priest, Caiaphas, mocked him. The servants of his house and others surrounded the Saviour, and mocked him. They smote him with their staves, and with the palms of their hands—they did spit in his face—they plucked off the hair—they blindfolded him; then they did buffet him with their fists, saying, “Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee?”’”²⁰ ¶ *I hid not my face from shame and spitting, for the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded:* The Targum (ܬ) has, for the second half, “The Lord God is my helper (or, ‘support’), therefore shall I not be confounded.” The LXX (Ϟ) reads, “And I turned not my face from the shame of spittles. Indeed the Lord Lord²¹ was my helper; therefore I was not ashamed.” Instead of *I hid*

¹⁸ Poole, M. (1853). *Annotations upon the Holy Bible* (Vol. 2, p. 441). New York: Robert Carter and Brothers.

¹⁹ Alford, H. (1976). *Alford’s Greek Testament: an exegetical and critical commentary* (1:52). Grand Rapids, MI: Guardian Press.

²⁰ Plumer, W. S. (1872). *Studies in the Book of Psalms: Being a Critical and Expository Commentary, with Doctrinal and Practical Remarks on the Entire Psalter* (p. 304). Philadelphia; Edinburgh: J. B. Lippincott Company; A & C Black.

²¹ See Septuaginta Apparatus Criticus, κυριος AQS⁺ + κυριος BS*LC

not, the Peshitta (ܣ) has *I turned not*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “I have not turned away my face from them that rebuked me, and spit upon me. The Lord God is my helper, therefore am I not confounded.” ¶ Rashi (in Rosenberg), as we alluded to earlier in this verse, suggests that no one stood up against Isaiah in this sort of way. Alexander well summarizes the exegetes: “Some have imagined that by spitting nothing more is meant than spitting on the ground in one’s presence, which, according to the oriental usages and feelings, is a strong expression of abhorrence and contempt. But, as Lowth well says, if spitting in a person’s presence was such an indignity, how much more spitting in his face; and the whole connection shews that the reference is not to any mitigated form of insult but to its extreme.”

7 For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded:* therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed, {And the Lord [He is] near and he that justifieth me.}**

* JST keeps this clause with the previous verse. In fact, verses 5–8a constitute only one verse in the JST.

** KJV keeps this clause with the next verse.

Therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. The Targum (ܬ) has, “Therefore have I set my face strong as a rock, and I know that I shall not be confounded.” The LXX (Θ) reads, “But kept my countenance firm as a rock. I knew indeed that I should not be confounded.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Therefore have I set my face as a most hard rock, and I know that I shall not be confounded.” ¶ To set the *face like flint* (CJB), פָּנַי כַּחֲלָמִישׁ, or a *hard rock*, is to be unmovable. In Ezekiel we likewise have a similar expression used: “Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads. As an adamant harder than flint (מַצֵּר)²² have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house” (Ezekiel 3:8–9). DBL-Hebrew has: “hard quartz mineral, with a focus on the hardness of the material, and its resulting difficulty to crack.” Here, *unmovable* in regards to moving forward in truth and righteousness. Rabbi Metsudath David, in Slotki/Rosenberg, says “of unbreakable determination.” Rawlinson wisely suggests yet another possible meaning, “*He sets his face like a flint*; i.e. makes it hard, impassive, expressionless, and at the same time determined, fixed not to give way.” Was this not especially true of how our Redeemer faced his attackers and accusers right before being arrested

and crucified? Keith observes: “There is allusion to this characteristic of the Redeemer [resolution and firmness] in his history, as where it is said, ‘He steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.’ Not only did the Father strengthen him for his work, he also justified him, or vindicated his claim to being the Son of God and the Saviour of the world.” ¶ Elder George Q. Cannon admonished: “... I notice a difficulty in our own midst, and that is that we yield, to a great extent, to the tendencies of the age, to the influences which surround us on every hand. We must refrain from this, we must set our faces like flint against every species of corruption, against every kind of wrong, in whatever form it may approach us. We must seek with all the energy that we have, to build up in truth and righteousness that which God has committed unto us, and establish impregnable the system of reformation with which we are entrusted. There can be no better way for us to commence than by listening to the counsels that have been given unto us in the past, and which have been the means of producing the peace, happiness and prosperity which we witness among us.”²³ President Daniel H. Wells likewise taught: “It is given unto us to overcome every difficulty and continue on our way rejoicing, having our hearts fixed like a flint on the prize before us; yes, no matter what devil stands in our way to prevent our onward march, or to beckon us this way or that way, let us not be moved either by fear or temptation, but exclaim like one of old, ‘As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord!’”²⁴ ¶ *Not be ashamed*. Orelli has: “Despite all abuse and ignominy, he has the confident sense of being free from real dishonour and shame.” ¶ *And the Lord is near and he justifieth me*. The Targum (ܬ) has, “My righteousness is near.” The LXX (Θ) reads, “Because he who justified me is near at hand.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “He is near that justifieth me.” Cheyne explains: “*He that justifieth me*] ‘To justify’ in the O. T. almost always (see on ISAIAH 53:11) means to pronounce a man righteous, or to prove him so in act.” Justification means to have a seal of approval put upon a thought, word or action by the Holy Spirit (see my notes on justification and sanctification under ISAIAH 45:25). Cheyne notes: “... whereas Job, the type of a *righteous* man, shrinks in terror from the issue, the Servant, human and yet superhuman in nature, has no doubt as to a favourable result.”

²³ Cannon, Elder George Q. “Gathering—Its Spirit—Its Object—Duties of the Gathered Saints.” 42nd Semi-Annual Conference, Salt Lake City, October 8, 1872.

²⁴ Wells, President Daniel H. “Increase of the Stakes of Zion” Brigham City, 18 August 1877.

²² From a rock.

8 And the Lord is near and he justifieth me.* Who will contend with me? let us stand together: who [is] mine adversary? let him come near to me, and I will smite him with the strength of my mouth;

✓ the master of my cause?

* JST keeps this clause with the previous verse.

Who will contend with me? let us stand together: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Who is he that will contend with me? Let us stand forth together.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Who is he that contendeth with me? Let him stand up with me face to face.” ¶ Cowles writes: “The figure leads the thought here: Who will arraign me before the judge? He who vindicates my cause [God] is near me. Who then will dare contend with me in litigation? Let us stand before the court together [a challenge to join issue].” Kay has: “*that justifieth me*] Acquitting Him from the charge on which He had been condemned.—That charge was, that, in claiming to be *the Son of God*, He had committed blasphemy. The resurrection ‘justified’ Him (Romans 1:4; cp. 1 Timothy 3:16).—In Romans 8:33–34, all the faithful are empowered to use the challenge of this verse; for in Christ’s justification theirs is included (Romans 4:25). *stand together*] before God’s tribunal (Deuteronomy 19:17; Zechariah 3:1).” ¶ *Who is mine adversary? let him come near to me, and I will smite him with the strength of my mouth.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Who is my adversary (literally, ‘who is the Lord of my cause’)? Let him come near me.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Yes, let my accuser, whoever he be, come near me.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) is missing the last clause, “And I will smite him &c.” ¶ Birks says: “The outward ‘adversary’ was the Jewish Sanhedrim; but in a deeper sense it is the Prince of this world,²⁵ who assailed our Lord in the hour of darkness, and found nothing in which he could prevail. Our Lord ‘endured the cross, despising the shame,’ in firm reliance on the love and wisdom of the Father.” Kay alludes to the legalistic character of these words: “*is mine adversary*] Or, ‘hath a claim against me’ (cp. the Hebrew in Exodus 24:14²⁶).” Wade has: “The

²⁵ That is, *Satan* (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11).

²⁶ Both verses have *נִשְׁמָר* (from the root *נִשְׁמַר*), to *come near* or *approach*. LHI has *approach* in both instances, here and in Exodus 24:14. LITV and NASB have *approach* only Exodus. Here, it is clearly a legal term, such as approaching the bar, “Who has a case against Me? Let him draw near [*נִשְׁמָר*] to Me” (NASB). Ringgren, in TDOT explains: “Another meaning of *נִשְׁמָר* is ‘go to court.’ Exodus 24:14 stipulates that in Moses’ absence, whoever has a dispute may turn to Aaron and Hur. They are thus appointed as arbiters, and ‘come before them’ means to accept their judgment. We find *נִשְׁמָר* used

expressions *justify, contend, adversary* (literally, *master of a suit*), and *condemn* are forensic²⁷.”

9 For Behold, the Lord GOD will help me; and all they which ~~who [is] he [that]~~ shall condemn me? lo, behold all they ~~all~~ shall wax old as a garment; and the moth shall eat them up.

For the Lord GOD will help me; and all they which shall condemn me ... The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Behold, the Lord God is my helper (or, ‘support’); who is he that shall condemn me?” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Behold the Lord, Lord²⁸ (Brenton, ‘the Lord, the Lord’) will be my advocate; who can do me any evil?” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “Behold the Lord God is my helper: who is he that shall condemn me?” ¶ In terms of what we find in the Masoretic text (ⲙ), Whitehouse says, “Here again we note, as in ISAIAH 50:1, that the interrogative is a rhetorical form of expressing a negative, viz. ‘none shall condemn.’” Yet modern revelation suggests otherwise, that there would be those who would condemn the Lord, and as a result would follow the consequences we see next. Young well says that: “The verb *condemn* is the antithesis of *justify*.” We see the latter in ISAIAH 50:7. ¶ *Behold all they shall wax old as a garment; and the moth shall eat them up.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Lo, they all shall be as a garment that waxeth old, yea, as when the moth eateth it.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Behold you shall all wax old like a mantle, and the moth shall consume you.” Instead of *wax old*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *wear out*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “Lo, they shall all be destroyed as a garment, the moth shall eat them up.” ¶ Rawlinson has: “Who will contend with me? (compare St. Paul’s words in Romans 8:33–34, ‘It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?’).” And in likening the scriptures unto us, Luther similarly speaks of Romans 8:31b: “If God be for us, who can be against us?” Ibn Ezra has: “And all those that condemn me by their words, they will ‘wax old as a garment.’” Such statements remind us of ISAIAH 40, where we read of the frailty of grass and flowers. So also garments are usually frail and eaten up

similarly in the fundamental precept of Deuteronomy 25:1: ‘If two men have a dispute and enter into litigation [Leeser has *and they come nigh* {*וַיִּנְשָׁא*}] unto a court of justice] and the judges decide between them, the one in the right is to be vindicated and the one in the wrong is to be condemned.’ Although this text has been interpolated into a law regulating flogging, it is a general description of correct legal procedure (cf. also Dt. 25:9, which deals with a particular case).” How can I not be filled with gratitude to Kay, and others like him, who have eyes to see these little details and lead us to them.

²⁷ One of the definitions of *forensic* is related to jurisprudence.

²⁸ See Septuaginta Apparatus Criticus, κυριος] + κυριος B^c

by moths or otherwise perish. Christ, in contrast, would endure for ever. Alexander observes: “By a perfectly natural and common transition, the writer passes from comparison to metaphor, and having first transformed them into garments, says directly that the moth shall devour them, not as men, in which light he no longer views them, but as old clothes. This is a favourite comparison in Scripture to express a gradual but sure decay (compare ISAIAH 51:8, and Hosea 5:12).” Barnes writes: “The idea is, that the Messiah would survive all ... attacks; his cause, his truth, and his reputation would live, while all the power, the influence, the reputation of his adversaries, would vanish as a garment that is worn out and then thrown away ... In eastern countries, where wealth consisted much in changes of raiment, the depredations of the moth would be particularly to be feared, and hence it is frequently referred to in the Bible.” This is particularly true of nations where wool was used for clothing—as contrasted also to the synthetics of today. ¶ Elder Orson Pratt said: “If we are faithful to our covenants, the fury of the oppressor will not harm us, and where will be the strong arm of man? It will be like the flax in the flame, like a moth-eaten garment, the wicked shall vanish away, and there will be no place found for them.”²⁹

vv. 10–11. A contrast is made between those who walk in the path of the Lord and those who walk in their own light.

10 ¶ Who [is] among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh [in] darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God.

Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “The Prophet said: The Holy One, blessed be He, shall say to all the nations: Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant the prophet, who keepeth the law, being in distress, as a man that walketh in darkness and has no light.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Who is there among you who feareth the Lord, let him hearken to the voice of his servant. Ye who walk in darkness and have no light.” The Peshitta (Ⓟ) reads something like, “Who among you reveres Yahweh? Give heed to the voice of his servant. He who walks in darkness and has no light.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has *heareth* instead of *obeyeth*. ¶ The word, when

associated with God, means to *reverence*. Gesenius gives us the example, *to reverence or fear Elohim, יָרָא אֶת־אֱלֹהִים*. ¶ According to Kimhi (in Rosenberg), walking in darkness means “they were not enlightened” by scripture but instead followed “the path of evil and darkness.” Clarke well points out that there is a contradiction between those who suggest that we can still walk in darkness while following the Lord. Some translations offer alternative meanings: “Therefore who so feareth the Lorde among you, let hym heare the voyce of his seruaunt: Who so walketh in darknesse and no lyght shyneth vpon hym, let hym put his trust in the name of the Lorde, and holde hym by his God” (Bishops); and “Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that hearkeneth to the voice of his servant? though he have walked in darkness, and had no light: let him trust in the name of the Lord, and lean for support upon his God” (Leeser). Barnes explains that to *walk in darkness* points to the human condition, wherein we have to face adversity. When we face such, we can find relief by turning to the Lord and trusting in Him. ¶ In the Hebrew Bible, as I have mentioned repeatedly, some of my favorite scripture begin with the question word *מִי*, *who*. All those who would follow the Lord and be His disciples are then given an important directive, to leave the darkness and to trust in the Lord. ¶ *Let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God*. The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “he trusting in the name of the Lord, will stay upon the salvation of his God?” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Trust in the name of the Lord and stay yourselves on God.” The Peshitta (Ⓟ) reads something like, “Let him place his trust in the name of the Yahweh that he may be saved by his God.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “Let him hope in the name of the Lord, and lean upon his God.” ¶ In these last verses of ISAIAH 50, Baltzer sees an allusion to *Rain in Due Season*: “... as the choice between life and death” and cites Deuteronomy 30:15, “See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil.” This is certainly true of *spiritual death* as well of the *second death*. Certainly, we are admonished to trust in the Lord and stay or lean upon the Father that we might have *Eternal Life*.

11 Behold all ye that kindleth a fire, that compass [yourselves] about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks [that] which ye have kindled; this shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow.

Behold all ye that kindleth fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire. The

²⁹ Pratt, Elder Orson. “The Kingdom of God.” discourse delivered in the Bowery, Great Salt Lake City, 8 July 1855.

Targum (Ⓢ) has, “The nations answered and said to him: O our Lord! it is not possible for us to occupy ourselves with the law; because we continually wage war against each other, and when we gain the victory one over the other, we burn their houses with fire, and bring their children and their treasures into captivity, and in this manner (the Royal Polyglot reads נִיִּיָּךְ, ‘fate’ or ‘that which is decreed’) our days are spent; thus it is impossible for us to occupy ourselves with the law. The Holy One, blessed be He, answered and said unto them: Behold, all of you who stir up a fire, and lay hold on the sword; go ye, fall into the fire which ye have stirred up, and by the sword, which ye have laid hold on. This shall be unto you from my Word, ye shall turn to your destruction.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Behold you are all kindling a fire and increasing the flame; walk in the light of your fire.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, for the middle clause, “Encompassed with flames.” ¶ In ISAIAH 2:5 we read this invitation: “O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.” This is in contrast to the light of our own fire. So we read: “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John 1:5–7). Instead of *compass about with sparks*, Kimhi (in Rosenberg) suggests the expression refers to “those who create fires by rubbing stones or sticks together.” ¶ President Joseph F. Smith warned against the lazy and the proud: “Among the Latter-day Saints, the preaching of false doctrines disguised as truths of the gospel, may be expected from people of two classes, and practically from these only; they are: FIRST—The hopelessly ignorant, whose lack of intelligence is due to their indolence and sloth, who make but feeble effort, if indeed any at all, to better themselves by reading and study; those who are afflicted with a dread disease that may develop into an incurable malady—laziness. SECOND—The proud and self-vaunting ones, who read by the lamp of their own conceit; who interpret by rules of their own contriving; who have become a law unto themselves, and so pose as the sole judges of their own doings. More dangerously ignorant than the first.”³⁰ ¶ *And in the sparks which ye have kindled; this shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow.* The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And by the flame which you have kindled. On my account these things have befallen you. You shall lie down in sorrow. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “And in the flames which you have kindled: this is done to you by my hand, you shall sleep in sorrows.”

¶ We have a choice of real, true enduring Light, or of furiously attempting to make our own fire—perhaps with a flint stone. Birks says: “Then the sparks they had kindled went out, their hopes expired in thick darkness; and they lay down in sorrow ... Hahn justly observes that the enlightening, not the consuming nature, of the fire and sparks is here chiefly intended. Instead of walking in the light of the heavenly Dayspring, they kindled an earthly light, transient and feeble. The true reference, then, is to Pharisaic righteousnesses and human traditions, or to vain, worldly philosophy, by which the unbelieving strive to light up the darkness of the soul. The humble may walk in darkness for a time, but heavenly light will soon dawn on them. The proud may comfort themselves, by false, self-righteous zeal or worldly wisdom, with a seeming light, but it will end in darkness and sorrow.” Horsley has: “Instead of walking by the light of God’s holy doctrine, ye endeavour to raise a light of your own; the light of false philosophy and human imaginations.” Kimhi (in Rosenberg) suggests that those who kindle their own fire will be burnt by the same. So also Rawlinson: “They are condemned to be scorched by the fire which they have themselves kindled, to be made wretched by the strife which they have themselves caused to spring up.” Lowth has: “The fire of their own kindling, by the light of which they walk with security and satisfaction, is an image designed to express, in general, human devices, and mere worldly policy, exclusive of faith and trust in God; which, though they flatter them for a while with pleasing expectations and some appearance of success, shall in the end turn to the confusion of the authors.” ¶ The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “But in obedience there is joy and peace unspotted, unalloyed [all of this in contrast to cursings and vexations that will lead us to lie down in sorrow and wailings of everlasting regret]; and as God has designed our happiness—and the happiness of all His creatures, he never has—He never will institute an ordinance or give a commandment to His people that is not calculated in its nature to promote that happiness which He has designed, and which will not end in the greatest amount of good and glory to those who become the recipients of his law and ordinances.”³¹ ¶ What does it mean to lie down in sorrow? Ibn Ezra has: “Compare וַיִּשְׁכַּב דָּוִד ‘and David slept,’ that is, “and David died” (1 Kings 2:10); there are, besides, a great many instances of the use of the verb שָׁכַב in this sense. Literally, שָׁכַב means *to lie down* (Gesenius, TDOT, HAL, DCH). The word *death* has a number of meanings and ranges, including *spiritual death*. Those who oppose God do not live lives of joy, so when such die, they can be said to die in

³⁰ Widtsoe, John A, and Smith, Joseph F. *Gospel Doctrine*.

³¹ TPJS 256–257.

sorrow. There is a spiritual death that separates man from the presence of God, and there is certainly a strong allusion to such a death here. An allusion which is confirmed in D&C, where portions of ISAIAH 50 are included, “And this shall ye have of my hand—ye shall lie down in sorrow. Behold, and lo, there are none to deliver you; for ye obeyed not my voice when I called to you out of the heavens; ye believed not my servants, and when they were sent unto you ye received them not. Wherefore, they sealed up the testimony and bound up

the law, and ye were delivered over unto darkness. These shall go away into outer darkness, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. Behold the Lord your God hath spoken it. Amen” (D&C 133:70–74).

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Isaiah 51

As so many of Isaiah's prophecies, this can be applied to multiple settings but most especially this chapter revolves around the latter-days and the gathering of Israel in preparation for the Messiah's Second Coming. We also find some allusions to the millennium. The Son at times speaks for the Father through the principle of Divine Investiture.

vv. 1–3. Ibn Ezra has: "The prophet speaks now to the good people, who believe in the words of the prophets. *Look*, etc. Be not surprised how Zion can again be filled with her children as before ..." Slotki/Rosenberg interpret Ibn Ezra as saying that despite the few faithful, they will receive the prophetic promises: "They have but to look to Abraham and Sarah to realize that a whole nation may arise from one small family." When The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was officially established, likewise, it was done by six individuals full of hope and a vision for a Church—as depicted in Daniel—that would be carved out of a mountain without hands. Calvin reminds us of Paul's words regarding Abraham: "Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness" (Romans 4:18–22). Nyman well has: "A careful analysis of the covenant made with Abraham and Sarah shows that it will be fulfilled in the last days. The Doctrine and Covenants reveals that Abraham's covenant is now being fulfilled (see D&C 103:17; 132:30). Isaiah's invitation for the righteous to look to Abraham and Sarah pertains to this same time period."¹

1 ¶ HEARKEN unto me, ye that follow after righteousness; ye that seek the LORD, look unto the rock from [whence] ye are were hewn, and to the hole of the pit from [whence] ye are digged.

HEARKEN unto me, ye that follow after righteousness. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "Hearken to my Word, ye that follow after truth." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "Hearken to me

ye who are in pursuit of righteousness." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, "Give ear to me, you that follow that which is just." ¶ Cowles reminds us that "the expression, 'follow after righteousness,' appears first in the writings of Moses (Deuteronomy 16)." There we have: "That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee" (Deuteronomy 16:20). Cowles also points us to Proverbs 15:9b, "[the LORD] loveth him that followeth after righteousness." In the New Testament we similarly read: "But thou, O man of God ... follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses" (1 Timothy 6:11–12). ¶ Can there be any more beautiful words than to hear from the Savior, "Hearken unto me, ye that follow after righteousness?" "The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the LORD: but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness" (Proverbs 15:9). To follow after righteousness makes a person a woman or a *man of God* [אִישׁ-אֱלֹהִים]: "But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness" (1 Timothy 6:11). The Savior said, "And blessed are all they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled with the Holy Ghost" (3 Nephi 12:6, compare with Matthew 5:6). ¶ *Ye that seek the LORD.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "Who seek instruction from the Lord." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "And who are seeking the Lord." ¶ In Isaiah's frequent parallel structure,² he repeats the same sentiment, ye that follow after righteousness / ye that seek the Lord. The Lord promises that we shall not seek Him in vain, "I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me" (Proverbs 8:17). The Lord invites us to seek Him with faith, and not to follow half-heartedly: "But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find [him], if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Deuteronomy 4:29). ¶ *Look unto the rock from whence ye were hewn.* The

² It should be noted, however, that Isaiah sometimes hides ideas in such parallel structures so that each expression has a different meaning. This he probably did knowing full well that the words of Scripture would be tampered with.

¹ Nyman, Monte S., *Great are the Words of Isaiah*, p.194.

Targum (Ⓒ) has, “Consider that ye were cut out like a stone hewn from a rock.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Look at that hard rock which you have been hewing.” Instead of *rock*, the Peshitta (Ⓔ) has *mountain* (Lamsa) / *mount* (BPE). ¶ This expression about the rock and the pit is sometimes given a negative and sometimes a positive turn. So also Alexander, who says: “In the same category may be safely placed the old dispute, whether Abraham is called a rock because he was strong in *faith* (Romans 4:20), or because he was as good as *dead* (Hebrews 11:12) when he received the promise.” It seems to me that it is the *positive* that is here intended.

We are first asked to *look* [נִבְטָ] unto the *rock* and then asked to *look* [נִבְטָ] unto *Abraham and Sarah*.

Regarding the figure of Abraham, Barnes writes: “To Abraham the founder of the nation. The figure is taken from the act of quarrying stone for the purposes of building; and the essential idea here is, that God had formed the nation from the beginning, as a mason constructs a building; that he had, so to speak, taken the materials rough and unhewn from the very quarry; that he had shaped, and fitted them, and moulded them into an edifice. The idea is not that their origin was dishonorable or obscure. It is not that Abraham was not an honored ancestor, or that they should be ashamed of the founder of their nation. But the idea is, that God had had the entire moulding of the nation; that he had taken Abraham and Sarah from a distant land, and had formed them into a great people and nation for his own purpose. The argument is, that he who had done this was able to raise them up from captivity, and make them again a great people.” Luther says: “He calls Abraham a rock because of his complete and vigorous faith. So the evangelist writes (Matthew 3:9): ‘God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.’”

¶ Delitzsch writes: “Abraham and Sarah they are mentally to set before them, for they are *types* of the *salvation* to be anticipated now” (emphasis added). Kay shows us that the true rock is not Abraham, but the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob by pointing us to Deuteronomy 32:18: “‘the Rock that *begat thee* ... God that *formed thee*,’ where the word for ‘formed’ is the same that is used in ISAIAH 51:2 for Sarah.” In Deuteronomy we have: “For the LORD’s portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance ... he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye ... then [Israel as a nation] forsook God *which* made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation ... Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee” (Deuteronomy 32:9, 10b, 15b, 18, also see vv. 3–4 that leave no doubt that Christ is the Rock). ¶ Once again, the recurring principle: *Beautiful Feet*. Christ *lends* to His prophets and disciples some of His sacred titles and attributes. Here, they are lent to Abraham and to Sarah. ¶ President

Brigham Young contrasted the good, or God, with our weaknesses and forgetfulness: “This people ... are apt to forget their God, the pit from which they were dug, and the rock from which they were hewn, everyman turning to his own way. Seemingly the Lord is chastening us until we turn and do His will.”³ God is thus represented by the rock and the pit. Christ is often referred to as the Rock of our salvation. Abraham and Sara are mentioned in the next verse as *types* of this Rock. While this scripture reminds us of our honorable *earthly* heritage, Elder George F. Richards reminds us of our *heavenly* heritage: “So every man and every woman under the sound of my voice is either a son of God or a daughter of God. He is our eternal Father. And as things earthly are typical of things heavenly, when we think of Father we naturally think of Mother. We think of being born. So we have been born of our heavenly parents in the spirit, and in our spirit birth have inherited attributes and qualities of a God-like character. What a noble parentage! What a noble ancestry we are of! What manner of men and women ought we to be? In the language of the scripture we might say: Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.”⁴ ¶ *And to the hole of the pit from whence ye are digged*. The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “That ye were cut out like a mass hewn out of a hollow cistern.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And into that deep pit which you have digged.” ¶ Barnes explains: “The word rendered ‘hole’ means such an excavation as men make who are taking stones from a quarry. It expresses substantially the same idea as the previous member of the verse. This language is sometimes addressed to Christians, with a view to produce humility by reminding them that they have been taken by God from a state of sin, and raised up, as it were, from a deep and dark pit of pollution. But this is not the sense of the passage, nor will it bear such an application. It may be used to denote that God has taken them, as stone is taken from the quarry; that he found them in their natural state as unhewn blocks of marble are; that he has moulded and formed them by his own agency, and fitted them into his spiritual temple; and that they owe all the beauty and grace of their Christian deportment to him; that this is an argument to prove that he who had done so much for them as to transform them, so to speak, from rough and unsightly blocks to polished stones, fitted for his spiritual temple on earth, is able to keep them still, and to fit them for his temple above.” In contrast to the pit mentioned in ISAIAH 51:14, Cowles well says: “The ‘rock’ and the ‘hole of the pit’ constitute but a single figure. It compares the Hebrew people to a stone cut from a quarry. Abraham was the

³ Young, President Brigham. 31 July 1853. JD 1:162.

⁴ Elder George F. Richards, General Conference Report, LDS Church News, *Deseret News*. April 1941, p. 113.

old quarry from which all these stones were taken—the hole in the ground when they were taken out.”

2 Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah [that] bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.

Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “Consider Abraham your father, and Sarah who conceived you.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Look to Abraham your father, and to Sarah who brought you forth.” ¶ Elder McConkie has: “Abraham alone is the father of us all, speaking after the manner of the flesh, and all who receive the blessings of the gospel are either natural or adopted sons in his everlasting family.”⁵ And further, “To Joseph Smith the Lord said: ‘Abraham received all things, whatsoever he received, by revelation and commandment, by my word, saith the Lord, and hath entered into his exaltation and sitteth upon his throne ... Go ye, therefore, and do the works of Abraham.’ (D&C 132:29, 32.)”⁶ And we are to look up not just to Abraham, but to his righteous wife, Sara, our mother. Elder Orson Hyde taught: “In the first place, then, we will look unto Abraham our father, and to Sarah who bore us, for if we are Christ’s, then we are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise ... I look then unto Abraham as my father, and unto Sarah as my mother who bore me. How was it, then, with Abraham? He is said to be the father of the faithful, and the great head of the Church in the days of the Patriarchs, and the head of those who have been adopted into the covenant of Jehovah through the blood of His only begotten; for if we are Christ’s then we are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise. If, by the virtue of the Savior’s blood, our sins are washed away, we are the children of Abraham; we hail him as our father, and Sarah as our mother; he is the father of the faithful, he is the father of many nations ... Jehovah promised that in him and in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed, as a pattern of piety, and as the great head of the Church. Because of his faithfulness in keeping the commandments of Jehovah on earth, he drew from on high this great promise.”⁷ ¶ Through Patriarchal Blessings, we can learn how we are connected to Abraham: “The practice of giving patriarchal blessings is a constant reminder of the honor and glory of family:

... They prompt those who receive blessings to ‘look unto Abraham, your father,’ (2 Nephi 8:2) to ‘do the works of Abraham’ (D&C 132:32; cf. John 8:39), to be willing to be ‘chastened and tried even as Abraham’ (D&C 101:4), and to recognize that Abraham’s willingness in offering up his son was ‘a similitude of God and his Only Begotten Son’ (Jacob 4:5).”⁸ The Apostle Paul wrote: “Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, [saying], In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham” (Galatians 3:7–9). ¶ *For I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “For Abraham was one alone in the world, and I brought him to my service, I also blessed him and multiplied him.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “For he was an individual when I called him; and I blessed him and loved him and multiplied him.” Instead of *for I called him alone*, the Peshitta (Ⓟ) makes emphasis on the fact that Abraham was just one person when he was called, before he blessed and multiplied. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has *multiplied* instead of *increased*. ¶ Alexander writes: “*For I have called him one*] which does not mean, I have declared him to be such, or so described him; but, I have called (*i.e.* chosen, designated) him, when he was only one, *i.e.* a solitary individual, although the destined father of a great nation (Genesis 12:2). This sense of the word *one* is clear from Ezekiel 33:24, where, with obvious allusion to this verse, it is put in opposition to *many*: *Abraham was ONE, and he inherited the land; and we are MANY, (much more then) is the land given to us for an inheritance.*” ¶ Regarding the second part of the clause, Cowles suggests: “The point of the promise turns largely on this future sense of the verbs, ‘*I will bless*’ and *I will increase* him. It is especially unfortunate that the received translation should have ignored this future sense and promise.” Barnes has: “*For I called him alone*] – HEBREW, ‘For one I called him;’ that is, he was alone; there was but one, and he increased to a mighty nation. The point of the declaration here is, that God had called one individual—Abraham—and that he had caused him to increase until a mighty nation had sprung from him.” ¶ Through the Abrahamic covenant all the nations of the world have been and will be blessed. “By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only [son]: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which [is] upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed

⁵ McConkie, Bruce R. *The Millennial Messiah* (The Messiah Series), Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1978–82, p. 245.

⁶ McConkie, Joseph Fielding. *Gospel Symbolism*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1985, p. 154.

⁷ Orson Hyde, *Journal of Discourses*. 26 vols. London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854–1886. April 6, 1853, Vol. 2, p. 79.

⁸ Patriarchal Blessings, Ludlow, Daniel H., ed. *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1992.

shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice” (Genesis 22:16b–18).

¶ How would the nations of the earth be blessed? President Joseph Fielding Smith explains: “Without doubt much of the promise of blessings to the nations has been lost through the transcribing and translating of the scriptures. In the Book of Abraham we find a more accurate account as follows: ‘My name is Jehovah, and I know the end from the beginning; therefore my hand shall be over thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee above measure, and make thy name great among all nations, and thou shalt be a blessing unto thy seed after thee, that in their hands they shall bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations; And I will bless them through thy name; for as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their father; And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee (that is, in thy Priesthood) and in thy seed (that is, thy Priesthood), for I give unto thee a promise that this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee (that is to say, the literal seed, or the seed of the body) shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal’ (Abraham 2:8–11) ... We are preaching the gospel now in all parts of the world, and for what purpose? To gather out from the *Gentile nations* the lost sheep of the house of Israel. It is by this scattering that the Gentile nations have been blessed, and if they will truly repent they are entitled to all the blessings promised to Israel, ‘which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal’” (emphasis added).⁹

3 For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, for the last two clauses, “They that offer thanksgiving, and the voice of them that praise.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And now Sion, I will comfort thee. I have indeed comforted all her desolations, and I will make her waste places like a garden; and those west of her like the garden of the Lord. In her shall be found joy and gladness, thanksgiving and the sound of praise.” Instead of the two *comforts*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *build* and in the second instance *build* (Lamsa) / *rebuild* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, “The Lord

therefore will comfort Sion, and will comfort all the ruins thereof: and he will make her desert as a place of pleasure, and her wilderness as the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of praise.” At the end of this verse, the expression *sorrow and mourning shall flee away* (compare to Masoretic text (Ⓜ) in ISAIAH 51:11,

נִסּוּ יָגוֹן וְאַנְחָה, appears only in the DSS 1QIsa^a (Ⓞ), נִסּוּ יָגוֹן וְאַנְחָה, but not in the Masoretic text (Ⓜ).

¶ Abarbanel, in Slotki/Rosenberg, speaks of *her waste places*: “The prophet compares Zion to Abraham and Sarah, who were childless for many years. So will Zion be bereft of her children for many years, but will eventually become like Eden, the garden of the Lord, cf. Genesis 13:10.” Redak, in Rabbi Rosenberg explains that this verse is written in the *prophetic perfect*, i.e., as something so sure that it has already been

accomplished. So also Orelli, regarding *comfort*, נָחַם.

We shall consider two different applications of this verse. First, the establishment of Zion in the *American Continent*, and then Zion in *Israel*. ¶ ZION, AMERICAN CONTINENT. Elder Orson Pratt forcefully taught: “But God has said that he would make the wilderness a fruitful field, and streams in the desert, and he has fulfilled his promise. Pioneers, if any of you are here today, let me ask you a question—When you came down from the mouth of Emigration Canyon, where Camp Douglas is now situated, into this region of country, in July, 1847, what did the ground appear like? Did you dig down and make any experiments? ‘O yes, in many places.’ How far did you dig down? ‘Some of us dug many feet to see if there was any appearance of moisture.’ Did you find anything? What was the appearance of the soil? It looked as though there had been no rain for many generations. What do we find now? We find this same parched-up soil, for some five square miles, where Salt Lake City is located, converted into fruitful gardens, planted with apple, pear, peach, plum, and other kinds of fruit trees adapted to the climate, and in the spring season of the year, in the months of May and June, this locality is like one vast garden full of blossoms, so much so that strangers are astonished beyond measure to see such a large extent of country so much like a garden. Now let us see what Isaiah says about it, for he looked upon it as well as you, if he did live twenty-five hundred years ago. ‘The Lord shall comfort Zion, he will make her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody.’ Indeed! Did you see it, Isaiah, as well as the people that live in our day? Did you see a people go into the desert and offer up thanksgiving and the voice of melody? Did you see that desert and wilderness redeemed from its sterile condition and become like the garden of Eden? ‘O yes,’ says Isaiah, ‘I

⁹ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Answers to Gospel Questions*. vols. 1–5. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1957–1966. Vol. II, p. 53.

saw it all, and I left it on record for the benefit of the generation that should live some two or three thousand years after my day.”¹⁰ Elder Woodruff said: “Are we not, as a whole people, witnesses unto God our Eternal Father and all men this day that this prophecy has been fulfilled under our eyes? It is peculiar that, although this is the chosen people of God, they have been called to settle the desert and barren spots of this earth? It is peculiar in one sense, and yet it is quite natural in another, when we take into consideration that through the conversion of the desert wastes into gardens and thus fulfilling the prophecies, the Lord has had a chance to prove His people, to develop a superior type of manhood and womanhood, and to bring out the best qualities of their natures.”¹¹ The Pioneers have turned, with God’s help, a wilderness into a most beautiful and productive place. When the Saints move to Jackson County, they are likely to do the same. ¶ ZION, ISRAEL. The land of Israel would be blessed as has long been predicted, and her blessing would begin to take place along with the restoration of the Gospel in the latter days. Orson Pratt explains: “David says, that after truth springs out of the earth,¹² the land of Israel ‘should yield its increase.’ Isaiah says, that in the day that the marvelous work and a wonder is accomplished, then ‘Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field’...”¹³ Today, Israel continues to become an agricultural powerhouse. ¶ MILLENNIUM. In the Millennium, “Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory” (Articles of Faith 10b). ¶ *Like Eden* [עֵדֶן]... *like the Garden of the LORD*, [גֶּן־יְהוָה]. Calvin has: “And will make her desert like a place of delights” The Prophet here alludes to a passage in the writings of Moses, in which he relates that man was at first placed in “the garden of Eden” [גֶּן־עֵדֶן] (Genesis 2:15), that is, in ‘a

place of delights,’ from which he was driven out ...” Eden, עֵדֶן means, “*delight, pleasure*” (Gesenius).

vv. 4–8. Regarding verses 4–5, Henderson writes: “These verses are so obviously parallel to ISAIAH 42:1–4, 6, that they must be regarded as referring to the same subject—the establishment of the gospel dispensation.” Kay, regarding 4–6 has: “[Christ] here invites them to listen to Him (ISAIAH 51:1, 4, 7); not now as the suffering Son of Man, but as the Ruler and Saviour of the world (ISAIAH 51:4–6).” The Gospel will go forth and be written in the hearts of Christ’s disciples.

4 ¶ Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.

Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: The Targum (ܬ) has, “Listen to my Word, O my people, and give ear, O my congregation, to my service.” The LXX (Ϯ) reads, “Hear me; hear me, my people, and ye kings; listen to me.” The Douay-Rheims (Ϯ) has *tribes* instead of *nation*. ¶ Sadly, every effort is made by the Gentile authors to wrest the blessings that await Israel in the last days, as they return to Christ, and give them to the Gentiles. So Lowth, who here has:

“For עַמִּי, *my people*, the Bodley MS, and another, read עַמִּים, *ye peoples*; and for לְאֻמִּי, *my nation*, the Bodley MS, and eight others (two of them ancient), read לְאֻמִּים *ye nations*; and so the Syriac in both words.

The difference is very material: for in this case the address is made, not to the Jews, but to the Gentiles, as in all reason it ought to be; for this and the two following verses express the call of the Gentiles, the islands, or the distant lands on the coasts of the Mediterranean and other seas.” Gladly, Henderson admits the presence of these readings but refutes the alternate reading and interpretation: “... but the evidence in its favour [that this refers to the Gentiles and not the Jews] is not to be weighed against that by which the reading of the *Textus Receptus* is supported, especially if we take the internal evidence into the account.” That the Lord calls Israel *my people* and *my nation* (עַמִּי and לְאֻמִּי), is very significant, as we have underscored in *Rain in Due Season*. The Gentile Nations have been called upon to help gather Israel in the last days, for which I am moved with the deepest gratitude. ¶ *For a law shall proceed from me.* The LXX (Ϯ) reads, “For from me shall proceed a law.” The Douay-Rheims (Ϯ) has, “For a law shall go forth from me.” ¶ According to Elder McConkie, this verse is related to the restoration,

¹⁰ Pratt, Elder Orson. “Fulfillment of Prophecy—The Desert Watered and the Wilderness Made Fruitful—Zion in the Valleys of the Mountains—Increase of Her families Like a Flock—Her Peace, Plenty, and Prosperity. Sunday afternoon, 30 August 1875. (JD 18:144, OP), p. 148.

¹¹ Woodruff, Elder A. O., General Conference Reports, LDS Church News, Deseret News. Excerpts 1970–1996. Salt Lake City: *Deseret News Publishing Company*. April 1902, p. 34. Also see Clawson, Elder Rudger, General Conference Reports, LDS Church News, Deseret News. Excerpts 1970–1996. Salt Lake City: *Deseret News Publishing Company*. April 1905, p. 35. President Charles W. Nibley also loved this verse. See e.g., General Conference Reports, LDS Church News, Deseret News. Excerpts 1970–1996. Salt Lake City: Deseret News Publishing Company. April 1930, p. 29.

¹² These words are an allusion to the First Vision and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. See Psalm 85:11.

¹³ Orson Pratt, Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon, 1850–1851, Latter-day Tracts, p. 95. (Typos corrected from Infobase version)

when “The fulness of my everlasting gospel shall be restored, and it shall be as it was in days of old.”¹⁴

תּוֹרָה, means *law* and *doctrine*, but also *instruction*, either human or divine (see Gesenius). In TDOT Lindars has: “God does not give תּוֹרָה except through such functionaries as prophets and priests.” LDS would say that revelations and teachings for the Church come through the living Prophet, as well as instructions from the Brethren, both the living and the former, and through the Holy Scriptures (including the Bible, Book of Mormon and Pearl of Great Price). But also, instruction, on an individual basis will also come through the Holy Spirit. The law that will proceed is referred to earlier in Isaiah, and is most especially related to General Conference addresses: “And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem” (ISAIAH 2:3). And from the Lord directly, when He reins upon the earth during the Millennium. ¶ *And I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And my judgment like a light; the nations which I led into captivity shall praise it.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And my judgment shall be for the light of nations.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓜ) has, “And my judgment shall rest to be a light of the nations.” ¶ Elder McConkie continues: “When the Lord said, ‘A law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people’ (ISAIAH 51:4); when the call shall go forth, ‘Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee’ (ISAIAH 60:1); when the pronouncement was made, ‘The Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations’ (ISAIAH 61:11); when the divine word shall say, ‘Lift up a standard for the people,’ and the call shall go forth ‘unto the end of the world, Behold, thy salvation cometh’ (ISAIAH 62:10–11)—when all these and many like pronouncements were and shall be made, be it known that they all refer to the Lord’s great latter-day work of restoration. His purposes were known to his ancient friends.”¹⁵ ¶ “My judgment” or the judgment of God is perfect, it combines justice and mercy. It is *righteous judgment*. It seems to especially point to the day when the Lord will reign upon the earth. A day when the Lord will be our light, for there will be no need for the sun: “And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is

the light thereof” (Revelation 21:23). Until then, we are still guided through the light, by following the promptings of the Holy Ghost. It is through following such promptings and speaking as moved by the Spirit that we may have that light even here, in this imperfect time. We need both to teach and be taught by that Spirit: President Young taught: “When an individual, filled with the Spirit of God, declares the truth of heaven, the sheep hear that, the Spirit of the Lord pierces their inmost souls and sinks deep into their hearts; by the testimony of the Holy Ghost light springs up within them, and they see and understand for themselves. This is the way the Gospel should be preached by every Elder in Israel, and by this power every hearer should hear; and if we would know the voice of the Good Shepherd, we must live so that the Spirit of the Lord can find its way to our hearts.”¹⁶

5 My righteousness [is] near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.

My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “My deliverance is approaching speedily.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓜ) has, “My just one is near at hand, my saviour (*salvator meus*, Vulgate, Ⓜ) is gone forth.” ¶ The first clause seems to be speaking of the expiatory sacrifice; the latter seems to be both a reference to the same and an invitation for all to come unto Christ through the restored Gospel. I find it interesting, that despite what Lowth just said in ISAIAH 51:4, here he has: “The word צִדִּיק, righteousness, is used in such a great latitude of signification, for justice, truth, faithfulness, goodness, mercy, deliverance, salvation, &c., that it is not easy sometimes to give the precise meaning of it without much circumlocution: it means here the faithful completion of *God’s promises to deliver his people*” (emphasis added). Young, regarding קָרוֹב says: “Stress falls upon the first word *Near*, for it brings out the most important point concerning the Lord’s righteousness. Balaam said of the Messiah, ‘I behold him, but not near’ (Numbers 24:17), by which he meant that the approach of the Messiah would not be for a long time to come ... Deliverance from Babylon captivity was only a forerunner or first taste of the promised salvation.” ¶ *And mine arms shall judge the people.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And the nations shall be judged by the strength of the arm of my might.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And my salvation shall go forth as light; and on mine arm nations will rely.” The

¹⁴ McConkie, Bruce R. *The Promised Messiah*. The Messiah Series. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1978–82, p. 331.

¹⁵ McConkie, Bruce R. *The Millennial Messiah*. The Messiah Series. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1978–82, p. 107.

¹⁶ Young, Brigham. *Discourses of Brigham Young*. Compiled by John A. Widtsoe. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978, p. 431.

Peshitta (ܣ) also renders *people* plural, as does the Masoretic text (אנשים, עַמִּי). ¶ Jenour suggests: “I shall only here observe, that as these are the words of Christ, and foretell the establishment of the Gospel dispensation.” The Lord Himself will personally judge the people: “O then, my beloved brethren, come unto the Lord, the Holy One. Remember that his paths are righteous. Behold, the way for man is narrow, but it lieth in a straight course before him, and the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there; and there is none other way save it be by the gate; for he cannot be deceived, for the Lord God is his name” (2 Nephi 9:41). The *arm* is symbolic of power and strength. ¶ *The isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.* The Targum (ܬ) has, “The isles shall hope for my Word, and they shall wait for the strength of the arm of my might.” The LXX (ϸ) reads, “The islands will expect me and on mine arm they will rely.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “The islands shall look for me, and shall patiently wait for my arm.” ¶ Barnes says: “*The isles shall wait upon me*] The distant nations; the heathen lands. The idea is, that distant lands would become interested in the true religion, and acknowledge and worship the true God.” The isles includes the American continent and the islands of the sea, where there will be a special devotion to the Lord in the last days. I was able to witness that in person, as the LDS chapels in some of the Polynesian nations (2011 visit) are as close to each other as one finds in Salt Lake City. For this land is a special and promised land (although the promise is conditional, as conditional as that on the promised land of Israel). “And inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments, ye shall prosper, and shall be led to a land of promise; yea, even a land which I have prepared for you; yea, a land which is choice above all other lands” (1 Nephi 2:20).

6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: For the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment. The LXX (ϸ) reads, “Turn up your eyes to heaven; then look down on the earth below! for the heaven is like smoke condensed, and the earth shall grow old like a garment.” Instead of *wax old*, the Peshitta (ܣ) has *wear*

out. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, for the first instance, *heaven* in singular; instead of *wax old*, it renders it *worn away*. ¶ These words, *Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath*, also remind us of the allusion found to the Book of Mormon in Psalm 85:11, “Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.” Certainly, the First Vision would come before the passing of the earth. ¶ In the matter of the passing of the earth, Horsley, leaning on Jerome, wrote: “From these words [in ISAIAH 51:6] St. Jerome draws an argument, that the heavens and the earth are not to be destroyed, but to *undergo a change for the better*” (emphasis added). So also Birks: “The waxing old of the earth, like a garment, plainly refers to the habitable surface, rather than to the solid globe. It implies no destruction of the planet, but a change affecting its whole condition as the home and dwelling-place of mankind.” ¶ These things have long been understood by the LDS. Elder Orson Pratt taught, “What! the earth and the heavens to die? Yes, the material heavens and earth must all undergo this change which we call death ...”¹⁷ President Joseph Fielding Smith, speaking of the death of the world as mentioned in ISAIAH 51:6, taught: “The Psalmist has added his testimony to this passing in these words: ‘Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end. The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee’ (Psalm 102:25–28) ... And then we have the testimony of our Lord: ‘Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away’ (Matthew 24:35).”¹⁸ President Joseph Fielding Smith also taught that in ISAIAH 51:6 “... we have predictions that the earth shall pass away, die, and all its inhabitants shall also die in like manner. This truth was not generally and correctly understood until the Lord made known in revelations to Joseph Smith that this should be the case. When Isaiah said the earth should ‘fall and not rise again,’ the interpretation is that it should not be restored to the same mortal or temporal condition. When the earth passes away and is dissolved it will pass through a similar condition which the human body does in death, but like the human body so shall the earth itself be restored in the resurrection and become a celestial body, through the mercy and mission of Jesus Christ. This reference to a new heaven and earth, spoken of in D&C 29: 22–23, and 77:1–2 [and in ISAIAH 51:6], is not the same [in contrast] as that spoken of by Isaiah in ISAIAH

¹⁷ *Journal of Discourses* 1:282, 25 July 1852.

¹⁸ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Restoration of All Things*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1973, pp. 295–296.

65:17. The ‘new heavens and new earth’ referred to in this scripture, and also in D&C 101:23–31, had reference to the change which shall come to the earth and all upon it, at the beginning of the Millennial reign, as we declare in the tenth article of the Articles of Faith. This is the renewed earth when it shall receive its paradisiacal glory, or be restored as it was before the fall of man. ‘The new heaven and new earth’ we are discussing in D&C 29, is the final change, or resurrection, of the earth, after the ‘little season’ which shall follow the Millennium.”¹⁹ In summary, President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “We discover from the word of the Lord that the earth, like mankind upon it, is passing through various stages of development, or change. It was created and pronounced good.²⁰ It partook of the decree of mortality coming through the fall. It is now passing through the telestial condition, in which telestial beings predominate and rule. It will then pass into the ‘renewed,’ or restored state, for a thousand years as a terrestrial earth and the abode of terrestrial inhabitants. Then comes the end. The earth like all creatures living on it must die. Then it will, like all creatures, receive its resurrection and be celestialized because it obeys its law.”²¹ ¶ *And they that dwell therein shall die in like manner:* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “So shall it wax old, and its inhabitants, also, they shall die.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And like those things the inhabitants shall perish.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “And the inhabitants thereof shall perish in like manner.” Cheyne and some others suggest that instead of *perish in like manner*, we should read *like gnats*: “Like the mosquitos of the Euphrates and the Nile (but the word is applicable to insects both with and without wings).” Birks has: “The righteous and salvation of Christ will outlast all the changes, however great, of the visible universe.” ¶ President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “When Adam transgressed in the Garden of Eden he died the spiritual death, as well as changing his nature and bringing upon himself mortality. Spiritual

death is banishment from the presence of God, and Adam was shut out from the presence of the Lord. Angels were sent to him, however, to teach him the plan of salvation. The earth probation was prolonged that he might repent and accept the plan offered to him. Through his repentance, baptism and confirmation, he was brought back again into the presence of God through the Holy Ghost. This same spiritual death comes upon all unrepentant and unbaptized men, and the only way they can be brought from spiritual death to spiritual life is through obedience to the Gospel. By this means all men may be redeemed, as Adam was, from the spiritual fall, but all who will not receive the Gospel ‘cannot be redeemed from their spiritual fall, because they repent not’ (D&C 29:44). The ‘second death’ is like the first death, spiritual banishment ...”²² ¶ *But my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, for the second clause, “And my righteousness shall not tarry (the Royal Polyglot reads לֹא יִשְׁכַּח, ‘shall not be broken’).” The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “But my salvation shall endure forever, and my saving mercy shall never fail.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “But my salvation shall endure forever, and my saving mercy shall never fail.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, for the second half, “And my justice shall not fail.” In the *Evening and Morning Star* we read: “The righteous have nought to fear; the promise of deliverance to them is certain; though the heathen rage, though bigots cry delusion, yet they know that those who put their trust in the Lord, will never be confounded.”²³ *Forever*, or לְעוֹלָם.

7 Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart [is] I have written my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.

Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Hearken unto my Word, ye that know the truth.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Hearken to me, ye who know judgment.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “Hearken to me, you that know what is just.” ¶ Birks writes, regarding ISAIAH 51:7–8: “The persecutors of the faithful will become like a moth-eaten garment, but these confessors shall ‘receive a crown of righteousness that fadeth not away.’” ¶ An important part of beautiful

¹⁹ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Church History and Modern Revelation*. Salt Lake City, Utah: The Council of The Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1946, Volume I, pp. 132–133.

²⁰ Before the Fall, explains Elder McConkie, the condition of the earth was Terrestrial, as it will likewise be during the Millennial day. The waters of Noah represent a baptism by water while “when the Lord comes again, our earth will be baptized with fire.” Furthermore, “This earth, the very planet on which we live, is being prepared for eternal salvation. As with all things, it was created as a spirit sphere ... As with men, so with the earth; both shall die and both shall be resurrected.” After quoting D&C 43:30–32, Elder McConkie explains that “This is the second day of burning, the day when planet earth becomes a celestial sphere.” McConkie, Bruce R. *The Millennial Messiah*. The Messiah Series. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1978–82, p. 535–536.

²¹ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Church History and Modern Revelation*. Salt Lake City, Utah: The Council of The Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1946, Volume II, p. 66.

²² Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Church History and Modern Revelation*. Salt Lake City, Utah: The Council of The Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1946, Volume I, p. 133.

²³ The Evening and Morning Star. 1832 – 1834, Independence [Zion], Missouri, and Kirtland, Ohio, Volume I, Number 11, April 1833, Independence, Mo., p. 86.

scripture is the repetition that gives force to it. This chapter started with the words: “Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged” (ISAIAH 51:1). Kay, with his superb insights notes: “*ye that know*] No longer only, ‘that seek’ (ISAIAH 51:1): for they have His ‘law in their heart’ (cp. Psalm 40:8).” ¶ *The people in whose heart I have written my law.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “The people in whose heart is the instruction of my law.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Ye people, in whose heart is my law.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “My people who have my law in your heart.” ¶ Here we are once again speaking of תּוֹרָה as *divine instruction* (see Gesenius). In Jeremiah we read: “But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people” (Jeremiah 31:33). ¶ *Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Be ye not afraid of the reproaches of the sons of men, neither be terrified on account of their grandeur.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Fear not the reproach of men, nor be overcome by their contempt.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has *blasphemies* instead of *reviling*. ¶ In other words, fear God more than man. Elder Lynn G. Robbins shared this beautiful anecdote about the question, *Which way do you face?*: “President Boyd K. Packer surprised me with this puzzling question while we were traveling together on my very first assignment as a new Seventy. Without an explanation to put the question in context, I was baffled. ‘A Seventy,’ he continued, ‘does not represent the people to the prophet but the prophet to the people. Never forget which way you face!’ It was a powerful lesson. Trying to please others before pleasing God is inverting the *first and second great commandments*. It is forgetting which way we face. And yet, we have all made that mistake because of the fear of men. In Isaiah the Lord warns us, ‘Fear ye not the reproach of men.’” ¶ The Prophet Joseph Smith likewise taught: “I have reason to think that the Church is being purged ... I want to stick to my text, to show that when men open their lips against these truths they do not injure me, but injure themselves. To the law and to the testimony, for these principles are poured out all over the Scriptures. When things that are of the greatest importance are passed over by the weak-minded men without even a thought, I want to see truth in all its bearings and hug it to my bosom. I believe all that God ever revealed, and I never hear of a man being damned for believing too much; but they are damned for unbelief.”²⁴ We can note that both of these Brethren are directing this warning particularly

to Church members, *lest after taking hold of the plow decide to look back* (see Luke 9:62). See also notes on ISAIAH 26:4. We continue this thread in ISAIAH 51:12.

8 For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.

For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: The Targum (ⲧ) has, “For they vanish like a garment, which the moth eateth, and like wool, which rottenness seizeth.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For they are like a garment which shall be worn out by time, and like woollens which shall be devoured by a moth.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has *moth* instead of *worm*. ¶ Whitehouse explains: “We have in the opening parallel clauses a pair of Hebrew synonyms for ‘moth,’ for which our language does not provide equivalents.” What in ISAIAH 40:6–8 was given as grass and flowers, here we have as a wool garment that is easily devoured by moths. The grass and the flower cannot withstand the heat of the sun, nor can the garment made of wool withstand the moth. Maimonides, according to Rabbi Rosenberg, felt this passage addressed the “nations of the world who oppressed Israel.” ¶ *But my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “But my saving mercy shall endure forever, and my salvation to generations of generations.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “But my salvation shall be for ever, and my justice from generation to generation.” ¶ As mentioned already, this is a similar allusion than that made in ISAIAH 40:6–8: “The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.” Just like the *Word* there represents the Lord, so here *my righteousness* and *my salvation* also are the Lord’s. Generation to generation is another way of saying *forever*, לְעֹלָם. So it is that both the Lord’s righteousness and salvation are לְעֹלָם.

vv. 9–16. Rawlinson well says of the markers, *Awake, awake*, which begin this section, the next, and ISAIAH 52:1: “Here we have thrice over ‘*Awake, awake*’—not, however, an exact repetition in the Hebrew, but a near approach to it—each summons forming the commencement of a new paragraph or subsection.” The עֹרִי עֹרִי is identical to that in ISAIAH 52:1. All three,

²⁴ TPJS 374.

however, have the *same* root, עִנָּה. “A number of editors (Volz, Budde, Elliger, Muilenburger etc.)” says Claus Westermann, “take the view that ISAIAH 51:9–52:2 represent a single consciously designed unit. The start of each of the three parts of it (51:9, 17; 52:1) is very clearly marked.” The power manifested by the Lord in ancient times would be manifested once again to the joy of the Saints and the consternation of the adversary.

9 ¶ Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. [Art] thou not it that hath cut Rahab, [and] wounded the dragon?

Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Reveal thyself, reveal thyself, put on the strength of might from the Lord.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Awake, awake, Jerusalem! and clothe thyself with the strength of thine arm.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has *arise, arise* instead of *awake, awake*. ¶ Skinner has, “Literally, ‘clothe thyself with strength,’ as Psalm 93:1 [... he is clothed with majesty; the LORD is clothed with strength ...] The arm of the LORD ... as a symbol of His might, possibly with a reference back to ISAIAH 51:5.” Cheyne suggests two possibilities: “it seems natural to regard it, with Gesenius, as an exhortation of Jehovah to himself (compare Judges 5:12, ‘Awake, awake, Deborah’), or, if we object to a rhetorical formula in so solemn a passage, as a fragment of deliberation within the plurality of the Godhead (compare Genesis 1:26; 11:7).” Following this last possibility and leaning on Birks, but changing the direction, Cheyne says that “God the son ... corresponds to the Arm (as also the Name and to the Face).” ¶ *Awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Reveal thyself as in the days of old, in the generations which were at the beginning: was it not for thy sake O congregation of Israel.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Awake as at the beginning of day.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “Arise as in the days of old, in the ancient generations.” ¶ Barnes suggests: “*Awake, as in the ancient days*] That is, in the time when the Jews were delivered from their bondage in the land of Egypt.” ¶ *[Art] thou not it that hath cut Rahab, [and] wounded the dragon?* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “That I broke the mighty, that I destroyed Pharaoh and his host, who were strong as a dragon?” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has something like, “Thou didst decree a harsh sentence that didst slay the dragon.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, for the first clause, “Hast not thou struck the proud one.” ¶ Rashi, in Slotki/Rosenberg, suggests that Rahab is “a poetical

name for Egypt meaning ‘the proud.’²⁵ Pride is the greatest instrument of evil and is often associated with Satan, with Babylon and with Egypt. Cheyne brilliantly has: “*That hewed Rahab in pieces ...*] Compare Psalm 89:10, ‘Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces as one that is slain; thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm.’ In both these passages, the exegetical tradition from the Targum onwards has taken Rahab (with which the ‘dragon’ of the parallel line is clearly synonymous) as a symbolic expression for Egypt ... The great enemy of Jehovah on earth was described in expressions coined originally for the constantly recurring ‘war in heaven’ between the powers of light and darkness. In confirmation of this, see chap. 15 of the Egyptian *Book of the Dead* (Birch’s transl. in Bunsen’s *Egypt*, vol. vi.), where the sun-god Ra is addressed thus: ‘Hail! thou who hast cut in pieces the Scornor and strangled the Apophis’ (i.e., the evil serpent). This suggests the possibility that in the passage before us the prophet alludes not only to the fate of the earthly but to that of the heavenly Rahab. The strife between light and darkness ...” Birks has: “The dragon alludes to the crocodile, as an emblem of Pharaoh. The earlier wonders of the Exodus are made the pledge of a still greater deliverance.” Cowles also, “Egypt’s king, slain in the Red Sea, is compared to the dragons or crocodiles of the Nile.”

10 [Art] thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?

[Art] thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Was it not for thy sake, O congregation of Israel that I dried up the sea, the water of the great deep.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Art thou not as the generation of old, which dried up the sea—the swelling water of the deep?” Just as in the previous verse, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) makes this an affirmative statement rather than a question. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “Hast not thou dried up the sea, the water of the mighty deep.” ¶ Barnes has: “*Art thou not it*] Art thou not still the same? The ground of the appeal is, that the same arm that dried up the sea, and made a path for the Jewish people [during the Exodus], was still able to interpose and rescue them.” ¶ *That hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “I made the depth of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Which made the depths of the sea a road for

²⁵ עִנָּה means proud, arrogant, plus also fierce and insolent (Gesenius, HAL).

the delivered and redeemed to pass?” Instead of *ransomed*, the Peshitta (S) has *redeemed*. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Who madest the depth of the sea a way, that the delivered might pass over?” ¶ Skinner suggests: “The reference to the Exodus is here unmistakable.” Barnes has: “This is the common illustration to which the Hebrew prophets and poets appeal when they wish to refer to the interposition of God in favour of their nation.” This allusion to the saving of Israel from Egyptian captivity, now, is turned towards a future time, when redemption from mystic Babylon would take place. Similar allusions to God’s former power and His present day ability to redeem are found in the verses surrounding D&C 133:68 (see D&C 133:57 ff.). ¶ Skinner, once again, has: “... every exhibition of Jehovah’s power over the sea was regarded as a repetition on a smaller scale of the original miracle of creation. Both alike are illustrations of what the ‘arm of the Lord’ can do, and of the great miracle of redemption to which the prophet looks forward.” If we substitute mystic Babylon, or *the world*, this passage from Barnes is perfect: “The word rendered *ransomed* is that which is commonly rendered *redeemed*. The argument in this verse is, that he who had overcome all the obstacles in the way of their deliverance from Egypt was able also to overcome all the obstacles in the way of their deliverance from Babylon; and that he who had thus interposed might be expected again to manifest his mercy and save them again from oppression. The *principle* involved in the argument is as applicable now as it was then. All God’s past interpositions—and especially the great and wonderful interposition when he gave his Son ... constitute an argument that he will still continue to regard the interests of his people, and will interpose in their behalf and save them.” ¶ Elder Orson Pratt taught: “What do we want with an highway in the desert? We have already read about the highway through the Red Sea, and through the seven streams of the river of Egypt that is to be cast up like it was in ancient days; but what need have we for a highway in the desert? It is for the ransomed of the Lord to pass over. What ransomed of the Lord? Those who are ransomed from among the nations, by the proclamation of the everlasting Gospel, those who listen to the angelic message that comes from heaven; they who have toiled with ox teams, mule teams and handcarts and wheelbarrows to get themselves here, to lay a foundation of the work of God in the midst of this desert. They need a highway here, that the balance who are to come hereafter, and they will come by hundreds of thousands, may come swiftly, and more speedily than by handcart conveyances.”²⁶

²⁶ Pratt, Elder Orson, “The Restoration of the Jews and the Rebuilding of Jerusalem—The Latter-Day Kingdom of God—

Israel is now being gathered from the four quarters of the earth.

11 Therefore the redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy **and holiness** [shall be] upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy; [and] sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

Therefore the redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion. The Targum (T) has, “Thus the redeemed of the Lord shall be gathered together (the Royal Polyglot reads תִּבְּרִי, ‘they shall return’) out of their captivity, and come to Zion with singing.” The LXX (G) reads, “For under the guidance of the Lord they shall be brought back, and shall come to Sion with joy and everlasting gladness.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “And now they that are redeemed by the Lord, shall return, and shall come into Sion singing praises.” ¶ Elder Mark E. Petersen quoted this verse and ISAIAH 51:3 as associated with the gathering of Israel.²⁷ Elder LeGrand Richards with his beautiful testimony said in 1980: “[Isaiah] saw the redeemed of the Lord come up and sing in the heights of Zion. And where do you find anything in the world to fulfill that like the singing of the Tabernacle Choir for over fifty years without a break?”²⁸ Elder Orson Pratt testified: “Therefore, Latter-day Saints, when you return to build up the waste places of Zion, and when you build up the New Jerusalem upon the place that he has appointed, whatever materials shall be used, by the blessing of the Priesthood, which God has ordained, these materials will endure forever: they will continue during the thousand years, without waste, and when they shall be caught up to heaven, when the earth flees away, they will still endure in all their perfection and beauty. When these cities shall descend again upon the new earth, in its immortal and eternal state, they will still be as endurable as the earth itself, no more to be subject to the curse, and therefore, will no more waste; death is gone—everything that is corruptible in its nature has ceased, so far as this habitable globe is concerned, and all sorrow and mourning are done away. May God bless the Latter-day Saints, and may our minds be kept steadfast upon the nature and glory of the promises to the righteous, and the great events that must be fulfilled, looking for the coming of the Church of the Firstborn, looking for the day of peace, the day of rest, when Jesus

Gathering of Israel” Journal of Discourses, Vol. 14, No. 9, 26 May 1871, pp. 58–70.

²⁷ Petersen, Elder Mark E., *Isaiah for Today*, p.134.

²⁸ Richards, Elder LeGrand. October 1980 General Conference.

shall reign king of kings as he now reigns in heaven. May the Lord stir up the minds of his people that they may seek for those things in the future, and may we put away from our minds everything calculated in its nature to shut out the spirit of the living God from our hearts.”²⁹ ¶ The Prophet Joseph Smith admonished: “... be very prayerful, very humble, and very charitable; working diligently, spiritually and temporally for the redemption of Zion, that the pure in heart may return with songs of everlasting joy to build up her waste places, and meet the Lord when He comes in His glory. Brethren, in the name of Jesus Christ, we entreat you to live worthy of the blessings that shall follow, after much tribulation, to satiate the souls of them that hold out faithful to the end.”³⁰ Jennings speaks to the restoration of the Jews in the Latter-days: “Nothing but unpardonable violence to Romans 11, as well as to a great part of the Old Testament can account for the denial of the restoration of the Jews to their land, and eventually to the favor of their Jehovah ... [and later in the same chapter beautifully adds] Have we no sympathy for Israel in the sorrows that she must still pass through? Have we never been stupefied by the chastening strokes of our God? ... If there should be one who reads these lines, who has recently wept under affliction, Awake, awake, my beloved brother or sister. Be not so stupefied as to forget that chastening is not the *end*, but only the *way* to peace and most tender comforting.” ¶ *And everlasting joy and holiness shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And everlasting joy shall be theirs, which shall not cease: and a cloud of glory shall shadow over their heads; they shall find joy and gladness, and there shall be an end of sorrow and sighing for the house of Israel.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “For praise shall crown their head and joy shall overtake them. Grief and sorrow and sighing are fled.” Instead of *mourning*, the Peshitta (Ⓟ) has *sighing* (Lamsa) / *moaning* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, for the first clause, “And joy everlasting shall be upon their heads.” ¶ Elder McConkie taught: “Joy is a gift of the Spirit. It comes from the Holy Ghost, is granted to those who gain a remission of their sins (Mosiah 4:3, 20; Alma 22:15) ... In the latter-days Israel ‘shall come to Zion, singing with songs of everlasting joy’ (D&C 45:71; 66:11; 101:18; 109:39; 133:33; Isa. 51:11).”³¹ Elder Jedediah M. Grant testified: “I say, that man knows the Most who enjoys the greatest portion of the Holy Spirit ... To impress the knowledge that he possesses upon the minds of others, he must have the Holy Ghost. I wish to

enquire whether the channel is open between you and the heavens, and do you draw daily from that source? If so, then you are in the narrow path, and rejoicing in the truth. I mention this that you may come to the school prepared to receive the impression that may be given [and] have your minds prepared to be instructed in doctrine, and in the love of God, and pray that you may receive a proper impression upon what may be advanced; for you must receive item after item, principle after principle, here a little and there a little (ISAIAH 28:10), until you get a fountain of wisdom. I want you to follow the impression that would lead you to serve God, and the still small voice of God will direct you in all your ways, and you will be wrapped up and live in revelation, and it will be your food by day and by night, and it will cause the mind to expand and the heart to leap with joy. I tell you, that if you have the Holy Ghost you can understand, and you can be impressed with truth, and that truth will make you free, and you will not forget those things which you receive under the impressions of the Holy Spirit.”³² Elder Marion G. Romney shared: “Somebody recently asked how one could know when he is converted. The answer is simple. He may be assured of it when by the power of the Holy Spirit his soul is healed. When this occurs, he will recognize it by the way he feels, for he will feel as the people of Benjamin felt when they received remission of sins. The record says, ... the Spirit of the Lord came upon them, and they were filled with joy, having received a remission of their sins, and having peace of conscience.”³³

12 I am he, [even] yea, I [am] he that comforteth you; behold, who [art] thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man [that] shall die, and of the son of man [which] shall be made [as] grass;

I am he, yea, I am he that comforteth you. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “I THE I AM am he who comforteth thee.” Certainly the Ⓛ seems to have some relation to the LDS version, here. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “I, I myself will comfort you.” ¶ As in ISAIAH 48:12, and as before

²⁹ Pratt, Elder Orson. JD 18:335.

³⁰ TPJS 78

³¹ McConkie, Elder Bruce R., *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed., p.397.

³² Grant, Elder Jedediah M. Journal of Discourses 3:11. Elder Grant also said in this talk: “Again, whenever I have had anything that was great or important to accomplish, I have been impressed with my own weakness and inability to perform the task imposed upon me, and that of myself I was as nothing, only as I trusted in God, and under these circumstances I was certain to speak by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. When I have trusted in books, or in my own acquirements ... I was sure to be foiled in my attempt, for all would leave me. But whenever I have trusted in the Lord, and relied upon Him for strength, it has come out right” (JD 3:10).

³³ Romney, Elder Marion G., *Conference Report*, October 1963, pp. 23–26.

the woman at Jacob's Well (John 4:26), Jehovah here says, **אֲנִי־הוּא**, *I am He*. These are among the most lovely words in all the Scriptures. Jehovah then expands on these words by adding, **אֲנִי הוּא מְנַחֵם**, *I am He that comforteth you*. ¶ President Gordon B. Hinckley, speaking to the family of President Howard W. Hunter after his death said: "May they be comforted, sustained, and blessed by Him who declared, 'I, even I, am he that comforteth you.'" ³⁴ Barnes has: "The word 'I' is repeated here to give emphasis to the passage, and to impress deeply upon them the fact that their consolation came alone from God." Jennings says: "Jehovah places a strong emphasis on its being Himself who will intervene. The law may be given by the disposition of angels, but He will depute no one to redeem—it is Himself from beginning to end. Thus He cries here, 'I, even I, and no other; no archangel, principality, or power of heaven will I permit to comfort Zion.'" This comfort is intimately connected to that offered by the Lord to Israel in ISAIAH 40:1–2a, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem." ¶ *Behold, who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "Of whom are ye afraid? of a mortal man (literally, 'a man that dieth')." The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "Recollect what thou wast when terrified at a mortal man." The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, "Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a mortal man." ¶ Nägelsbach has: "Forgetting Jehovah (ISAIAH 51:13 is really the cause both of fearing men and of the continual trembling." Calvin says: "It is exceedingly base to tremble at the threatenings of men to such a degree as to care nothing about God's assistance; for he displays his power for this purpose, that he may at least fortify us against every attack. Accordingly, by an excessive fear of men we betray contempt of God. Hence it is evident how sinful it is to be agitated by the terrors of men, when God calls us to repose. And indeed it is amazing ingratitude in men, who, when they hear that God is on their side, derive no hope from his magnificent promises, so as to venture boldly to exclaim, 'If God be for us, who can be against us?' (Romans 8:31) ... for God is treated with the highest dishonor when we doubt his truth, that is, when we are so completely overcome by human terrors that we cannot rest on his promises." ¶ *And of the son of man which shall be made as grass*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "Or of a son of man, who is counted like grass?" The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "And at a son of man who are withered like grass." Instead of *made as grass*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *that dries up like grass* (Lamsa) / *that dries as an herb* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, "And of the son of man, who shall wither away like grass?" ¶ Again, in

ISAIAH 40:6—building in crescendo to ISAIAH 40:8—we see man's mortality compared to grass. In contrast, our Savior, "the Word of our God shall stand *for ever* [לְעוֹלָם]." Keith notes: "The period to which allusion is made in these verses seems to be to the time when the Lord shall gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle, previous to the time of national judgment, when it shall be said to Israel, 'Fear not, thou worm Jacob; I will help thee, saith the Lord,' (see ISAIAH 41:14). That such is the bearing of this verse is corroborated by parallel texts. Thus, in a passage which refers clearly to the final restoration of Israel—for it is the time when all flesh shall see the glory of the Lord—there is the same allusion to the comfort which she will then receive, to the overthrow of the nations gathered together against her, and to the immutability of the word of the Lord: 'Comfort ye my people cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished ... (ISAIAH 40:1 ff.)'" Gill considers the possibility that it is not man in general to whom these words refer, but rather: "Or it may be, the man of sin, the son of perdition, antichrist, is here referred to, who in his time has made all to tremble at him (Revelation 13:3–4), but must die, and his power too, and will be destroyed with the breath of Christ's mouth, and the brightness of his coming; and therefore his church and people have no reason to be afraid of him" (see also ISAIAH 51:18–20).

13 And forgettest the LORD thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready[✓] to destroy? and where [is] the fury of the oppressor?

✓ or, made himself ready

And forgettest the LORD thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "And that thou shouldest forget the worship of the Lord thy maker, who has suspended the heavens and founded the earth." The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "And forgettest the God who made thee—him who made the heaven and founded the earth." The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, "And thou hast forgotten the Lord thy maker, who stretched out the heavens, and founded the earth." ¶ Barnes says: "These verses are designed to rebuke that state of the mind—alas, too common even among the people of God—where they are intimidated by the number and strength of their foes, and forget their dependence on God, and his promises of aid. In such circumstances God reproves them for their want of confidence in him, and calls on them to remember that he has made the heavens, and has all

³⁴ Hinckley, President Gordon B. April 1995 General Conference.

power to save them.” ¶ *And hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where [is] the fury of the oppressor?* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And shouldest fear continually all the day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy; and where is now the fury of the oppressor?” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And wast every day in continual dread of the furious countenance of thine oppressor.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “And thou hast been afraid continually all the day at the presence of his fury who afflicted thee, and had prepared himself to destroy thee: where is now the fury of the oppressor?” ¶ If we do not follow Christ, then indeed we will have much to fear: “And upon them that are left alive of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth” (Leviticus 26:36, *Rain in Due Season*). Whitehouse has: “*where is the fury*] Again a rhetorical interrogative, to which the negative answer ‘nowhere’ is expected.” Cowles suggests that this fear shows a lack of confidence in God: “The Hebrew idiom, ‘Who art thou, and thou wast afraid’ (the form of the original) means simply, Why then hast thou been afraid? It is not strictly, Why *shouldest* thou be afraid? although this is implied; but the question expresses an actual and culpable distrust of God.” The oppressor is none other than Satan, “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!” (ISAIAH 14:12). Wordsworth has: “*where is the fury of the oppressor?*] Where is the fury of Pharaoh’s host? At the bottom of the Red Sea; and Israel is delivered. And where is the fury of Babylon? It also is fallen in the hour of its idolatrous revelry, and Israel is free. Where is the fury of Satan? He has been vanquished by Christ on the Cross, and the World is redeemed.” ¶ Elder Orson Pratt testified: “If we are faithful to our covenants, the fury of the oppressor will not harm us, and where will be the strong arm of man? It will be like the flax in the flame, like a moth-eaten garment, the wicked shall vanish away, and there will be no place found for them. Then hearken to the counsel that *proceeds from the First Presidency*, and hold up your heads, and do not let them droop, and in this way, we shall prosper, and obtain a holy dwelling place in the presence of our God forever”³⁵ (emphasis added).

14 The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail.

³⁵ Pratt, Elder Orson. JD 3:70.

The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Vengeance hasteneth to be revealed.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For how did he consult to carry thee away!” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲥ) has, “The oppressor hastened to destroy the mighty ones.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “He shall quickly come that is going to open unto you.” ¶ Cheyne (see AMP, BBE, Darby, ESV, FDB, FLS, Henderson, JPS, LITV and TLV) translates as צָעָה as *stooped*, “*He that was bent down*] i.e., by the weight of his fetters, or by confinement in the stocks (Jeremiah 20:2; 29:26).” The complete clause is translated by Cheyne as: “He that was bent down is quickly released.” Henderson suggests: “Speedily shall the bending prisoner be released” and explains that a: “five-holed wooden machine, which held the body in a bent posture, the head as well as the hands and feet being fixed in it. A more distressing posture cannot well be imagined ... [and regarding the *pit*] שְׁחַת³⁶ here as in בּוֹר, Jeremiah 38:6, Zechariah 9:11, means a cistern without water, converted into a dungeon.” Regarding צָעָה, Ibn Ezra has: “צָעָה *The captive exile*. Comp. צוּעִים ‘oppressors.’ וְצָעוּהוּ ‘and they shall oppress them’ (Jeremiah 48:2). The literal meaning of the word, though a participle active, is ‘bound;’ he who is oppressed, and is in distress, is, as it were, bound. This meaning of the word is proved by the words which follow: ‘that he may be loosed.’” Barnes has: “The word here used and rendered ‘captive exile,’ צָעָה from צָעָה means properly that which is turned on one side, or inclined, as e.g. a vessel for pouring (Jeremiah 48:12). Then it means that which is inclined, bent, or bowed down as a captive in bonds.” ¶ *And that he should not die in the pit.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And the righteous shall not die in the pit.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “But where now is the fury of thine oppressor?” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲥ) has, “But they shall not die or be destroyed.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “And he shall not kill unto utter destruction.” ¶ Alexander suggests: “... whether the phrase in question mean *for hell*, or *for the grave*, or *in the pit*, or *to destruction*, the general sense is still that the captive shall not perish in captivity. This general promise is then rendered more specific by the assurance that he shall not starve to death, which seems to be the only sense that can be put upon the last clause.” Faussett has: “The scene is primarily Babylon, and the time near the close of the captivity. Secondly, and antitypically, the mystical Babylon, the last enemy of Israel and the Church, in which they have long

³⁶ Gesenius has: שְׁחַת f. with suff. שְׁחַתָּה Ezek. 19:4, 8 (from the root שָׁחַת, like נִהַת, from the root נָחַת, a *pit*.”

suffered, but from which they are to be gloriously delivered.” Satan will not have power over the dispersed children of Israel for the Gospel would be preached in the Spirit World as well as throughout the earth. ¶ *Nor that his bread should fail.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Nor be in want of their food.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “For when thou art saved he shall not stand; nor long continue.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “Neither shall his bread fail. ¶ This seems an allusion to *Rain in Due Season* curses and blessings about hunger; perhaps related to spiritual hunger that will be satisfied by the Lord, who comes upon the scene in our next verse.

15 But I [am] the LORD thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared: The LORD of hosts [is] his name.

The Targum (Ⓣ) has the first half as, “For I am the Lord thy God, who rebuketh the sea, though its waves roar.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Because thy God am he who tempesteth the sea and causeth the billows thereof to roar; the Lord of Hosts is my name.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) renders it something like, “I am the Lord thy God who rebukes the sea and calm the waves.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “But I am the Lord thy God, who trouble the sea, and the waves thereof swell: the Lord of hosts is my name.” ¶ יהוה זבאות שמו, *LORD of hosts his name*, reminds us that the Lord’s role here is that of a warrior. Cheyne says: “Israel’s God has at his command all the forces, the potencies, the ‘hosts’ of heaven and earth.” Rawlinson—as well as a number of exegetes—point this verse as an allusion to the power of the Lord as He saved Israel from their Egyptian captivity: “*But I am the Lord thy God, that divided the sea*; rather, for I, the Lord thy God, am he that divided the sea (compare ISAIAH 51:10). The reference is once more to the great miracle wrought at the Exodus, when the Red Sea was ‘divided’ before the host of Israelites (Exodus 14:21; Psalms 74:13). *Whose waves roared* (see Exodus 14:27; 15:10).”

16 And I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Behold, thou [art] my people.

And I have put my words in thy mouth. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “I have put the words of my prophecy in thy mouth (the Royal Polyglot reads בפני נביא, ‘into the mouth of the prophets’).” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “I will

put my words in thy mouth.” ¶ I believe that these are the words the Father put in the mouth of His beloved, even Christ. Our Savior spoke only the words of the Father. Cheyne has: “‘I put my words in thy mouth’ is precisely parallel to the speech of the Servant, ‘he made my mouth as a sharp sword’ ... and the next clause, ‘in the shadow of my hand I covered thee,’ is even verbally almost identical with the Servant’s declaration, ‘in the shadow of his hand he hid me’ (ISAIAH 49:2).” Kay, also, with additional proof has: “*I have put my words in thy mouth*] Who, then, can the Person here addressed be, but the Great One of whom God said to Moses, ‘I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and will put My words in His mouth’ (Deuteronomy 18:18, s.w.; cp. John 3:34)? The same terms are employed in ISAIAH 59:21.” Alexander also has: “... the Messiah is the object of address, and that his work or mission is here described.” ¶ *And I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And with the shadow of my power have I protected thee.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And cover thee under the shelter of my hand.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has *protected* instead of *covered*. ¶ Barnes has: “It refers to the restoration of the Jews to their own land; to the re-establishment of religion there; to the introduction of the new economy under the Messiah, and to all the great changes which would be consequent on that.” The religion to be founded would begin with the angel spoken in the Book of Revelation 14:6, Angel Moroni: “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.” Redak, in Rabbi Rosenberg, makes a connection to the words being in both “your mouth and in your heart” to Deuteronomy 30:14 (*Rain in Due Season*): “But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.” Also see Deuteronomy 30:6–16. ¶ *That I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “To raise up the nation, concerning which it hath been promised that they shall be as many as the stars of heaven, and to establish the congregation it has been promised concerning them, that they shall multiply like the dust of the earth.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “With which I made the heaven and founded the earth.” Instead of *plant*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *stretched forth* (Lamsa) / *extended* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “That thou mightest plant the heavens, and found the earth.” ¶ Skinner has: “The conception of a new moral universe about to be created is partly anticipated [see especially ISAIAH 51:6] ... This verse, however, adds the further idea that the new creation is the ultimate goal of God’s dealings with Israel ...” Cheyne suggests: “For the use of the verb ‘to plant,’ comp. Daniel 11:45. The figure is that of a tent with its stakes set firmly in the ground (comp. ISAIAH 40:22).”

So also Henderson, regarding לְנִטֵּעַ (*to plant*): “לְנִטֵּעַ ... is the proper term by which to denote the fixing or establishment of the heavens, conceived of *as a tent*,—a metaphor not unusual with the sacred writers. It signifies *to plant*, in the sense of fixing or driving into the ground, the pins or pegs to which the cords of a tent are fastened.” As LDS, the Lord has revealed the same use of this expression for our Stakes in Zion (D&C 82:14; ISAIAH 54:2). ¶ *And say unto Zion, Behold, thou art my people.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And to say to the inhabitants of Zion, ye are my people.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And say to Sion, Thou art my people.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “And mightest say to Sion: Thou art my people.” ¶ Elder Orson Pratt has: “... this latter-day gathering was to be a people called ‘the redeemed of the Lord;’ they were to go into a wilderness country. They were called, in many parts of the Scripture writings, ‘the people of Zion,’ and ‘the Zion of the latter days.’ ... It seems that the people of Zion are to be gathered out from all lands, from every nation under heaven, from the four points of the compass ...”³⁷ Skinner has: “*and say unto Zion, etc.*” לְאֵמֹר usually ... introduces the direct speech: and the following words are certainly those of Jehovah.” Indeed, Jehovah is the speaker throughout. And what does He say? Hear oh Israel: “*Thou art my people!*” (see Leviticus 26:12, *Rain in Due Season*). Horsley has: “In this verse the transition is made ... to that of the final conversion and restoration of the Jews. For the Jewish people is the Zion here meant.” Although Horsley says Jewish people, all of Israel is intended, including Judah.

vv. 17–23. As in the last section, the double repetition of *awake* marks a new thought. The repeated word in Hebrew is הִתְעוֹרְרִי הִתְעוֹרְרִי. Skinner does well in saying that in these verses, at least in part, “The prophet, [is] returning to the thought [of] ISAIAH 40:2, [and] announces that the period of Jerusalem’s degradation has expired.” There is yet much that will be painful to Judah before that cup of trembling is to be completely removed. Jerusalem, in the last days, will be surrounded by her enemies. There will be little consolation to her. The Lord will give Jerusalem two special servants as spoken in the book of Revelation.

17 ¶ Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the LORD the cup of his fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, [and] wrung [them] out.

Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the LORD the cup of his fury. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Magnify thyself, magnify thyself; arise, O Jerusalem! who hast received from the Lord the cup of His wrath.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Awake, awake, stand up, Jerusalem who hast drunk from the hand of the Lord the cup of his indignation.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has *arise, arise* instead of *awake, awake* and *wrath* instead of *fury*. ¶ Regarding the repetition of *awake* [*rouse oneself*—Orelli],

הִתְעוֹרְרִי הִתְעוֹרְרִי, Keith says: “The same exciting language as is used here — ‘Awake, awake,’ is addressed to her in the beginning of the following chapter. It implies the suddenness as well as the magnitude of the change which she will then experience.” Slotki/Rosenberg have: “*the cup of His fury*] A common metaphor of the prophets to describe Divine retribution (cf. Jeremiah 25:15 ff., Ezekiel 23:32 ff.).” Nägelsbach has: “[Jerusalem] has received from the hand of its Lord the cup of His fury, which by its intoxicating contents, is also a cup of reeling, and has drunk it to the dregs, even sipped it empty.” ¶ *Thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, [and] wrung [them] out.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The vial of the cup of cursing thou hast drunk, and thou hast removed it.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “For thou hast drunk the cup of horror—the great cup of his wrath; and drained it.” The Peshitta (Ⲯ) has *drunk to the last drop* (BPE) / *drained it* (Lamsa). Instead of *the dregs of the cup of trembling*, the Peshitta (Ⲯ) has “the dregs of the cup of trembling, and drained it” (Lamsa) / “drunk to the last drop of the cup of terror” (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “Thou hast drunk even to the bottom of the cup of dead sleep, and thou hast drunk even to the dregs.” ¶ In Deuteronomy 28:65, *Rain in Due Season*, we read: “And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind.” Here we reproduce Jeremiah 25:15–18–38, alluded to earlier, beginning with Jerusalem but then expanding the punishment throughout the world—for those who would not repent (compare with 3 Nephi 9–12): “For thus saith the LORD God of Israel unto me; Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them. Then took I the cup at the LORD’s hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom the LORD had sent me: To wit, Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the kings thereof, and the princes thereof, to make them a desolation, an astonishment, an hissing, and a curse; as it is this day; [then numerous nations are mentioned] Therefore thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Drink ye, and

³⁷ Pratt, Elder Orson. JD 21:272.

be drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you. And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Ye shall certainly drink. For, lo, I begin to bring evil on the city which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the LORD of hosts. Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them, The LORD shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation; he shall mightily roar upon his habitation; he shall give a shout, as they that tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth. A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the LORD hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. And the slain of the LORD shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground. Howl, ye shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves in the ashes, ye principal of the flock: for the days of your slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished; and ye shall fall like a pleasant vessel. And the shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to escape. A voice of the cry of the shepherds, and an howling of the principal of the flock, shall be heard: for the LORD hath spoiled their pasture. And the peaceable habitations are cut down because of the fierce anger of the LORD. He hath forsaken his covert, as the lion: for their land is desolate because of the fierceness of the oppressor, and because of his fierce anger.” ¶ This cup of trembling is given that we might repent (see 3 Nephi 9:13). Barnes points us to Revelation 14:10: “The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.” Birks writes: “*Thou hast drunk deep*] The word rendered ‘dregs,’ A. V., means rather the bowl or the lowest part of the cup (Alexander, Hahn, Stier, Delitzsch). Thus it implies either the large size of the cup, or the thoroughness with which it has been drunk to the very bottom.” Cowles suggests: “The word rendered ‘dregs’ is now generally held to mean a cup or bowl, and compounded with the other word for cup as we might say, a ‘goblet-cup.’—‘Trembling’ is reeling as if with intoxication. ‘Wrung out,’ is rather *sucked* out, drained to its last drop.” Whitehouse prefers: “Who hast drunk from Yahweh’s hand—the cup of His wrath, Yea the bowl of reeling—hast drunken, hast drained,” and

further reminds us that “the metaphor of a cup” was used by Christ in Mark 14:36: “And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.”

18 And [there is] none to guide her among all the sons [whom] she hath brought forth; neither [is there any] that taketh her by the hand of all the sons [that] she hath brought up.

And there is none to guide her among all the sons whom she hath brought forth. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “comfort” for *guide*. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And of all thy children which thou didst bring forth there was not one who comforted thee.” Instead of *guide*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *comfort*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “There is none that can uphold her among all the children that she hath brought forth.” ¶ Cowles writes in contrast: “The verbs rendered ‘guide,’ and ‘take by the hand,’ are precisely those which are used pertinently to express what Christ does for his people, guiding them as a shepherd, his flock; grasping their hand strongly to impart strength and powerfully sustain ... But Zion has none among all her sons (other than the Messiah) to sustain and to lead her thus.” ¶ *Neither is there any that taketh her by the hand of all the sons that she hath brought up.* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Nor was there one who took hold of thy hand: no, not of all the sons whom thou didst raise.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has *children* instead of *sons*. ¶ It has been suggested by some LDS scholars the Jerusalem is lacking the Priesthood, among her sons.

19 These two [things] sons are come[✓] unto thee; ~~who~~ they shall be sorry for thee[✓], thy desolation, and destruction,[✓] and the famine, and the sword; and by whom shall I comfort thee?

✓ happened ✓ ✓ breaking

These two sons are come unto thee. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Two tribulations have come upon thee, O Jerusalem.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Because these things have befallen thee.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “There are two things that have happened to thee.” ¶ Most exegetes find that this verse is very difficult to understand as it stands. Almost without exception the exegetes are confused by the two [שְׁתֵּי דָבָרִים] *things* and like Wade say something like: “*These two things*. Strictly, two pairs of things, (1) the desolation of the land and destruction of the city; (2) the starvation and

the slaughter of the population.” ¶ Gladly, we know that such an approach is not necessary, as from modern revelation we know that it is two *sons* rather than two *things*. Elder John Taylor taught: “The Spirit of light and truth will be opposed by the spirit of darkness and error. They are two antagonistic powers which will strive for the mastery until error is vanquished and overcome. John speaks of two Prophets that will prophesy in Jerusalem, and that will have power to cause that it rain not in the days of their prophecy, to turn the waters into blood, and to smite the earth with plagues as often as they will. The nations of the earth will be gathered against them, and they will be overcome by their enemies; and hence it is said their dead bodies shall lie in the streets of Jerusalem for three days and three nights. The wicked will so rejoice in their success and gloat over the destruction of those Prophets that they will indulge in feasting and sending gifts one to another, because of the destruction of those men of God. But by-and-by, we read the spirit of life sent from the Great God shall again enter their tabernacles, and they shall be received up into heaven in the sight of their enemies, who shall then experience the fury of the Almighty. The Prophet Zechariah gives an interesting account of what shall take place in Jerusalem about the time of the appearance of these two great Prophets.”³⁸ Jackson explains: “The book of Revelation further associates these two witnesses with the symbolism of two olive trees and two candlesticks mentioned in Zechariah 4:11–14, Revelation 11:4. In the Doctrine and Covenants the Lord identified these two witnesses as ‘two prophets that are to be raised up to the Jewish nation in the last days, at the time of the restoration, and to prophesy to the Jews after they are gathered and have built the city of Jerusalem in the land of their fathers’ (D&C 77:15).”³⁹ In D&C 77:15 we have: “Q. What is to be understood by the two witnesses, in the eleventh chapter of Revelation? A. They are two prophets that are to be raised up to the Jewish nation in the last days, at the time of the restoration, and to prophesy to the Jews after they are gathered and have built the city of Jerusalem in the land of their fathers.” Nyman says, “Because the people of Judah have no sons with the priesthood among them, two other sons (who have the priesthood) are to be sent to them.”⁴⁰ ¶ *They shall be sorry for thee, thy desolation, and destruction, and the famine, and the*

sword. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Thou art not able to arise; when four shall come upon thee, spoiling and destruction, and famine, and the sword.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Who will condole with thee? Desolation and destruction, famine and the sword.” Instead of *desolation*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *plunder*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has *who* instead of *they*. ¶ Elder Parley P. Pratt, leaning on Josephus, applies part of this desolation to the destruction of Jerusalem as happened seventy years after the birth of Christ. He quotes the warning in *Rain in Due Season* (Deuteronomy 28:56) about such extreme famine that women [as would men, see Deuteronomy 28:54] would eat their own children.⁴¹ ¶ Who shall be sorry for Jerusalem? Christ will be sorry of Jerusalem and send these two servants spoken off in the book of Revelation, who will be full of the pure love of Christ. ¶ *And by whom shall I comfort thee?* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “There shall be none to comfort thee beside me.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Who will comfort thee?” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “Who shall comfort thee?” ¶ This clause seems to be a reference to the two prophets, who like fiery bulls, will protect Jerusalem from her enemies. We are able to be filled with comfort and joy as we invite the Holy Ghost to abide with us.

20 Thy sons have fainted *save these two*, they lie at the head of all the streets, as a wild bull in a net; they are full of the fury of the LORD, the rebuke of thy God.

Thy sons have fainted save these two. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Thy children shall be torn in pieces.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Thy sons? Some are astounded.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “Thy children are cast forth.” ¶ The sons who have fainted refers to the inhabitants of Jerusalem at a time when they are persecuted and hated from every side. *Thy sons*, is a reference to God’s people. Similarly to the time when Goliath provoked Israel and most were scared of the giant, so too, in the last days there will be a continuing hatred towards Israel. Instead of David as the champion of Judah, there will be two prophets raised to be champions for Jerusalem. ¶ *They lie at the head of all the streets, as a wild bull in a net*. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “They shall be cast at the head of all the streets as broken vials.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Some asleep at the head of every way, like a parboiled beet.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has something like: *they lie at every street corner, as wilted beet*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “They have slept at the head of all the ways, as the wild ox that is snared.”

³⁸ Taylor, Elder John. *Safety of the Saints at Home—Contrast of Their Position With that of the United States*. Discourse delivered in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 28 April 1861. (See Zechariah 12–14.)

³⁹ Jackson, Kent P., ed., *Studies in Scripture*, Vol. 4:1 Kings to Malachi, p.147–148.

⁴⁰ Nyman, Monte S., *Great are the Words of Isaiah*. See further comments in ISAIAH 51:20.

⁴¹ Journal of Discourses, Vol. III, Parley P. Pratt, 7 October 1855, pp. 132–137.

¶ Henderson—and numerous exegetes—suggests: “The oryx⁴² is an animal of the antelope species, which, in the East, is still caught in a net.” ¶ *They are full of the fury of the LORD, the rebuke of thy God.* The LXX (Ⓜ) reads, “Some are full of the indignation of the Lord, enervated by the Lord God.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “Full of the indignation of the Lord, of the rebuke of thy God.” ¶ This verse is in relation to the two witnesses or servants who will die and be resurrected in Jerusalem. “[Sometime] After the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled,” explains Elder Orson Pratt, “... the nations that live in the regions round about Jerusalem will gather up like a cloud, and cover all that land round about Jerusalem. They will come into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, east of Jerusalem, and they will lay siege to the city. What then? The Lord will raise up two great Prophets, they are called witnesses, in the Revelation of St. John. Will they have much power? Yes, during the days of their prophesying they will have power to smite those who undertake to destroy them, and until their testimonies are fulfilled they will be able to keep at bay all those nations besieging Jerusalem, so that they will not have power to take that city. How long will that be? Three and a half years, so says John the Revelator. If any man hurt them, they shall have power to bring upon that man, nation or army, the various plagues that are there written. They will have power to smite the earth with plague and famine, and to turn the rivers of water into blood. And when they have fulfilled their prophecy, then the nations that have been lying before Jerusalem so long, waiting for an opportunity to destroy the city, will succeed in killing these two Prophets, and their bodies, says John’s Revelation, will lie in the streets of Jerusalem three days and a half after they are killed. What rejoicing there will be over the death of these men! Those who have been waiting so long and anxiously for this to take place, will no doubt send gifts one to another, and if the telegraph wires are not destroyed, they will telegraph to the uttermost parts of the earth that they have succeeded in killing the two men who had so long tormented them with plagues, turning the waters onto blood, etc. But by and by, right in the midst of their rejoicing, when they think the Jews will now certainly fall a prey to them, behold there is a great earthquake, and in the midst of it these two Prophets rise from the dead, and they hear a voice up in the heavens saying—‘Come up hither;’ and they immediately ascend in the sight of their enemies. What next? Notwithstanding all this, those nations will be so infatuated, and so determined to persecute the people of God—as much so as Pharaoh and his army in ancient days that they will say—‘Come, now is the time to pitch into the Jews and destroy them.’ And they will commence their work of destruction, and they will

succeed so far as to take one half the city, and while they are in the very act of destroying Jerusalem, behold the heavens are rent, and the Son of God with all the heavenly hosts appears, and he descends and rests upon the summit of the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east. And so great will be the power of God that will then be made manifest, that the mountain will divide asunder, half going towards the south, and half towards the north, producing a great valley going east and west, from the walls of Jerusalem eastward. What next? The Jews that are not taken captive by these nations, will flee to the valleys of the mountains, says the Prophet Zechariah; and when they get into that great valley, where these personages are who have descended, they expect to find the Deliverer which their Prophets have spoken of so long ... The personage they have been looking for some eighteen hundred years is the true Messiah, and now, say they—‘He has come to deliver us.’ But how great will be their astonishment when, while looking at their Deliverer, they see that his hands are marred considerably! Say they, one to another—‘There are large scars in his hands; and there is another large scar in his side, and behold his feet, they are scarred also!’ And, as the Prophet Zechariah has said, they will begin to enquire of him—‘What are these wounds with which thou art wounded?’ And he replies—‘These are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.’ What then? Then they begin to believe ... [and those who are] convinced they begin to mourn, and they mourn every family apart, and their wives apart. The family of the house of Levi apart and their wives apart; the family of the house of David and their wives apart, and all their families that remain will mourn, they and their wives apart, and there will be such mourning in Jerusalem as that city never experienced before. What is the matter? What are they mourning about? They have looked upon him whom their fathers pierced, they behold the wounds, they are now convinced that they and their fathers have been in error [for centuries], and they repent in dust and ashes. The next step for them will be baptism for the remission of their sins. They look upon him whom their fathers pierced and they mourn for him as one who mourns for his only son, and, as Zechariah says, they are in bitterness for him. But repentance alone would not be sufficient, they must obey the ordinances of the Gospel; hence there will be a fountain opened at that time on purpose for baptism. Where will it be opened? On the east side of the Temple. A stream will break out from under the threshold of the Temple, says the Prophet, and it will run eastward, and will probably pass directly through the deep valley made by the parting of the Mount of Olives. It will run eastward, and as you go down from the Temple a few thousand cubits it increases so rapidly that it becomes a great river that cannot be forded. This is the fountain that Zechariah

⁴² Oryx is the name used in the Vulgate (Ⓟ).

says is open to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of David for sin and uncleanness. ‘How is it that’ says one? ... Why yes, baptism for the remission of sins. [And this water which breaks out from the threshold of the Temple, will not only run eastward but westward also, and there will be a great change in the land there, certain portions rising up, others lowered, rough places made smooth and mountains cast down; and half the waters of this spring which will burst forth, will go towards the former sea and half to the other sea; in other words half towards the Dead Sea and half toward the Mediterranean.] Then the Jews will receive the Gospel and they will be cleansed from all their sins by being baptized in water for their remission. Then will be fulfilled the words of the Prophet Isaiah, when speaking of Jerusalem—‘For henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.’ But the name of the city from that day will be—‘The Lord is there;’ that is, the Lord will be personally there, there with his Apostles and with all his ancient Saints, for Zechariah says that when he comes and stands his feet on the Mount of Olives, all his Saints will come with him ... From that day forward there shall be written upon the bells of the horses and upon the vessels of the house of the Lord—‘Holiness to the Lord’

[קִדְשׁ לַיהוָה] ...”⁴³

21 Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted, and drunken, but not with wine:

The LXX (6) reads, “Therefore hear, thou, who hast been humbled, and who art drunk, but not with wine.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “Therefore hear this, thou poor little one, and thou that art drunk but not with wine.” ¶ Redak, in Rabbi Rosenberg, suggests there is an ellipsis meant when we read drunk, and adds the words “drunk from troubles.” Ibn Ezra similarly suggests an ellipsis: “*And drunken with*” Supply חמה ‘anger,’ אף ‘wrath,’ or רעות ‘evils.’” Alexander well has: “Not with wine, but with the wrath of God, which had already been described as *a cup of reeling* or intoxication ... The Targum supplies from *distress*. Kimhi inserts *the wrath of God*.” These words are followed with comforting ones.

22 Thus saith thy Lord the LORD, and thy God [that] pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, [even] the

dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again:

Thus saith thy Lord the LORD. The LXX (6) reads, “Thus saith the Lord, the God” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “Thus saith thy Sovereign the Lord.” As Wade has, “Better, *thy Lord Jehovah*,” which is more literal:

אֲדֹנָיִךְ יְהוָה. ¶ *And thy God [that] pleadeth the cause of his people.* The Targum (7) has, “Even thy God will take vengeance of judgment for His people.” The LXX (6) reads, “who judgeth his people.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “And thy God, who will fight for his people.” ¶ Rawlinson has: “*The Lord... that pleadeth the cause of his people* (comp. Jeremiah 50:34, which contains an allusion to this passage). As his people have a relentless adversary, who accuses them continually, and pleads against them, (Revelation 12:10) so it is needful that they should have an untiring advocate. God himself is this Advocate.” ¶ *Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, [even] the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again:* The Targum (7) has, “Behold, I have taken away the cup of cursing, the vial of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again.” The LXX (6) reads, “Behold I have taken out of thy hand the cup of horror—the great cup of mine indignation; and thou shalt no more drink it again.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “Behold I have taken out of thy hand the cup of dead sleep, the dregs of the cup of my indignation, thou shalt not drink it again any more.” ¶ Lowth, in part, says: “The bold image of the cup of God’s wrath, often employed by the sacred writers, is nowhere handled with greater force and sublimity than in this passage of Isaiah.” Faussett says: “This cannot apply to Israel after the return from Babylon, but only to them after their final restoration.” Young has: “The cup of reeling (i.e., the cup that causes reeling) is conceived as yet in Zion’s hand, and from this goblet-cup Zion is no more to drink. The original is forceful: *thou shalt not add to drink it again*.” One of the reasons for all of this mercy is that Christ has also drunk of the bitter cup, on our behalf. ¶ Elder Orson Hyde assured that those who turn to God will no longer have to drink this cup: “I have no enmity towards anyone, but my general feeling is, Heaven bless the Saints and may Heaven destroy every influence that is arraigned against Zion. And the Lord will do this; and I will prophesy in the name of the Lord God of Hosts that if we continue to walk in the light of truth, to labor to build up Zion, that cup of trembling spoken of by the Prophet Isaiah shall never return to your lips nor to our habitations, but we will float along increasing in power and strength from day to day, continually rejoicing in the truths of our holy religion.”⁴⁴

⁴³ Pratt, Elder Orson. Return of the Jews to Jerusalem. Discourse delivered in the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday Afternoon, 25 July 1875.

⁴⁴ Hyde, Elder Orson. JD 10:112.

23 But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over.

But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee.

The 1QIsa^a (¶) adds וְיִמְעִיךְ, and oppressed (DSSB, of those who afflicted and oppressed you, also see Young). The LXX (⚡) reads, “And I will put it into the hands of them, who have injured thee and oppressed thee.” The Douay-Rheims (¶) has, “And I will put it in the hand of them that have oppressed thee.”

¶ Regarding מוֹנִיךְ [afflict, root יָנָה] Young says: “Isaiah uses a root also found in Lamentations 1:12⁴⁵, and the reading is confirmed by the Qumran Scroll.” The cup of the wrath of God will be taken from Israel and from Judah, and placed upon those who persecute her. So also in *Rain in Due Season*: “And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers: If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul” (Deuteronomy 30:7–10). Cowles has: “This verse answers to our Lord’s warning (Matthew 21:44–26). Judgment has lighted heavily on the Jews, who stumbled at the stumbling-stone; but the judgment on those Gentile persecutors, who have despised or perverted the Gospel, will be heavier still. The Christian nation, which renounces Christ, builds its house on the sand; and when the floods arise, and the winds blow fiercely, it must fall, and great will be the fall of it.” Interestingly, we read that the Angel Moroni taught the Prophet Joseph Smith that the day of the Gentile was at hand and furthermore, “[Moroni] quoted also the third chapter of Acts, twenty-second and twenty-third⁴⁶ verses, precisely as they stand in our New Testament.

⁴⁵ מוֹנִיךְ, root יָנָה.

⁴⁶ “For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people” (Acts 3:22–23).

He said that that prophet was Christ; but the day had not yet come when ‘they who would not hear his voice should be cut off from among the people,’ but soon would come” (JS–History 1:40b). Elder Orson Hyde taught that those who hurt the Saints will have to drink the bitter cup: “Now concerning the times and seasons in which we live. The Lord says by the mouth of Isaiah, ‘Thus saith thy Lord the Lord, and thy God that pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again: But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over.’ What are you going to do with this text, my friends? I will put it into the hands of them that have afflicted thee. What was that army up here for? They were sent as agents of the Almighty to take away this cup of trembling, which had afflicted us for so many years, and they carried it away with them down yonder, and they then began to drink of it and have been drinking of it ever since. Do you know that there was a kind of tremor with some of us at that time? But I tell you what it is, the nerves have become settled, and those who sought to make us drink the dregs are drinking them now, and they will continue to do so until the dregs are all drunk out. I have no feeling against anyone, and I regret exceedingly that these of whom I speak should have brought upon themselves these terrible calamities which now afflict our once happy country.”⁴⁷ ¶ Which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: The LXX (⚡) reads, “Who have said to thy soul, Crouch down that we may walk over thee.” The Douay-Rheims (¶) has, “And have said to thy soul: Bow down, that we may go over.” ¶ Barnes shows that in Biblical times similar procedures took place elsewhere: “Thus in Joshua 10:24, ‘Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war that went with them, come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings.’ So David says, ‘Thou hast given me the necks of mine enemies’ (Psalm 18:40). ¶ And thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over. The Targum (⚡) has, “And thou hast humbled thy glory as the ground, and thou becamest like the street to them that passed by.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “When thou hadst bent thy body down level with the earth in the street, to them passing along.” The Peshitta (⚡) has, “And thou hast made your people like the ground and like the street to them that passed by.” The Douay-Rheims (¶) has way instead of street. ¶ Skinner explains: “Bow down, that we may go over] The figure is taken from the Eastern custom of treading or even riding on the backs of conquered enemies. Compare Lane’s account of the

⁴⁷ Hyde, Elder Orson.JD 10:70.

Mohammedan ceremony of the *Dooseh* or ‘Treading,’ as he witnessed it at Cairo in 1834; when the Sheikh of the Saadiyeh dervishes,⁴⁸ mounted on horseback, rode over the prostrate bodies of a large number of dervishes (see *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, pp. 417 f., 432 f. [Ed. 1890].) and thou hast laid (Sr’c.] so that thou madest thy back as the earth.” Barnes, also leaning on the same author, has: “Mr. Lane (*Modern Egyptians*, vol. i. p. 199) describes an annual ceremony which may serve to illustrate this passage: ‘A considerable number of Durweeshes [i.e., dervishes], says he (I am sure there were not less than sixty, but I could not count their number), laid themselves down upon the ground, side by side, as close as possible to each other, having their backs upward, having their legs extended, and their arms placed together beneath their foreheads. When the Sheikh approached, his horse hesitated several minutes to step upon the back of the first prostrate man; but being pulled and urged on behind, he at length stepped upon them: and then without apparent fear, ambled with a high pace over them all, led by two persons, who ran over the prostrate men, one sometimes treading on the feet, and the other on the heads. Not one of the men thus trampled on by the horse seemed to be hurt; but each the moment that the animal had passed over him, jumped up and

followed the Sheikh. Each of them received two treads from the horse, one from one of his fore-legs, and a second from a hind-leg.’ It seems probable that this is a relic of an ancient usage alluded to in the Bible, in which captives were made to lie down on the ground, and the conqueror rode insultingly over them.” ¶ Elder Erastus Snow has: “... if his Spirit is poured out upon the people so generally, it will be because their hearts are prepared to receive it, because their ears have been opened to the word of God, and faith has been begotten in them. They have listened to the call of the Almighty, and have received the message of salvation sent unto them. But shall all people be thus converted unto the Lord? Shall the king upon the throne, the judges who have judged for reward, the Prophets who have divined for money, the priests who have taught for hire, the murderer, the idolater, the abominable, those who have oppressed and ruled mankind with a rod of iron, who have said to the souls of men, ‘Bow down, that we may walk over you?’ Shall all these be converted unto the Lord of hosts and receive of these blessings? ... the Prophets have not so predicted.”⁴⁹

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⁴⁸ *Dervish*, according to *Webster’s 11th Edition*: “a member of a Muslim religious order noted for devotional exercises (as bodily movements leading to a trance).”

⁴⁹ Snow, Elder Erastus. Ancient Prophecy, Relating to the Time of the Restitution of All Things, to Be Fulfilled. JD 16:200. Discourse delivered in the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday Afternoon, 14 September 1873.

Isaiah 52

The resurrected, exalted Christ explained this chapter when He made His appearance in the American Continent. Of special interest are 3 Nephi 16:1–20; and 20:13–46. Between these two Book of Mormon chapters, our Redeemer quotes or alludes to all but two verses (ISAIAH 52:4–5) of ISAIAH 52—which is pronounced in the context of the *Day of the Gentile Nations*. In essence, the Lord tells us how the Gentiles—for *Gentiles* read *Gentile nations* (see 3 Nephi 20:20)—will be receptive to the fullness of the Gospel while Israel will at first reject it. The Gentiles will be greatly blessed with the Holy Ghost and play a vital role in gathering Israel from the four quarters of the earth. The unbelieving Gentiles will help further scatter Israel. The Gentile nations will become prideful and many shall reject the fullness of the Gospel. The Lord will recall His covenant with Israel. The inheritance of the Lamanites would be within the American Continent. The Lord will greatly strengthen the gathered of Israel and be in their midst, fulfilling the Abrahamic covenant. To Judah, the Father will give the land of Jerusalem and in due time the Gospel will be preached to them, also. The day will come in which the Jews will pray unto the Father in the name of Messiah, even Jesus Christ. As a descendant of Judah from my paternal heritage, my most valued treasure is the unshakable testimony of the Divinity of Jesus the Messiah, Son of God. When the Jews as a nation turn unto Christ, then ISAIAH 52:8–10 shall be fulfilled (3 Nephi 16, 20), and Jerusalem (put for not only Jerusalem but for all of Israel) shall lift up her voice in rejoicing song. The people of Judah shall be redeemed, as the arm of the Father is made manifest before the nations through Christ and His servants. Then the Lord recaps ISAIAH 52 from the first verse: when all these things happen Jerusalem will be inhabited by the righteous; she will again put on the garments of the holy Priesthood and will no longer be a captive. She will be redeemed, not with money but through the atonement and will truly know the Holy One of Israel, Jesus Christ. Jerusalem will rejoice over the beautiful feet of the Savior; her priesthood will be unpolluted; the Lord will protect her and be her rearward; shall be lifted very high; will understand the atonement and the sacrifice of the Holy One; and Israel shall be gathered and the covenant fulfilled. For this chapter we have very important additional study aids from the Book of Mormon (e.g., Mosiah 12:21–24), D&C (e.g., D&C 113:7–10; 45:18–30) and the words of the Brethren. Among the Gentile authors, there are those who have a good understanding of the general setting. For instance, Birks explains: “The fulness of the promise, and the order in the vision, confirm the application to a time still future, when Jerusalem will cease to be ‘trodden down of the Gentiles,’ and to a deliverance of which the Return from Babylon was a pledge and partial earnest only.” Of the last three verses and flowing into ISAIAH 53, Skinner beautifully has: “The tragedy of which they have been spectators [the Servant’s contemporaries] makes an impression far more profound and convincing than any direct teaching could have done, compelling them to recognize the mission of the Servant, and at the same time producing penitence and confession of their own sin. The whole conception here given of the Servant of the Lord makes the prophecy the most remarkable anticipation in the Old Testament of the ‘sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.’” Urwick writes: “The more accurately and closely the passage is studied, the clearer does its Messianic import appear ... No interpretation of this chapter at all comes up to its tone and befits its language, save that which recognizes here the invitations, the blessings, the triumphs of the gospel of Christ ... Our English version of this famous passage is in the main as correct as it is beautiful. Compared with any newly attempted and competing translations, it far transcends them in sublime simplicity and in pathos.”

vv. 1–6. The restored Priesthood will be a matter of great power as the Church is restored, as it is exercised in righteousness and Holy Temples are built. The scattered remnant shall be gathered as the Book of Mormon goes forth and The Church of Jesus Christ is restored. The Lord’s name is blasphemed but the time will come when it shall be honored.

1 ¶ AWAKE, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth

there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.

AWAKE, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Reveal thyself, reveal thyself, put on thy strength, O Zion.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Awake, awake, Sion! clothe thyself, Sion, with thy strength.” The Peshitta (Ⓟ) lacks the clause, *put on thy strength*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has *arise, arise* instead of *awake, awake*. ¶ Rabbi Ibn Ezra has: “All agree that this prophecy has reference to the time yet to come ... How could this prophecy be referred to the deliverance and return of the captives in Babylon, when it is said, ‘the uncircumcised and unclean shall no more come unto

thee.” Wordsworth has: “This is an alarm which ... is a call to Zion to awake, and to arouse the world from the slumber and prison of sin and Satan by the trumpet of evangelical preaching to all Nations.” ¶ This verse and much of this chapter is intimately associated with the Priesthood. Also see the repetition of the words holy, beauty, garments and glory [especially in **ᖃ**] in these passages. Wordsworth finishes his observations with these thoughts, that it is Christ who “imparts His own beauty and glory to her¹ [i.e., to His Church, to Zion].” From D&C 113 we read, “Questions by Elias Higbee: What is meant by the command in ISAIAH, 52d chapter, 1st verse, which saith: Put on thy strength, O Zion—and what people had Isaiah reference to? [Answer:] He had reference to those whom God should call in the last days, who should hold the power of priesthood to bring again Zion, and the redemption of Israel; and to put on her strength is to put on the authority of the priesthood, which she, Zion, has a right to by lineage; also to return to that power which she had lost” (D&C 113:7–8).

¶ Elder Franklin D. Richards taught about the priesthood and about service: “Behold! as I look abroad this afternoon in this house, I contemplate the great mass of this congregation that are partakers of the Holy Priesthood. It is not a few that are partakers of the holy calling, the authority to administer in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the echo of that saying that is written in the Scriptures where the Lord has said that He would take of Israel and make of them a nation of kings and priests unto Himself ... Here is Israel gathering together, being taught of the Lord, to learn of His ways and walk in His paths, that they may receive the blessing and be clothed upon with power, as the Prophet said: ‘Awake, awake; put, on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem.’ What are these beautiful garments? These beautiful garments are [to be clothed] upon with the authority and power of the Holy Priesthood. It is that which makes people beautiful; it is that which makes people useful; it is that which causes the Saints to sing: ‘How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!’ It is that excellence of the knowledge of God that makes men and women beautiful, and makes their acts delightful when they are performed in righteousness in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ ... As Apostles, as Bishops, as High Priests, as Elders, as well as fathers and mothers, we need to get more of the spirit of this great work in all its different branches, and keep it with us; always have a blessing to dispense; everywhere a word of comfort and

consolation to bestow.”² President Russel M. Nelson explained: “We need to pray from our hearts ... Are you willing to pray to know how to pray for more that brings enduring power. Are you willing to pray *to know how to pray for more power*? The Lord will teach you. Are you willing to search the scriptures and feast on the words of Christ—to study earnestly in order to have more power? If you want to see your wife’s heart melt, let her find you on the Internet studying the doctrine of Christ or reading your scriptures!” ¶ *Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city*: Targum (**Ⲯ**) has, “Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the city of holiness.” The LXX (**Ⲅ**) reads, “Put on thy glory. O Jerusalem, thou holy city!” The Douay-Rheims (**ᖃ**) has, “Put on the garments of thy glory, O Jerusalem, the city of the Holy One.” ¶ Gill, who died shortly before the Gospel was restored, says: “Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; another name for the Gospel church (see Hebrews 12:22), and which is called ‘the holy city’; referring to the times in the latter day, when holiness shall more appear and prevail ... when saints shall be built up in their holy faith, and more closely attend to holy ordinances, and walk in an holy conversation and godliness; and especially the New Jerusalem church state will answer to this name, and so it is called (Revelation 21:2,10), and when the saints will ‘put on’ their ‘beautiful garments’ ... the witnesses will no more prophesy in sackcloth; the marriage of the Lamb will come; the bride made ready, being clothed with fine linen, clean and white, the righteousness of the saints, the garments of Christ’s salvation, and the robe of his righteousness; which are the beautiful garments here meant ...”

Wordsworth, another Gentile author, for

בְּגָדֵי תִפְאָרֶת has: “*beautiful garments*” Literally, garments of glory and beauty, such as were worn by Aaron the High Priest. See Exodus 28:2, 40, where the same words are used; cp. 2 Chronicles 3:6; and below, ISAIAH 60:7; 64:11, where the word here rendered beautiful is applied to the Temple. The Priesthood and the Temple of Zion receive new beauty and glory in the Church of Christ, Who fulfils all that was pre-signified by them, and imparts His own beauty and glory to her.” Here we quote the Exodus and Isaiah references: “And thou shalt make *holy garments* [**בְּגָדֵי קֹדֶשׁ**] for Aaron thy brother *for glory and for beauty* [**לְכָבוֹד וְלִתְפָּאֶרֶת**]” (Exodus 28:2); “And for Aaron’s sons thou shalt make coats, and thou shalt make for them girdles, and bonnets shalt thou make for them, *for glory and for beauty* [**לְכָבוֹד וְלִתְפָּאֶרֶת**]”

¹ *How beautiful are the feet principle.*

² Richards, Elder Franklin D., “Our Labors are Interesting and Peculiar, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 26, No. 11, 18 January 1885, pp. 98 ff.

(Exodus 28:40); “Our holy and our beautiful house [בֵּית קֹדֶשׁנוּ וְהַפְּאֵרָהֵנוּ] (ISAIAH 64:11a). Kay also, “Put on thy garments of beauty” s.w.a. Exodus 28:2 (of Aaron’s priestly robes).” ¶ Elder Wilford Woodruff spoke frequently on the topic of the beautiful garments. He made it clear that Zion had not yet fully been clothed with them, but was rather in the process of putting them on: “... this Zion so often spoken of in holy writ, has got to arise and put on her beautiful garments; these mountain vales have got to be filled with the saints of God and temples reared to his holy name, preparatory to the time when ‘the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.’ And [the] time will come when the nations are fully warned by the preaching of the servant of God, and his judgments commence to be poured out upon the world, in fulfillment of the revelations of St. John.”³ This quote from 1878 is particularly interesting not only because it makes an allusion to the day of the Gentile Nations, but also because it prophesies of a time when the Wasatch front would be filled with temples as it is today. Elder Woodruff also said: “I thank God I live in this day and age of the world. I thank God that I heard the Gospel. I thank the Lord I have been made partaker of the holy priesthood in connection with the Gospel ... I realize and understand, as well as I know anything, that this kingdom is ordained to stand. It will grow and increase. Zion will arise and put on her beautiful garments ... We are surrounded with temptations which have a tendency to lead us away. We have got to guard against them; we have got to increase our faith and live nearer and nearer to the Lord.”⁴ ¶ *For henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.* Targum (Ⲯ) has, “For the uncircumcised and the polluted shall pass no more through thee.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “No more shall the uncircumcised and the unclean pass through thee.” The Douay–Rheims (Ⲕ) has, “For henceforth the uncircumcised, and unclean shall no more pass through thee.” ¶ The ellipsis that is missing here is *uncircumcised of heart* which goes well with the *unclean*. In its most complete sense, the fulfillment of this prophecy will have to wait to the Millennium. So also Elder McConkie, who speaks of uncircumcised of heart and further, states that: “In the day of which we speak there will be none who are unclean in the telestial sense of the word, for the wicked will be destroyed by the brightness of His coming. And there will be none who are uncircumcised, as it were, for all who seek the blessings of the Holy City will be

in harmony with the plans and purposes of Him whose city it is.”⁵ Keith says: “The description can apply only to the time yet to come, when God, having turned his hand upon her, shall purge away her dross ...”

2 Shake thyself from the dust; arise, [and] sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

Shake thyself from the dust; arise, [and] sit down, O Jerusalem: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “sit upon the throne of glory” instead of *sit down*. Leaning on the Targum (Ⲯ) Wordsworth has: “*Arise, and sit down*] As a queen on a throne.” Rashi (in Rabbi Rosenberg) follows the Ⲯ and has: “*sit down*—on a throne.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Shake off the dust, and stand up: assume thy seat, O Jerusalem!” ¶ This figure is taken from captives who sit on the ground or dirt. Zion is commanded to arise, shake off the dirt, and sit down in her throne. Lowth notes that this scripture also alludes to ISAIAH 51:23 where the children of Israel were depicted as prostrate. ¶ Elder Wilford Woodruff testified: “When he, who has the authority, preaches the Gospel, he promises, in the name of Jesus Christ, to all that believe and obey, that the Holy Ghost will be given them. By virtue of this promise, all such can know for themselves, whether it is of God, or whether it is of man ... Our boys [and now our girls, also—GB] are often called from the plow and the workshop, to go abroad to the nations to disseminate the principles of the everlasting Gospel. By what power are our young men sustained, who go forth, inexperienced, without much education, presenting in meekness, to a learned and intelligent world, the Gospel of Christ? God, through his angels, attends them; he strengthens their feeble knees, and gives them utterance ... The Lord chose poor, illiterate fishermen, and sent them forth to combat, and even to confound the wisdom of the wise. His Gospel is represented today, by the weak things of the earth ... And what is the result of our preaching? Let facts speak for themselves ... Why have we been so successful, thus far, in accomplishing so great a work? Simply, because God has confirmed our preaching, and the testimonies we have borne, by conferring the Holy Ghost, with signs following the believers.”⁶ ¶ *Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The chains of thy neck are broken, O captive congregation of Zion.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Loose the chain from

³ Woodruff, Elder Wilford. “Faith, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 19, No. 50, 30 June 1878, p. 359.

⁴ Woodruff, Elder Wilford. “Duties and Responsibilities, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 21, No. 22, Jul. 3, 1880, p. 196.

⁵ McConkie, Bruce R. *The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man – Restoring the Kingdom to Israel*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company.

⁶ Woodruff, Elder Wilford. “Simplicity of the Gospel, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 18, No. 27, Aug. 13, 1876, p. 219.

thy neck, O captive daughter of Sion!” Instead of *loose thyself from the bands*, the Peshitta (S) has *loose the bands*. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, for the first clause, “Loose the bonds from off thy neck.” ¶ This has reference to the idea of rising from the dust, or from captivity and symbolically sitting in a chair, leaving the shackles of slavery behind. Skinner has: “The description is influenced by the contrast (evidently intentional) to the taunt-song on the ‘daughter of Babylon’ (ISAIAH 47:1 ff.).” Part of the process of getting off the ground would include dusting off the dirt of the apparel. Barnes explains: “She is now called on to cast off these chains from her neck, and to be again at liberty. In captivity, chains or bands were attached to various parts of the body. They were usually affixed to the wrists or ankles, but it would seem also that sometimes collars were affixed to the neck.” In ISAIAH 1:8 we said that *daughter of Zion*, בַּת־צִיּוֹן, stood for *Jerusalem*. But it well stands, also, for all of the remains of scattered Israel. ¶ “[Questions by Elias Higbee:] What are we to understand by Zion loosing herself from the bands of her neck; 2d verse? [Answer:] We are to understand that the scattered remnants are exhorted to return to the Lord from whence they have fallen; which if they do, the promise of the Lord is that he will speak to them, or give them revelation. See the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses. The bands of her neck are the curses of God upon her, or the remnants of Israel in their scattered condition among the Gentiles” (D&C 113:9–10). The curses are an allusion to those found in the *Rain in Due Season*. After the “blessing and the curse” (Deuteronomy 30:1b) it is Jehovah Himself who will gather Israel (Ezekiel 37:21) wherein the *bands of her neck* will be removed.

3 For thus saith the LORD, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money.

For thus saith the LORD, Ye have sold yourselves for nought. The LXX (G) reads, “For thus saith the Lord, You were sold for nought.” The Peshitta (S) has, for the second clause, “You were sold for nought.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, for the second clause, “You were sold gratis,” or *Gratis venundati estis* (D). The Spanish LDS RV2009, leaning on RV 1960, reads: “Ye were sold for nought” (de balde fuisteis vendidos) rather than “Ye have sold yourselves for nought” (KJV). ¶ Indeed, almost all of the translations and the exegetes render the clause as does the Spanish Reina Valera, rather than what we have in the AV. The idea, they argue, is that no money was paid for them when the children of Israel were taken away captive, and thus no money is needed to redeem them. While there is much to be said for this

argument, I prefer the rendering offered in the AV. Birks suggests: “*Not with silver*] The received version gives the main thought, and is simpler in style, but obscures an important allusion (see 1 Peter 1:18–19).” There we have: “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter 1:18–19). ¶ In ISAIAH 50:1 we saw: “Thus saith the LORD, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away.” From a historical perspective we know that the children of Israel sold themselves—nay, even more, in the Biblical language we see that they *prostituted* themselves. Except while a normal prostitute gets paid for her services, Jerusalem (standing for Israel as a nation) paid her lovers, instead: “They give gifts to all whores: but thou givest thy gifts to all thy lovers, and hirest them, that they may come unto thee on every side for thy whoredom. And the contrary is in thee from other women in thy whoredoms, whereas none followeth thee to commit whoredoms: and in that thou givest a reward, and no reward is given unto thee, therefore thou art contrary” (Ezekiel 16:33–34). Both Samaria and Judah (standing for the north and the south) were also compared to prostitutes, the older and younger sister, *Ahalah* and *Aholibah* (Ezekiel 23:4b , אֶהְיֶה הַגְּדוֹלָה וְאֶהְיֶה הַקְּטָנָה). ¶ And ye shall be redeemed without money. The LXX (G) reads, “And you shall be ransomed, not with money.” Henderson translates the verse similarly to the AV: “For thus saith Jehovah: *As ye sold yourselves for nought*. So ye shall be redeemed without money” (emphasis added). Alexander writes: “The reflexive meaning given to נִמְכַּרְתֶּם in the English version (*ye have sold yourselves*), is not sustained by usage, nor required by the context, either here or in Leviticus 25:39, 47” yet Alexander admits that Gesenius finds the reflexive appropriate in the latter (נִמְכַּר). There we read in the AV “and be sold unto thee” and “sell himself unto the stranger,” respectively. The following are some of the Bible translations that suggest that the Israelite sells himself rather than is sold by another in the context of Leviticus 25:47: ASV, BBE, Bishops, CEV, CJB, Darby, DRB, ERV, ESV, Geneva, GNB, GW, HCSB, ISV, JPS, JUB, KJV, LBLA, LITV, NASB, NBLH, Leeser, Rotherham, RV, Reina Valera, SRV, SSE, and Webster. ¶ In ISAIAH 50:1, interestingly, we have the Lord saying that He had sold Israel, and then, in the very same verse, explains that indeed Israel had sold herself. After saying: “... or which of my creditors is it

to whom I have sold you (מִכַּרְתִּי)?” the Lord seems to say, *wait a second!* and corrects the statement, “Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves (מִכַּרְתֶּם).” The prophet Joseph Smith made substantial changes to ISAIAH 50:1, but left the idea that Israel had sold herself intact. Being *sold for naught* means that Israel gained nothing by abandoning the Lord. She was *redeemed without money*, but with the blood of our Savior who in anguish bled from every pore.

4 For thus saith the Lord GOD, My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.

For thus saith the Lord GOD, My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there. The LXX (6) reads, “Thus saith the Lord, My people went down to Egypt at first to sojourn there.” The Douay-Rheims (1) has, “For thus saith the Lord God: My people went down into Egypt at the beginning to sojourn there.” ¶ Here we have mention of two sources of oppression, the first from Egypt; the second from Assyria (with an ellipsis we might also include Babylon). Birks says: “The word, Egypt, comes first in the original, and shows that the main thought is the enumeration of the past trials of Israel, as a ground for their deliverance at last.” ¶ Faussett explains: “*Went down*—Judea was an elevated country compared with Egypt.” In the writings of the Jews, also, anytime people went to Jerusalem they *went up*, regardless of where they went there from. And the opposite, they *went down*, when they left Jerusalem. Delitzsch writes: “Israel went down to Egypt, the country of the Nile valley, with the innocent intention of sojourning, i.e., living as a guest there in a foreign land; and yet (as we may supply from the next clause, according to the law of a self-completing parallelism) there it fell into the bondage of the Pharaohs, who, whilst they did not fear Jehovah, but rather despised Him, were merely the blind instruments of His will.” ¶ *And the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.* The LXX (6) reads, “And to the Assyrians they were carried by force.” The Peshitta (5) has “And the Assyrian *carried them away with violence* (BPE) / *took them captive by force* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (1) has, “And the Assyrian hath oppressed them without any cause at all.” Wordsworth, leaning on Vitranga and Delitzsch, agrees that in the type of Asshur, Babylon is also included: “The comprehensive word Asshur is used to signify the oppression of Israel by Assyria, as well as that of Judah by Babylon.” Delitzsch has: “Asshur then oppressed it ... as אַשּׁוּר is the synonym of בָּבֶל in ISAIAH

40:17; 41:2) ‘for nothing,’ i.e., without having acquired any right to it, but rather serving in its unrighteousness simply as the blind instrument of the righteousness of Jehovah, who through the instrumentality of Asshur put an end first of all to the kingdom of Israel, and then to the kingdom of Judah.”

5 Now therefore, what have I here, saith the LORD, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the LORD; and my name continually every day [is] blasphemed.

Now therefore, what have I here, saith the LORD, that my people is taken away for nought? The Targum (7) has, “Therefore now I am ready to redeem *them*, saith the Lord; for my people was sold for naught.” The LXX (6) reads, “Now therefore why are you here? Thus saith the Lord, Because my people were taken away for nought.” The Douay-Rheims (1) has, “And now what have I here, saith the Lord: for my people is taken away gratis.” ¶ Keith observes: “... the Lord is represented as struck with astonishment or indignation at the condition to which he sees his people Israel reduced—removed unjustly from their own land—treated cruelly by their oppressors—and in the dishonour of Israel the God of Israel dishonoured. This view of their condition appears, from what follows, to be a general one, embracing their state up to the period of their deliverance. The expression ‘what have I here,’ is literally, ‘what to me here’ ... For the state of things described here, the people of God oppressed, and the name of God despised, a remedy must be found, and one is promised. They would be made to know the Lord by the deliverance which they would experience when restored finally to their own land. In the doings of that day they will see what will vindicate the honour of the Almighty, and put an end to all blasphemy of his name.” Jenour has: “For, as in former times when they had gone down *into Egypt to sojourn*, the Egyptians had oppressed them and Jehovah delivered them, not they themselves; so would it be now; he would not quietly look on, and suffer them to be oppressed without measure, and finally destroyed; but would interpose on their behalf. This is what seems to be implied in the expression, *Now, what do I here?* by which Jehovah intimates that he would not remain an idle spectator of his people’s sufferings.” There is something akin to the *Hosea Principle* here. An allusion is made to Israel selling herself for nothing—or without cause—but in the very next verse, the Lord, full of tenderness, makes it clear He will not tolerate the abuse to which Israel has been submitted to. ¶ *They that rule over them make*

them to howl, saith the LORD. The Targum (ⲉ) has, for the first clause, “The nations that ruled over them boasted.” The LXX (ⲗ) reads, “(express your amaze; and raise the mournful cry!) Thus saith the Lord.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲅ) has, “They that rule over them treat them unjustly, saith the Lord.” ¶ *They that rule over them*. Rabbi Rosenberg points to the Targum (ⲉ), that suggests that this is of the nations where Israel was exiled to. ¶ Lowth suggests *boast* for *howl*: “*make their boast of it*] For יהלילו, ‘make them to howl,’ five MSS (two ancient) have יהללו, ‘make their boast;’ which is confirmed by the Chaldee paraphrast, who renders it מִשְׁתַּנְחִין. Leeser likewise offers: “... its rulers vaunt aloud.” ¶ *And my name continually every day [is] blasphemed*. The Targum (ⲉ) has, “And they continually, all the day, provoke *them* to anger, because of the worship of my name.” The LXX (ⲗ) reads, “On your account my name is continually reviled among the nations.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲅ) has, “And my name is continually blasphemed all the day long.” ¶ Skinner suggests that rather than *blasphemed*, נִאָץ literally means *despised*. Gesenius has “to deride, to despise, to reject with contempt and derision.” TDOT has *abuse, slander, contemptible, despise, abhor*. HALOT gives *disdain, dishonour, spurn, discard*. ¶ Wordsworth explains: “My Name is blasphemed by the heathen, who imagine that in conquering My People they have conquered Me.”

6 Therefore, my people shall know my name; **yea, therefore [they shall know]** in that day **they shall know** that I [am] he that doth speak; behold, [it is] I.

We have some connected ideas: *for no reason* (connects verses 4–5); and *my name* (connects verses 5–6). The Targum (ⲉ) has, “Therefore my name shall be magnified among the nations: therefore at that time ye shall know, that I *am* He that hath spoken: and my Word shall abide (the Royal Polyglot inserts לְעֹלָמָא, ‘for ever’). The LXX (ⲗ) reads, “Therefore in that day my people shall know my name. Because I THE I AM, the same who am speaking, am at hand.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲅ) has, “Therefore my people shall know my name in that day: for I myself that spoke, behold I am here.” ¶ Horsley has: “*in that day*] The day, which is yet to come, when Jesus Christ will reveal himself to the Jewish nation, in sensible and notable proofs of his presence, his power, and majesty.” We see that in contrast to having His name blasphemed or despised; now His name will be known and revered. There is indeed much significance to the *name* of the **LORD**,

יהוה, associated with I AM that I AM,

אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה.⁷ John Wesley Etheridge, referring to the various Targumim (ⲉ), explains the translation in the Aramaic paraphrase: “Onkelos leaves the Hebrew untranslated; but the Palestinian Targum attempts a paraphrase: ‘He who spake, and the world was; who spake, and all things were. And He said, This shalt thou say to the sons of Israel, **I am He who Is, and who Will Be**,⁸ hath sent me unto you.’ The Jerusalem Targum has, ‘And the Word of the Lord said to Moshe, He who spake to the world, Be, and it was; and who will speak to it, Be, and it will be. And He said, Thus shalt thou speak to the sons of Israel, Eheyeh hath sent me unto you.’”⁹ CJB, based on the Masoretic text has: “God said to Moshe, ‘Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh [*I am/will be what I am/will be*],’ and added, ‘Here is what to say to the people of Isra’el: ‘Ehyeh [*I Am or I Will Be*] has sent me to you.’” Although also based on the Masoretic text, AMP incorporates the idea of the Targum (ⲉ): “And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM and WHAT I AM, and I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE; and He said, You shall say this to the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you!” Rabbi Isaac, according to Gill, has: “the holy blessed God said to Moses, Say unto them, I am he that was, and I am he that now is, and I am he that is to come, wherefore is written three times (Shemot Rabba, sect. 3. fol. 73. 2.).” The Targum Onkelos (ⲉ) for Deuteronomy 32:39, as translated by Etheridge, has: “**I am He who Am, and Was, and Will Be**, and there is no other God beside Me.”^{10 11} These are almost indistinguishable in essence to what we find in the Doctrine and Covenants, as we see below. During the 13 March 2016 all-Chile

⁷ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל-מֹשֶׁה אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה, And [he] Elohim said unto Moshe, I AM that I AM.

⁸ אֲנִי הוּא דְהוּיָא וְעֵתִיד לְמִיכּוּי (Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon. (2005). Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to the Pentateuch (Ex 3:14). Hebrew Union College.)

⁹ Etheridge, John Wesley (1865), *The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan ben Uzziel on the Pentateuch; with the fragments of the Jerusalem Targum: from the Chaldee*, 2:12.

¹⁰ Etheridge, John Wesley (1865), *The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan ben Uzziel on the Pentateuch; with the fragments of the Jerusalem Targum: from the Chaldee*, 2:669.

¹¹ “When the Memra of the Lord shall reveal itself to redeem his people, he will say to all the nations: “See, now, that **I am the one who is, [and—GB] was, and I am the one who shall be in the future**, and there is no other god besides me ...” (Cathcart, K., Maher, M., & McNamara, M. (Eds.). (1998). *The Aramaic Bible: Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Deuteronomy*. (E. G. Clarke & S. Magder, Trans.) (Vol. 5, Dt 32:39). Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press. And for those interested in the Aramaic, כִּד יִתְגַּלִּי מִימְרָא דִּינִי לְמַפְרֹק יֵת, עֵמִיָּה יִימַר לְכָל עַמְמִיָּא חֲמוֹן כְּדוֹן אַרְוִם אֲנִי הוּא דְהוּיָא וְעֵתִיד לְמִיכּוּי וְלִית אֱלֹקָא חוּרִין בְּרִי מִינִי (Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon. (2005). Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to the Pentateuch (Dt 32:39). Hebrew Union College).

conference (President Russel M. Nelson presided), I was electrified as one of the Sisters quoted: “Wherefore, be of good cheer, and do not fear, for I the Lord am with you, and will stand by you; and ye shall bear record of me, *even Jesus Christ, that I am the Son of the living God, that I was, that I am, and that I am to come*” (D&C 68:6, emphasis added). The whole idea of the *name of the Lord*, is to testify of His being and of His coming to this earth and be born of an immortal Father and a mortal mother. From the perspective of the passage in Exodus, it was looking forward. Now, in D&C 68:6, the Lord testifies of these same truths again, but in part looking backwards—and also forward. He was, He is, and He is to yet come again. The Lord who *was* has reference to His mortal ministry as well as to His pre-mortal existence. The Lord who *is* has reference to the resurrected Lord. The Lord who will be has reference to eternity, but also to His Second Coming. ¶ Skinner points us to Ezekiel 20: “And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for the which I lifted up mine hand to give it to your fathers. And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled; and ye shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed. And ye shall know that I am the LORD when I have wrought with you for my name’s sake, not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD” (Ezekiel 20:42–44). And furthermore, Skinner points us to Ezekiel 5:13b, regarding *he that doeth speak*: “... and they shall know that I the LORD have spoken it ...” In the Doctrine and Covenants we likewise have: “For, behold, *it is I that speak*; behold, I am the light which shineth in darkness, and by my power I give these words unto thee” (D&C 11:11, emphasis added). ¶ *In that day*. Young says: “The phrase *in that day* tells when the people will know, namely, in the day when God manifests His power.” ¶ Speaking of יהוה, as associated with *my name*, Lowth has: “*For I am He that promised*” For יהוה, the Bodley MS, and another, have יהוה; “for I am **JEHOVAH** that promised:” and another ancient MS adds יהוה after יהוה.”

vv. 7–12. The beautiful feet of Jesus Christ and of those who proclaim His gospel. ISAIAH 8–10 was explained by the Savior Himself in the Book of Mormon in the following context: During Christ’s visit to the American Continent He speaks (1) of His other sheep that were not from Jerusalem or the other areas He ministered in, (2) how the Gentiles will be receptive to the fullness of the Gospel while Israel will at first reject it, (3) the vital role the Gentile Nations will play in gathering Israel to the Gospel from Jerusalem and the four quarters of the

earth, (4) how the unbelieving Gentiles will further help scatter and harm Israel, (5) how Israel will be humbled by the Gentiles, (6) how many, among the Gentile Nations, will become prideful and reject the fullness of the Gospel, and (7) how the Lord will take the fullness of the Gospel from the prideful Gentiles—but not from the Gentiles who repent, “... then will I remember my covenant which I have made unto my people, O house of Israel, and I will bring my gospel unto them. And I will show unto thee, O house of Israel, that the Gentiles shall not have power over you; but I will remember my covenant unto you, O house of Israel, and ye shall come unto the knowledge of the fulness of my gospel. But if the Gentiles will repent and return unto me, saith the Father, behold they shall be numbered among my people, O house of Israel ... Verily, verily, I say unto you, thus hath the Father commanded me—that I should give unto this people this land for their inheritance. And then the words of the prophet Isaiah shall be fulfilled, which say: Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing, for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion. Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God” (3 Nephi 16:11–13, 16–20). Of verses 7–10, Westermann writes: “The words radiate exultation, an exultation which can only be very imperfectly conveyed in translation and commentary, for the force of the original is lost. They are to be thought of as sung.”

7 ¶ **And then shall they say**, How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings **unto them**, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings **unto them** of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

The Targum (ܬ) adds, “of the land of Israel” after *mountains*, and also, after *salvation*, has “Saying to the congregation of Zion, The kingdom of thy God is revealed.” The LXX (Ϟ) reads, “Like beauty on the mountains—like the feet of one proclaiming peace, like one proclaiming glad tidings. Because I will cause thy salvation to be proclaimed, Saying, Sion, thy God will reign.” The Douay-Rheims (Ϸ) has, “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, and that preacheth peace: of him that sheweth forth good, that preacheth salvation, that saith to Sion: Thy God shall reign!” Westermann observes: “North comments laconically, ‘but feet are hardly

beautiful.’ But this fails to see that ‘the beautiful’ means something different in Hebrew thought than it does for us. The beautiful is something that comes about ... The messenger’s feet are not objectively beautiful. Their beauty consists in their intimation of the beauty of the coming of the tidings; and this is beautiful because it awakens jubilation.” ¶ Ibn Ezra says: “*Thy God reigneth*] This is the explanation of **הִנְנִי** ‘behold, it is I.’” Please note the final word in ISAIAH 52:6 is **הִנְנִי**, that is, *behold, [it is] I*. Or, it is I, **JEHOVAH**. So it is the feet of the LORD God who are the beautiful feet. There is much confusion among the Gentile authors as to whose beautiful feet these are. Jenour gladly understands it of Messiah: “These are the words of the ministers of religion; who, in the character of watchmen placed upon the walls of Jerusalem, behold a messenger of good tidings swiftly approaching over the tops of the distant hills, and immediately communicate the glad intelligence to those within the city, that is, the church, by breaking forth into a song of gratulation¹² and praise. But who is this messenger? He is no other than the Messiah himself ...” Gill, a Gentile, beautifully writes: “... of John the Baptist, the forerunner of our Lord; best of Christ himself, the messenger of the covenant, who was anointed to preach glad tidings to the meek, and by whom grace, peace, life, and salvation came; and also of the apostles of Christ, for to Gospel times are these words applied ... It may be applied to all other ministers of the Gospel in later ages, who are bringers of the same good tidings to the children of men, to whom their very feet are beautiful, and even at a distance, upon the high mountains ... [and then speaking of Moroni—GB] The words may with the greatest propriety, and in agreement with the context, be understood of that angel, or set of Gospel ministers in the latter day, represented as flying in the midst of the heavens, having the everlasting Gospel to preach to all nations, which will precede the fall of Babylon (Revelation 14:6,8).” ¶ The feet can walk and the feet can run. Luther says: “To run means to serve in the office of preacher, as Paul says (Philippians 2:16): ‘I did not run in vain.’ Thus the foot is the instrument of this running. For when the Gospel runs, it proclaims all good things ...” ¶ Cowles well says: “Bearing tidings so joyful, who would not say of these gospel heralds [in the sense of those who bring good news, as in 2 Samuel 18:19–32] that their very feet were beautiful?” Keith has: “It is also applied, by adaptation, by Paul, to ministers of the gospel (Romans 10:15). A very similar passage, and referring also to the reign of Christ over Israel at last, is that in ISAIAH 40:9 (margin||). The appearance of the messenger on the mountains around Jerusalem is followed by the rejoicing of the watchmen

on the walls of the city at the good tidings.” ¶ I feel I have much to say about the *How beautiful¹³ upon the mountains* [**מִהַר-נָאוֹו עַל-הָהָרִים**] principle. Whose feet [**רַגְלָי**] are the beautiful feet? They are the feet of the Savior, of Messiah, our Lord and our Redeemer. They announce *peace* [**שָׁלוֹם**], *good* [**טוֹב**] and *salvation*¹⁴ [**יְשׁוּעָה**]. The message, further, may be translated not only as *thy God reigneth*, but also, *Dein Gott ist König!* (GLB), that is, *Thy God is King!* (see GNB, GW, LEB, Rotherham). Baltzer has: “**מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹהֶיךָ**.”¹⁵ This can be rendered: ‘your God has proved himself king’ or ‘as king reigns your God.’ There is no doubt that in the context this sentence is connected with the formula **יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ**.¹⁶ Indeed, Jehovah never ceased to be Israel’s King, but we forsook Him for an earthly king. The good news is that He again is seen to be our King, our Redeemer, our All. In Ezekiel 37:22b we read this promise in connection to the preaching of the Book of Mormon: “...and one king shall be king to them all.” That the Savior is willing to share this glory with all those who help—be they angels or men—bring glad tidings of the restored gospel unto others, it is true, but first and foremost, these words are about the beautiful feet of Jesus Christ, the Holy One of Israel. And what are the mountains? It is the temple of our God, and also symbolical of the expiatory sacrifice of our Lord. And once again, the Lord is willing to share this with all who will help by doing family history and temple work, “And saviours shall come up on mount Zion ...” (Obadiah 1:21). When we also consider ISAIAH 2:2–3, it becomes even clearer that the mountains represent the temple. What we have then, is a massive effort of missionary and ordinance work directed to both the living and the dead. Why are the feet mentioned? Consider John 13:1–10a. How beautiful are the feet which have been cleansed by the atoning sacrifice of the Savior and now go forth to preach the Gospel! Paul speaks of the preaching of the Gospel: “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” (Romans 10:13–15). The importance of missionary work is plainly seen in the scriptures and particularly upon

¹³ *Nauvoo*, **נָאוֹו**.

¹⁴ *Salvation*, **יְשׁוּעָה**, also *Yeshua*, that is, *Jesus* the Christ.

¹⁵ **מֶלֶךְ**, *reigneth*, but with different Masoretic points, **מֶלֶךְ**, *King*.

¹⁶ *Jehovah is King*.

¹² Happiness, satisfaction, joy (see *Wiktionary*).

reading the whole of Mosiah 15.¹⁷ ¶ Elder William W. Phelps spoke of this verse in relation to the gospel being

¹⁷ What is the setting of Mosiah 15, where these verses are so clearly explained? In verses 1–7 we see that Yahweh would himself come upon the earth and suffer for our sins, and this makes the subject of the chapter clear, it is about the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ: “AND now Abinadi said unto them: I would that ye should understand that God himself shall come down among the children of men, and shall redeem his people. And because he dwelleth in flesh he shall be called the Son of God, and having subjected the flesh to the will of the Father, being the Father and the Son—The Father, because he was conceived by the power of God; and the Son, because of the flesh; thus becoming the Father and Son—And they are one God, yea, the very Eternal Father of heaven and of earth. And thus the flesh becoming subject to the Spirit, or the Son to the Father, being one God, suffereth temptation, and yieldeth not to the temptation, but suffereth himself to be mocked, and scourged, and cast out, and disowned by his people. And after all this, after working many mighty miracles among the children of men, he shall be led, yea, even as Isaiah said, as a sheep before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. Yea, even so he shall be led, crucified, and slain, the flesh becoming subject even unto death, the will of the Son being swallowed up in the will of the Father” (Mosiah 15:1–7). Next we read about the glorious resurrection of Messiah, for the grave would not be able to hold Him in captivity. Abinadi continues: “And thus God breaketh the bands of death, having gained the victory over death; giving the Son power to make intercession for the children of men—Having ascended into heaven, having the bowels of mercy; being filled with compassion towards the children of men; standing betwixt them and justice; having broken the bands of death, taken upon himself their iniquity and their transgressions, having redeemed them, and satisfied the demands of justice. And now I say unto you, who shall declare his generation? Behold, I say unto you, that when his soul has been made an offering for sin he shall see his seed. And now what say ye? And who shall be his seed?” (Mosiah 15:8–10).

And *who* ¹⁸ shall be His seed? This is indeed a wonderful question, a glorious question. Abinadi continues and gives us the answer: “Behold I say unto you, that whosoever has heard the words of the prophets, yea, all the holy prophets who have prophesied concerning the coming of the Lord—I say unto you, that all those who have hearkened unto their words, and believed that the Lord would redeem his people, and have looked forward to that day for a remission of their sins, I say unto you, that these are his seed, or they are the heirs of the kingdom of God. For these are they whose sins he has borne; these are they for whom he has died, to redeem them from their transgressions. And now, are they not his seed? Yea, and are not the prophets, every one that has opened his mouth to prophesy, that has not fallen into transgression, I mean all the holy prophets ever since the world began? I say unto you that they are his seed” (Mosiah 15:11–13). The answer, then, is that all those who throughout the ages are willing to hear and walk in the steps of the Savior are redeemed of Him. And are we to be content that perhaps we might be counted among such? God forbid. We must be willing to share this knowledge with everyone we meet and work in the temple for our departed ancestors. We must testify of the divinity of Christ and of the restored Gospel. We must help to bring the good tidings. Abinadi continues and explains that the feet of all those who help in this process will become beautiful: “And these are they who have published peace, who have brought good tidings of good, who have published salvation; and said unto Zion: Thy God reigneth! And O how beautiful upon the mountains were their feet! And again, how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those that are still publishing peace! And again, how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those who shall hereafter publish peace, yea, from this time henceforth and forever!” (Mosiah 15:14–17). Yes, the Beautiful Feet are those of Yahweh, Redeemer of Israel, Holy One of Israel, He who trampled the grapes alone: “And behold, I say unto you, this is not all.

taken to the Lamanites and lifting their condition: “No man that possesses a spark of love for his fellow-beings—a mite of righteousness, or a grain of faith as large as a mustard seed, but will rejoice to see Israel’s latter day at hand; yea, who can refrain from joy, when, phoenix-like, he beholds the [Lamanites] begin to raise out of their fourteen hundred years of darkness and error, to prepare for glory—for robes of righteousness—for the coming of the Savior, when they can shine on this choice land, in the kingdom of God, like the stars of heaven, and bud and blossom as the rose; yea, become the joy of the whole earth? ... No wonder the pure in heart will return to Zion, singing songs of everlasting joy—no wonder there is joy in

For O how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that is the founder of peace, yea, even the Lord, who has redeemed his people; yea, him who has granted salvation unto his people; For were it not for the redemption which he hath made for his people, which was prepared from the foundation of the world, I say unto you, were it not for this, all mankind must have perished. But behold, the bands of death shall be broken, and the Son reigneth, and hath power over the dead; therefore, he bringeth to pass the resurrection of the dead” (Mosiah 15:18–20). The happiness that awaits those who have walked in the way of truth, is beyond description, for these shall come forth in the first resurrection: “And there cometh a resurrection, even a first resurrection; yea, even a resurrection of those that have been, and who are, and who shall be, even until the resurrection of Christ—for so shall he be called. And now, the resurrection of all the prophets, and all those that have believed in their words, or all those that have kept the commandments of God, shall come forth in the first resurrection; therefore, they are the first resurrection. They are raised to dwell with God who has redeemed them; thus they have eternal life through Christ, who has broken the bands of death. And these are those who have part in the first resurrection; and these are they that have died before Christ came, in their ignorance, not having salvation declared unto them. And thus the Lord bringeth about the restoration of these; and they have a part in the first resurrection, or have eternal life, being redeemed by the Lord. And little children also have eternal life” (Mosiah 15:21–25). And in contrast, what of those who will not listen? Should we not tremble if we do not share with them that which we know to be true? “But behold, and fear, and tremble before God, for ye ought to tremble; for the Lord redeemeth none such that rebel against him and die in their sins; yea, even all those that have perished in their sins ever since the world began, that have wilfully rebelled against God, that have known the commandments of God, and would not keep them; these are they that have no part in the first resurrection. Therefore ought ye not to tremble? For salvation cometh to none such; for the Lord hath redeemed none such; yea, neither can the Lord redeem such; for he cannot deny himself; for he cannot deny justice when it has its claim” (Mosiah 15:26–27). The chapter ends up with the wonderful news that the Gospel would be preached to all people: “And now I say unto you that the time shall come that the salvation of the Lord shall be declared to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. Yea, Lord, thy watchmen shall lift up their voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion. Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God” (Mosiah 15:28–31). So, then, what is the *how beautiful upon the mountains principle*? It is that the Saviour of mankind is willing to share with us His glory, and wishes for us to be one with Him through the at-one-ment or atonement, as he is one with the Father.

heaven over repenting sinners, and no wonder the prophet exclaimed: —‘How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!’—ISAIAH 52:7.”¹⁸ Elder Carlos E. Asay also spoke much on the topic. I share this powerful testimony: “Everyone who proclaims the gospel of Christ and who seeks to become a savior of men shall be a messenger with beautiful feet, whether standing upon the mountains or upon the plains. ‘What position,’ asks Wilford Woodruff, ‘can any man occupy on the face of the earth, that is more noble, God-like, high and glorious than to be a messenger of salvation unto the human family?’ (In *Journal of Discourses* 13:319) ... I close with my personal testimony of the divinity of missionary service, its sanctifying nature, and this stirring declaration: ‘Now, what do we hear in the gospel which we have received? A voice of gladness! A voice of mercy from heaven; and a voice of truth out of the earth; glad tidings for the dead; a voice of gladness for the living and the dead; glad tidings of great joy. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those that bring glad tidings of good things, and that say unto Zion: Behold, thy God reigneth! As the dews of Carmel, so shall the knowledge of God descend upon them!’ (D&C 128:19).”¹⁹

8 Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The voice of thy rulers! They are lifting up their voice, together they offer praise; because with their eyes they see the mighty works which the Lord shall do, when He shall return His Shekinah to Zion.” The LXX (Ⲙ) reads, “Because the voice of thy watchmen is lifted up; with the voice therefore let all at the same time express joy. Because eyes will look to eyes when the Lord compassionateth Zion.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, “The voice of thy watchmen: they have lifted up their voice, they shall praise together: for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall convert Zion.” ¶ Keith has: “There are repeated other allusions to those who are called the watchmen of Israel. One of the clearest of them is the following: ‘I

have set watchmen upon thy walls, Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord keep not silence’ [ISAIAH 62:6]. Here the watchmen are explained to be those who make mention of the Lord, those who seek Israel’s recovery—all who come under the character of praying for the peace of Jerusalem. These, so soon as her restoration is effected, are described as exchanging their supplications for thanksgivings.” Skinner, although he does not subscribe to the idea himself, says that “the prophets are often called ‘watchmen’ (ISAIAH 56:10; Habakkuk 2:1; Jeremiah 6:17; Ezekiel 33:2 ff.).” Gill explains: “... the evangelists and apostles of Christ; best of all Gospel ministers in the latter day, so called in allusion to watch men on the walls of cities looking out, and giving notice of approaching danger.” Barnes notes: “The Hebrew here is more abrupt and emphatic than our common translation would make it. It is literally, ‘The voice of thy watchmen! They lift up the voice together; they sing’—as if the prophet suddenly heard a shout.”

¶ **יְהוָה צִיּוֹן**, *when the Lord shall bring again Zion*, or shall *return* her to Himself, where *bring again* is given as **בְּשׁוּב**. Alexander writes: “... the reconciliation between God and his people is represented as a *return* after a long absence.” Cowles, continuing with the figure of the runner mentioned in the previous verse, has: “Zion’s watchmen are the first to see on the distant mountains the feet of those gospel heralds. This conception is thoroughly oriental (see the case of those heralds who brought tidings to David: ‘The watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall and looked, etc.’²⁰) ... The far-seeing vision of the prophet gave him first the coming heralds seen crossing the distant mountain tops, rushing on with their burden of glad tidings. Next, lo! a shout of the watchmen! All as one they lift up their voice in joyous outcries; at one and the same moment, they all catch the sight of the coming heralds. They seem intuitively to seize the joyous import of their tidings and pour forth their soul and voice in triumphant song! Is not the scene inspiring?” Yes, Cowles, I can see what you are painting. The news of the birth of the Christ-child; of His glorious resurrection; of a young man who has gone to the Sacred Grove and seen two glorious personages; an angel flying with the everlasting Gospel; the publication of the Book of Mormon, carried to every corner of the earth by missionaries; and the final and triumphant Second Coming of our Redeemer! These things fill my soul with joy untold. ¶ The expression,

¹⁸ Cowdery, Oliver, et al., eds. *Messenger and Advocate: The Latter Day Saints’ Messenger and Advocate*. 3 vols. Kirtland, Ohio: F. G. Williams & Co., et al., October 1834 to August 1837. Electronic text prepared by the Department of Church History and Doctrine, Brigham Young University, 1991.

¹⁹ Asay, Carlos E. *The Seven M’s of Missionary Service*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1996.

²⁰ 2Samuel 18:24. Clarke explains that “There appear to have been two sorts of *messengers* among the Jews: one sort always employed to bring evil tidings; the other to bring good ... [so that] at a distance they could tell, from seeing the messenger, what sort of tidings he was bringing (2 Samuel 18:19–27).”

see *eye to eye* (literally, *eye in eye*), עֵין בְּעֵין, seems to refer to a *unity of understanding* and clarity about Gospel truths. For instance, President Brigham Young powerfully taught about the required unity in Church councils: “Every man in the Kingdom of God would give the same counsel upon each subject, if he would wait until he had the mind of Christ upon it. Then all would have one word and mind, and all men would see eye to eye.”²¹ On another occasion President Young declared: “You ask almost any person in the world a question, and he thinks it a disgrace to be unable to answer it. He feels chagrined, his mind flags, when he finds that he is not quite as knowing as his neighbors think him to be; and, to avoid this, he will often venture an answer without knowing the facts in the case, or the effects of his answer. If you would always pause and say, I have no counsel for you, I have no answer for you on this subject, because I have no manifestation of the Spirit, and be willing to let everybody in the world know that you are ignorant when you are, you would become wise a great deal quicker than to give counsel on your own judgment, without the Spirit of revelation. If the Elders of Israel would observe this rule, never to give counsel unless they give it by the testimony of the truth, by the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, and, if they cannot give counsel in that manner, not to give any, there would be no conflicting counsel in the kingdom. All would be one; counsel would be one: we would soon come to understanding and be of one heart and mind, and our blessings would be increased upon us faster than in taking any other course.”²² ¶ Elder Charles W. Penrose spoke about divisions within Christendom and said: “There is to be a time, according to the Scriptures, when the people who believe in God, will all be brought into such a condition that they will ‘see eye to eye.’ There is to be a time when all people living upon the earth ‘shall know God, from the least even to the greatest,’ and there will be no need to contend about doctrine or principle, but all will understand alike, for ‘the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God, as the waters fill the great deep.’”²³

²¹ Widtsoe, John A. & Young, Brigham. *Discourses of Brigham Young*. Also, one of my favorite books on the topic of unity within Church councils is *Counseling with Counsels*, by M. Russell Ballard. Elder Ballard speaks about individuals coming to a council with different opinions, but having a complete unity of thought and heart before coming to a final decision. I believe that we need to speak with inspiration as taught by President Young, and also to speak softly, gently, tentatively and briefly, permitting others to express their points of view. And when others have spoken, to make every attempt to understand the honorable unmet needs they are expressing.

²² Young, President Brigham, “Joseph Smith’s Family, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, No. 21, 2 August 1857, p. 100.

²³ Penrose, Elder Charles W. Penrose, “Divisions of Modern Christendom, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 22, No. 20, 17 July 1881, p. 155.

¶ It is instructive to see how the term *watchmen* has been used by the Brethren. President George Q. Cannon and Elder Wilford Woodruff have used the word as a synonym for Priesthood leaders or servants of God who have been called to guide the people.²⁴ ²⁵ Elder Charles W. Penrose explains that Church members will be of one heart with their leaders for: “God will speak by his Spirit direct to their hearts; and when he reveals anything through his appointed servants, every word will find an echo in the hearts of those who have received this Spirit, and the people will see eye to eye, for they will become united as one, as a band of brethren and sisters, to roll forth the purposes of God, to prepare the way for the feet of the Lord Jesus.”²⁶ ¶ The Jewish view is particularly interesting to the LDS. Redak (in Rosenberg) explains that revelation—which ceased with “Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi”—would once again be established with strength before the advent of the Messiah. Indeed this was true before the coming of Christ in the meridian of times, and now again as the Church has been restored before the Second Coming. There is a direct relationship between the restoration of prophecy and revelation on the one hand and *seeing eye to eye* on the other. Of the Gentile authors, Keith notes: “The expression ‘they shall see eye to eye,’ is equivalent to a more common Scriptural phrase, ‘they shall see face to face,’ and denotes, to see distinctly. Under the government of the Messiah, when he shall restore Zion—that knowledge being recovered *which man has lost*, and which *revelation* has in part restored—the righteous shall know, not as now *in part*, which even the learned and gifted Paul acknowledged was his case, but even as they are known; then they shall see *no longer through a glass*” (emphasis added). ¶ *Seeing eye to eye* can also be a Hebrew expression for seeing something (or someone) *closely and clearly*. Kay has: “*Eye to eye* no longer seen in prophetic vision, but personally present.” Gill says: “and as their light and discerning will be most clear, like the light of seven days, so it will be alike in them; their sentiments and doctrines will exactly agree; there will be no difference nor dissension among them.” It seems that when people see closely and clearly the truth of the Gospel, as mentioned by Kay and Gill, then in essence it is the same as the expression of *seeing eye to eye* in terms of unity of thought. Exegetes often use Numbers 14:14b as proof, where עֵין בְּעֵין is translated by most versions as: “face to face,” although the *literal translation* would

²⁴ Cannon, President George Q. “Traveling through the Settlements, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 24, No. 44, 2 September 1883, pp. 368–369.

²⁵ Woodruff, Elder Wilford. “Responsibilities of the Priesthood, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 21, No. 31, 4 July 1880, p. 283.

²⁶ Penrose, Elder Charles W. “Definite Ideas Concerning God, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 20, No. 27, 25 May 1879, p. 219.

once again be *eye to eye* (LEB, LITV, MKJV, NASB, Rotherham, RV1865, RVG, SRV, SSE, TLV, YLT). The context of the Scripture in Numbers is that the Lord was present in the midst of the people where He could be beheld by all. We have other Scriptures where we have a literal *face to face* as in Genesis 32:30 (*also see* Exodus 33:11, Deuteronomy 5:4, Judges 6:22, Ezekiel 20:35), פָּנִים אֶל-פָּנִים. ¶ In summary, we may well say, then, that this *seeing eye to eye* is part of the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ—or Zion. As I speak to my friends and acquaintances from other faiths I often remind them that in their religious beliefs there is little harmony. The more honest of them immediately agree with me. ¶ *When the Lord shall bring again Zion*. This means when the Lord shall restore Zion, bring it back to earth, as part of the restoration of all things in the last days. Gill, born before the re-establishment of the Lord's Church, clearly looked to the restoration of the Gospel when he said: "... return his church and people to their former state, from whence they were declined; restore them as at the beginning; revive his work among them; cause his Gospel and ordinances to be professed and observed in their purity; call in his ancient people the Jews, and bring in the fulness of the Gentiles; pour out his spirit in a plentiful manner on them, and grant his gracious presence to them ..."

9 Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.

Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: The LXX (6) reads, "Let the ruins of Jerusalem break out together with bursts of joy." The Douay-Rheims (1) has, "Rejoice, and give praise together, O ye deserts of Jerusalem." ISAIAH 52:9–10 seem to be a psalm of thanksgiving. There are some applications to the meridian of times as well as the last days, when Jerusalem is surrounded on every side and the Lord comes in to save the day. Speaking of the mortal Messiah, Whitehouse has: "*Break forth, utter a ringing cry together—ruins of Jerusalem*]. Even the very ruins are to join the exultant acclaim. Perhaps the reply of Jesus, on the occasion of His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, in response to the protests of the Pharisees: 'If these shall be silent, the stones will cry out' (Luke 19:40) was based on a reminiscence of this passage where the triumphal entry of Yahweh into His own ruined and desolated city is the theme." Cowles has: "Let the Simeons and the Annas who, to their hoary age have wept and fasted and prayed for this salvation, now lift up their heads with joy and their tremulous voices in exultant song!" ¶ Elder George Q. Morris suggested that

the fulfillment of ISAIAH 52:9–10 would take place at "the time when the Lord Jesus Christ is to stand on the Mount of Olives."²⁷ ¶ *For the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem*. The LXX (6) reads, "Because the Lord hath compassionated her and delivered Jerusalem." ¶ Rawlinson explains: "*Hath comforted... hath redeemed*]. Perfects of prophetic certitude" (see ISAIAH 42:16). Elder Orson Pratt gloriously said: "So we see there is a day of power coming, and a day of wonders and a day of mighty deeds, when the power of the Lord, in great judgment, will be upon the nations of the wicked; and also when his glory shall be upon his covenant people who shall be restored to their own lands. The message with which we are now entrusted is a part of the great and last warning message to the nations of the earth, first to the Gentiles, and last to the house of Israel. And when we get through warning the Gentiles, the proclamation which the Lord has given us, shall be delivered to Israel in the islands of the sea and among the various nations; and they shall gather home to the land of their inheritance. Then Jerusalem shall be redeemed and a temple established upon its former foundation in the holy land."²⁸

10 The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations. The LXX (6) reads, "Let the Lord therefore make bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations!" The Douay-Rheims (1) has, "The Lord hath prepared his holy arm in the sight of all the Gentiles." ¶ Cowles writes: "To make bare the arm is to gird the loins, leaving the arm uncovered and unencumbered for the most vigorous activities." Skinner writes: "...throwing back the sleeveless upper garment from the right shoulder, in readiness for action." Cheyne likewise: "viz., for action (comp. Ezekiel 4:7, Psalm 74:11); alluding to the sleeveless Eastern dress." Whitehouse suggests: "The metaphor is martial. Yahweh shall perform His doughty deed of deliverance in the presence of all the nations of the world (cf. Ezekiel 38:23; 39:21)." Barnes has: "The metaphor is derived from the manner in which the Orientals dressed. The following extract from Jowett's *Christian Researches* will explain the language: 'The loose sleeve of the Arab shirt, as well as that of the outer garment,

²⁷ Morris, Elder George Q. "The Return of the Jews." *Conference Report*, April 1960, pp. 100–102.

²⁸ Pratt, Elder Orson. "Discourse by Elder O. Pratt." *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 20, No. 18, Mar. 9, 1879, p. 148.

leaves the arm so completely free, that in an instant the left hand passing up the right arm makes it bare; and this is done when a person, a soldier, for example, about to strike with the sword, intends to give the arm full play.” Keith further explains: “The phrase, to make bare the arm, is explained in the same way as the similar one, to gird up the loins; it refers to the loose sleeve of the East, which required to be tucked up before engaging in work.” ¶ Rawlinson has: “*The nations... the ends of the earth*] It may well add to the general joy that the work wrought for Israel is not ‘a thing done in a corner,’ but one on which the eyes of the ‘nations’ have been turned and to which the attention of ‘the ends of the earth’ has been called.” Barnes suggests: “The meaning here is, that the deliverance of his people referred to would be so remarkable as to be conspicuous to all the world. The most distant nations would see it, and would be constrained to recognize his hand.” This clause is intimately connected with the next and refers to the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ upon the earth after the long period of apostasy. It reminds us of ISAIAH 2:2. ¶ *And all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.* The LXX (6) reads, “And let all the ends of the earth see the salvation come from our God.” Cowles writes about the importance of “earnest work—its great command being, ‘Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.’ This done, all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God.” In Luke 3, these thoughts are put in the context of the upheavals that will take place in association to the last days: “Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God” (Luke 3:5–6). The Gospel preached to every corner of the earth. So also “Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it” (Acts 28:28). ¶ In the latter days the same expression is used in conjunction to the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: “And also it is an imperative duty that we owe to all the rising generation, and to all the pure in heart—For there are many yet on the earth among all sects, parties, and denominations, who are blinded by the subtle craftiness of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, and who are only kept from the truth because they know not where to find it—Therefore, that we should waste and wear out our lives in bringing to light all the hidden things of darkness, wherein we know them; and they are truly manifest from heaven— These should then be attended to with great earnestness ... Therefore, dearly beloved brethren, let us cheerfully do all things that lie in our power; and then may we stand still, with the utmost assurance, to see the salvation of God, and for his arm to be revealed” (D&C 123:11–14, 17). ¶ The Lord’s arm is revealed in at least two ways: through the

power of the Holy Ghost revealing the truth to this earth’s inhabitants when they come in contact with the Book of Mormon and the testimony of the missionaries; and the arm of the Lord will also be revealed in the Second Coming, where all will see His power and might.

11 Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean [thing]; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD.

Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean [thing]. The Targum (7) has, “Separate yourselves, separate yourselves, go ye out from thence, do not come near the unclean.” The LXX (6) reads, “Depart, depart; come out thence, and touch no polluted thing.” ¶ Speaking of former times, Delitzsch explains: “... those who bear the vessels of Jehovah, i.e., the vessels of the temple, are not only not to defile themselves, but are to purify themselves. This is an indirect prophecy, and was fulfilled in the fact that Cyrus directed the golden and silver vessels, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought to Babylon, to be restored to the returning exiles as their rightful property (Ezra 1:7–11).” ¶ These commanding words were not only applicable to the former days but are just as much in force today. Regarding the double *depart ye*, סורו סורו, it is a forceful command to mystic Babylon behind and come unto Zion with full purpose of heart. So also Ibn Ezra: “I think that these words are addressed to those that are still in exile among the nations. The repetition of ‘Depart ye’ is to indicate that it is to be done immediately.” Govett points out the connection of this verse with the testimony of Paul: “... for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be *their God*, and they shall be *my people*. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Corinthians 6:16b–18, emphasis added). Wade writes: “The passage is imitated in Revelation 18:2, 4: “And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird ... And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” ¶ Birks thinks of this verse as associated with the events before the first coming of Christ: “The restoration of the temple-service is the main feature in the sacred narratives of the

Return from Captivity.” As LDS we love the word *restoration*, and also anything that pertains to the proper order of the *priesthood*. We know that in the last days there will yet again be a temple built in Jerusalem, preparatory to the Second Coming. Keith has: “That language employed in describing the separation of the people of God from the mystic Babylon previous to its destruction, connects it with the nations gathered against Jerusalem. Of that Babylon it is also said, that it shall ‘gather the kings of the earth and of the whole world to the battle of the great day of God Almighty’ (Revelation 16:14). The manner of the separation of Israel is also foretold. Unlike her removal from Egypt, when she fled from her pursuers, she will not go with haste.” Interestingly, Gill believed the *unclean thing* to be the false doctrine of the apostate Christian church in the latter-day, all of which had *retained many impurities to this day*. Also of interest, is that Gill refers to Revelation 14:4–5, regarding those who would not be defiled—it is interesting as the very next verse speaks of Angel Moroni appearing with the everlasting Gospel (Revelation 4:6). Our beloved Prophet Joseph said: “Judah must return, Jerusalem must be rebuilt, and the temple, and water come out from under the temple, and the waters of the Dead Sea be healed ... and all this must be done before the Son of Man will make His appearance.”²⁹ ¶ *Go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Come forth from the midst of her: those that carry the vessels of the house of the sanctuary of the Lord have been chosen.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Come out from the midst of her; be clean, ye who carry the vessels of the Lord.” Instead of *be ye clean*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *purge* (Lamsa) / *purify* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, for the last clause, “you that carry the vessels of the Lord.” ¶ In ISAIAH 33:15 we said: “The Talmud tradition (Seder Nezikin, Baba Bathra 57b, also see Makkoth 24a) has a beautiful and poetic injunction against looking at women to lust after them (see notes there). ¶ Gill explains that cleanliness can “... be understood of the ministers of the Gospel, and of the treasure of the Gospel which they have in their earthen vessels; or the name of the Lord, which they are chosen vessels to bear and carry in the world; who ought to be pure from *false doctrine*, superstitious worship, and an evil conversation ...” (emphasis added). And related to ISAIAH 18:7³⁰, “In Zohar³¹ [in Exod. fol. 87. 4], these

vessels are interpreted of the righteous, brought as a gift to the King Messiah.” ¶ President David O. McKay said, “It is a beautiful, impressive things to have our boys administer [the sacrament]. They are the servants; they are waiting upon us and waiting upon the Lord; and have come there because they are worthy to officiate if the bishop has spoken to them properly. ‘... be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord’ (ISAIAH 52:11).”³² President John Taylor admonished: “Therefore let us do right. Do right by everybody. Bear with the infirmities of men and the follies of men. Treat all men kindly, no matter who they may be—whether they are insiders or outsiders, or apostates, or anybody else—treat everybody kindly. But do not be partakers of the practices of the wicked. Do not mix up with the corrupt and evil. If they are hungry, feed them; if they are naked clothe them; if they are sick, administer to them; but do not associate with them in their abominations and their corruptions. Come out from the world and be ye separate, ye that bear the vessels of the Lord, and let ‘Holiness to the Lord’ be written in every heart; and let us all feel that we are for Zion and for God and His Kingdom, and for those principles that will elevate us in time and throughout the eternities that are to come.”³³ ¶ **נִשְׂאֵי כֵלֵי יְהוָה**, that *bear the vessels of the LORD*. In the 2 April 2016 Priesthood session of General Conference, President Russell M. Nelson taught about bearing the Priesthood—and his words also made me think of bearing the vessels of the LORD. Speaking of “worthily [bearing] the Priesthood after the holiest order of God. To bear means to support the weight of that which is held. It is a sacred trust to bear the Priesthood, which is the mighty power and authority of God.”³⁴

12 For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel [will be] your rereward. ✓

✓ or, gather you up

For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: The Targum (Ⲯ) adds, “from among the nations,” after *haste* and for the second clause, “nor be carried in flight to your land.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For you shall not come out in haste, nor by flight march along.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “For you shall not go out in a tumult, neither shall you make haste by flight.” ¶ Ibn

²⁹ Smith, Joseph. *History of the Church* 5:337.

³⁰ “In that time shall the present be brought unto the LORD of hosts of a people scattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, the mount Zion” (ISAIAH 18:7).

³¹ The *Zohar* [זוהר] is a pseudepigraphical mystical work and a commentary of the Torah. See *The Jewish Encyclopedia* 12:689.

³² President David O. McKay, April 1946 General Conference.

³³ Taylor, President John. “The Gathering, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 26, No. 8, 30 November 1884, p. 76.

³⁴ Nelson, President Russel M. “The Price of Priesthood Power.” April *General Conference*, Priesthood Session.

Ezra has: “*Not with haste*, as was the case at the departure from Egypt. For the Lord, that is, the Glory of the Lord, is going before you.” Once again, we recall Keith’s note that: “Unlike her removal from Egypt, when she fled from her pursuers, she will not go with haste.” Whitehouse suggests: “The word for *haste* [in or with *haste*, **בְּחֵפָז**] seems here to be expressly chosen in the original in reference to and contrast with Deuteronomy 16:3, which refers to the *haste* [in *haste*, **בְּחֵפָז**] in which the passover was eaten on the night of the exodus which the annual celebration of the festival ever recalls (cf. Exodus 12:39).” A number of the Jewish exegetes, such as Rabbi Lipmann of Muhlhausen, speak of the gathering of Israel in this verse (see Driver & Neubauer). ¶ *For the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel [will be] your reward*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “For your guide is the Lord, and He that shall gather your captivity is the God of Israel.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For the Lord will march before you in front; and the God of Israel will bring up your rear.” Instead of *rearguard*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) and the Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) have, *gather you together*. ¶ Keith has: “Your reward, from **רָכַב**, to gather, assemble. Hence to bring up the rear, that is, to collect the last stragglers of an army. Its use here implies very significantly how universal the gathering of the dispersed of Judah at last will be.” Faussett likewise has: “*reward*”—literally, ‘gather up,’ that is, to bring up the rear of your host.” Why is the *reward* or *rearward* so important? Gill explains: “... he also will bring up *the rear*, so that they shall be in no fear of the enemy attacking them behind, and where generally the weaker and more feeble part are; but the Lord will be gathering them up, or closing them, as the word [ⲙⲁⲥⲥⲁⲃ] signifies.” Calvin, following the margin ||, says: “*And the God of Israel will assemble you*” The word ‘assemble’ will confirm the interpretation now given; for there will be no scattering such as usually takes place when men are under the influence of terror, nor will they wander about here and there, but will march, as under banners, in a regular and ordinary manner.” Both ideas are pretty much the same, with the people being protected or gathered by the Lord.

vv. 13–15. Carefully note the ancient Targum of Jonathan (Ⲯ), which makes it clear that these verses are of the *Christ*. Wordsworth has: “That this is a prophecy of the sufferings and exaltation of the Messiah, is confessed by many of the Hebrew Rabbis, as in *Targum of Jonathan* here, *H. Simeon*, and *R. Moshe, R. Alschech*.” Cowles also notes: “Jewish opinion show that they applied it to the Messiah; e.g., the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it, ‘My servant, the Messiah.’ This is supposed to bear date before the Christian era.

That this opinion was held by the oldest school of Jewish interpreters is freely admitted by the Jewish doctors of the middle ages who themselves discarded the Messianic interpretation because they discarded the Christian Messiah; e.g., Ibn-Ezra, Jarchi, and Abarbanel.—In the Christian church, the Messianic interpretation was held almost universally until the close of the eighteenth century. It was then abandoned by various German critics who had previously discarded the doctrine of atonement and of divine inspiration. Their denial of its reference to the Messiah may very properly prompt us to a more vigilant examination of the subject and to a more thorough canvassing of its significance and weighing of its proofs; but need shake no man’s faith, for the passage rejoices in the most searching scrutiny and triumphs only the more, by how much the more severe is the ordeal of criticism through which skeptical minds may cause it to pass.” Wordsworth has: “The ancient Jews always connected these three verses with what follows in the fifty-third chapter, and applied them to the same Person—the MESSIAH.” Also Horsley, along with numerous other exegetes, believes this passage ought to have been coupled with ISAIAH 53: “This chapter should end with the 12th verse, and the three following verses should make the beginning of the fifty-third chapter; in which the immediate subject is the humiliation and sufferings of the Messiah, his accomplishment of the general redemption, and his progress through suffering to glory.” ¶ Instead, I would suggest that just as Isaiah has done with other subjects throughout, he is giving us a foretaste of things to come, in this case, of the Messiah’s sufferings on earth, more fully expanded in ISAIAH 53. So also Rawlinson: “It is generally allowed by modern commentators that this passage is more closely connected with what follows it than with what precedes. Some would detach it altogether from ISAIAH 52 and attach it to ISAIAH 53. But this is not necessary. The passage has a completeness in itself [and serves as a prelude or introduction to the same].” Govett well says that there is a contrast, in these last verses, between the mortal Messiah and the glorified Messiah: “Then follows a prediction of Jesus, and a comparison is instituted between his first and second coming. As many were astonished at his marred countenance when he came in humility, so ‘when he shall be exalted, and lifted very high.’” Indeed, there is a sort of chiasmus here. ISAIAH 52:14 is the center of the poem, focusing on the mortal Messiah, and the verses on each side (ISAIAH 52:13, 15) speak of the glorified Lord. Keith suggests: “These verses ... describe the glory of Christ, which will be manifested when he shall gather Israel, a glory which shall be in proportion to his former shame.” Cheyne writes: “The importance of this chapter justifies a somewhat fuller commentary than usual. The ideas are well fitted to arrest the attention, especially that of

Vicarious Atonement, which some have laboured hard to expel from the prophecy, but which still forces itself on the unbiassed reader.” Faussett writes: “The correspondence with the life and death of Jesus Christ is so minute, that it could not have resulted from conjecture or accident. An impostor could not have shaped the course of events so as to have made his character and life appear to be a fulfilment of it. The writing is, moreover, *declaredly* prophetic.” Delitzsch writes quoting the Jewish perspective: “‘Christian scholars’ says Abravanel, ‘interpret this prophecy as referring to that man who was crucified in Jerusalem about the end of the second temple, and who, according to their view, was the Son of God, who became man in the womb of the Virgin. But Jonathan ben Uziel explains it as relating to the Messiah who has yet to come; and this is the opinion of the ancients in many of their Midrashim.’ So that even the synagogue could not help acknowledging that the passage of the Messiah through death to glory is predicted here.” As in other occasions, Isaiah gives a hint of what is to come in more detail later. Driver & Neubauer, who write about the Jewish perspective, quote Yepheth Ben ‘Ali, a Karaite,³⁵ who after refuting the idea that these three verses could apply to the prophets in general or to Jeremiah in particular, boldly states: “As to myself, I am inclined, with Benjamin of Nehawend, to regard it as alluding to the Messiah ...”

13 ¶ Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, ✓ he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

✓ or, prosper

Behold, my servant shall deal prudently. The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “Behold, my servant the Messiah shall prosper. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Behold my servant will mind.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has *understand* instead of *deal prudently*. ¶ Once again, note the reference to the Messiah. The Hebrew יִשְׁכַּל, from the root שָׁכַל, has been variously interpreted. Gesenius uses *prudently*, as the AV. Cowles prefers *wisely*. TDOT prefers *to have insight*. DCH has *wise, prudent, successful*. HAL, to have *success*. AKOT, as does Schiller-Szinessy, has *to prosper*. Cheyne has: “The same verb [יִשְׁכַּל] from the root שָׁכַל, *wisely, prudently*, to be a *success*, see Gesenius also] is applied to the ‘righteous Branch’ (i.e.,

probably, the Messiah) in Jeremiah 23:5³⁶.” Not *probably* but surely of the Messiah. The Jewish *Midrash Tanhuma*, explains Henderson (also see Schiller-Szinessy, Urwick), “... taking each of the verses separately, explains the passage thus: ‘This is the King Messiah,—who shall be higher than Abraham, more elevated than Moses, and exalted above the ministering angels.’” Urwick further has: “Rabbi Alschech (in his commentary on this chapter, AD 1601) says: ‘Upon the testimony of tradition, our old Rabbins have unanimously admitted that King Messiah is here the subject of discourse.’” Alexander defends the idea of the Messiah being here meant by *my servant*, עֶבְדִּי: “The objection, that the title *servant* is not applied elsewhere to Messiah, would have little force if true, because the title in itself is a general one, and may be applied to any chosen instrument; it is not true, however, as the single case of Zechariah 3:8 will suffice to shew, without appealing to the fact, that the same application of the title, either partial or exclusive, has been found admissible above in ISAIAH 42:1, 49:3, and 50:10.” Zechariah 3:8 reads: “Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth *my servant* the BRANCH,” אֶת-עֶבְדִּי צִמָּה. Urwick, in defending the Messianic view, explains: “The word עֶבְדִּי occurs twice only in the passage [speaking of ISAIAH 52:13–15 through ISAIAH 53:12]; in the beginning, 52:13: ‘Behold *my Servant*’ and near the close, 53:11: ‘*My righteous Servant*’; but the recurrence of the personal pronoun throughout, the emphatic and repeated הוּא, points obviously to Him, as distinct from the אֲנַחְנוּ, *we*. There is a contrast very marked throughout between the Servant on the one hand, and the people collectively on the other. If our English version is deficient in any way, it is in not giving sufficient emphasis to these pronouns, הוּא, *He, Himself*, on the one hand; and אֲנַחְנוּ, *we on our part*, on the other. That emphatic pronoun occurs five times in the passage, which in other places our translators have rendered by the words: *He Himself*, e.g. Psalm 1:6: ‘God is Judge Himself;’ Psalm 37:5: ‘The Prophet Himself;’ ISAIAH 7:14: ‘*Jehovah Himself shall give you a sign*.’” ¶ *He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high*. The Targum (Ⓢ) has, for the last clause, “And He shall be very strong.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And be

³⁵ The Karaites are a Jewish group who reject rabbinical traditions and lean heavily on the Hebrew Scriptures, that is, the Old Testament. For more information see *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (1901–1906), 7:438, New York; London: Funk & Wagnalls.

³⁶ “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign *and prosper* [יִשְׁכַּל, root שָׁכַל], and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth” (Jeremiah 23:5). ASV has: “Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and *deal wisely*, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.”

exalted and highly glorified.” This is a beautiful expression indeed, : **יָרֹם וְנִשָּׂא וְנִבְהָ מְאֹד**. Schiller-Szinessy makes a comment of special interest to the LDS: “**נִבְהָ**” means in itself simply *and shall be high*, and becomes relatively the superlative, only by the addition of another word ... ‘For one higher than a high one regardeth, and *there are higher ones than they.*’ Here the other qualifying word is **מְאֹד**” (emphasis added). In Abraham we read: “And the Lord said unto me: These two facts do exist, that there are two spirits, one being more intelligent than the other; there shall be another more intelligent than they; I am the Lord thy God, *I am more intelligent than they all*” (Abraham 3:19, emphasis added). Cowles has: “‘*Extolled*’ is here ... [to mean] *elevated*, raised to supreme dignity and glory. All these terms concur in this one idea, which is put in its strongest possible form by the accumulation of all the words of the language which express it, heightened by the intensive, *very, exceedingly*, at the end.” These words are intimately associated with **יָרֹם וְנִשָּׂא** in ISAIAH 6:1, when Isaiah saw the Lord **[אֵת-אֲדֹנָי]** “sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up.” It is this *lifted up, exalted*, portion that has always particularly touched my heart. In that place we explained that most exegetes think it was the throne that was lifted up, but Kay and I believe it was the Lord who was *exalted*. Furthermore, there is no doubt that here in ISAIAH 52:13, we are speaking of the Messiah as being exalted and glorified. Yes, indeed our Redeemer atoned for our sin and triumphed over the grave, completing His expiatory work so that He could well say: “And now, O Father, *glorify* [see LXX (6) here in ISAIAH 52:13] thou me with thine own self with the *glory* [see LXX (6) here in ISAIAH 52:13] which I had with thee before the world was” (John 17:5). All those who are true disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ “shall be *lifted up* at the last day” (Alma 38:5b, *also see* Alma 37:37). Jenour has: “St. Paul furnishes the best commentary that can be given upon these words; ‘Wherefore God hath highly exalted him (Jesus), and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow’ (Philippians 2:9).” The Jewish view is also that the Messiah will be the most exalted. Driver & Neubauer quote Yalqut, as we saw earlier: “*Who art thou, great mountain?* (Zechariah 4:7.) This refers to the King Messiah. And why does he call him ‘the great mountain?’ because he is greater than the patriarchs, as it is said, ‘My servant shall be high, and lifted up, and lofty exceedingly’—he will be higher than Abraham, who says, ‘I raise *high* my hands unto the Lord’ (Genesis 14:22); lifted up above Moses, to whom it is said, ‘*Lift it up* into thy bosom’ (Numbers 11:12); loftier than the ministering angels, of whom it is written, ‘Their wheels were lofty and

terrible’ (Ezekiel 1:18). And out of whom does he come forth? Out of David (Yalqut 2:571).”

14 As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:

As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man. The Targum (T) has, “As the house of Israel anxiously hoped for Him many days.” The LXX (6) reads, “In the same manner as many will be astonished at thee; (so devoid of glory for men will be thine appearance.” Instead of *at thee* (second person), the Peshitta (S) has *at him* (third person). The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “As many have been astonished at thee, so shall his visage be inglorious among men.” ¶ Isaiah is about to speak of the mortal Messiah. Birks has: “The appearance and character of Messiah would be a marvel and cause of astonishment to the Jewish people. He would wholly disappoint the expectation of carnal minds, who looked for all outward signs of royalty and worldly greatness. The rest of the verse explains the source of their astonishment, the appearance of a sorrowful and suffering Messiah.” Cowles, leaning on Alexander says: “The many individuals were amazed at his marred visage and saw only things toward which they felt contempt and aversion.” Skinner writes: “The word ‘astonied’ expresses the blank amazement, mingled with horror, excited in the minds of beholders by the spectacle of the Servant’s unparalleled sufferings (cf. 1 Kings 9:8; Jeremiah 2:12; 18:16).” Keith has: “In regard to his humiliation it is said, that the effects of his sufferings were so traceable in his appearance as to excite the astonishment of the spectator. Judging from the effects of suffering in others, in the shrunken features and shattered frame of the sufferer, no doubt, although it is not expressed in his history, that of Christ told visibly upon the frame of him who was flesh of our flesh. And as his sufferings were greater than others can endure, so, doubtless, his visage and form were more marred than those of others ... Visage, from **מִרְאָה**, signifying a looking, then the object seen, then appearance, as in Exodus 24:17. This is the meaning here, not the face only, but the general appearance.” Jenour explains: “The humiliation and after glory of our adorable Redeemer are clearly predicted here, and in the following chapter. When his countenance was disfigured with tears and blood; and his body with stripes and wounds, and he hung in expiring agony upon the cross, to which he had been fastened by the hands of wicked men, then they who beheld him, looked upon him with scorn, and mocked and despised

him.” There seems little doubt, at any rate, that Isaiah saw our Redeemer in the Garden of Gethsemane as well as on the cross. ¶ Quoting Dr. Kalisch, Urwick explains that the whole point of the Mosaic law according to the Jewish perspective pointed to the role the Messiah would play: “So the Kabbalists held, that after the advent of the true Messiah no animal sacrifice would be required, since he would himself effect all that can be hoped for by sacrifices; ‘the Messiah will deliver up his soul and pour it out unto death, and his blood will atone the people of the Lord.’”³⁷ While as LDS we understand that animal sacrifice will once again, for a period, be carried out in the temple that will follow Ezekiel’s vision of the last days, the essence of this Kabbalistic statement is true. ¶ Elder Neal A. Maxwell spoke about the process of being *marred*, “Because living prophets are so precious a presence on the human scene, adversarial efforts to diminish and to mar them—past and present—should not be surprising. These men are thus called upon to endure efforts to ‘mar’ them. The word mar, as used in certain scriptures, suggests to ‘spoil to a certain extent or to render less attractive,’ as if one were to mar furniture by scratching its surface but not harming its substance. Isaiah speaks of the Lord’s servant whose ‘visage’ (or appearance) is marred (ISAIAH 52:14). The resurrected Jesus speaks of a ‘great and marvelous work’ which will not be believed by many, ‘although a man shall declare it unto them.’ This latter-day servant who was to bring Christ’s word forth ‘shall be marred ... Yet ... I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil’ (3 Nephi 21:9–10). The Doctrine and Covenants (10:43) uses those same last words (about the wisdom of the Lord proving greater than the cunning of the devil) in reference to Joseph Smith and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. Joseph Smith, Sr., gave a father’s blessing to the Prophet Joseph on 9 December 1834. In part of that blessing Father Smith quoted from ancient Joseph, who wondered how his latter-day posterity would receive the word of God. Then ancient Joseph’s eyes beheld Joseph Smith, Jr., to be raised up in the last days. Ancient Joseph’s soul was satisfied and he wept. Ancient Joseph was quoted by Father Smith as saying that the choice seer to arise ‘shall meditate great wisdom, [and his] intelligence shall circumscribe and comprehend the deep things of God, ... though the wicked mar him for a little season.’ Church members should not be surprised, therefore, if enemies seek to ‘mar’ prophets and the Presidents of the Church, or the Church itself, by seeming to render it, or us as

members, less attractive and influential, thus causing some to turn away from or to discount the Lord’s work and His servants. One of the early Twelve, Elder Orson Hyde, observed that the ‘shafts’ intended for the Church ‘are always aimed at the head first.’ Being marred can be part of the experience of discipleship: ‘Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake’ (Matthew 5:11). If we as members are likewise ‘marred’ while doing the Lord’s work, it will prove to be yet another dimension of sharing the fellowship of Christ’s sufferings (see Philippians 3:10).”³⁸ The Savior was marred (see Elder McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah*) through His suffering and is also now being marred through evil speech. The Savior, in His visit to the American Continent, quoted ISAIAH 52:14 (see 3 Nephi 21:10) and spoke of a servant who would yet be marred, through the *How Beautiful Feet Principle* in the future. The Prophet Joseph Smith was also frequently punished physically and hated by many: “He [the angel] called me by name, and said unto me that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, and that his name was Moroni; that God had a work for me to do; and that my name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues, or that it should be both good and evil spoken of among all people” (JS—History 1:33). ¶ The Jewish scholars and Rabbis have ironically spoken much about the suffering Messiah, of *Isaiah ben Joseph*, or more specifically, *Isaiah ben Ephraim* (see Driver & Neubauer, pp. 16, 32, 162, 300–303, 321, 390, 394). Some Christian exegetes have felt that this has been an effort to deny suffering to *Messiah ben Judah* or *Messiah ben David*. ¶ *And his form more than the sons of men*: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “(Which was poor among the nations; their appearance and their brightness being worse than that of sons of men).” The LXX (Ⲙ) reads, “And thy glory for the sons of men).” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, “And his form among the sons of men.” ¶ The Savior’s suffering was indeed more profound than that of any man and He bled from every pore for us.

15 So shall he sprinkle [Book of Mormon] gather [Inspired Version] many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him; for [that] which had not been told them shall they see; and [that] which they had not heard shall they consider.

So shall he sprinkle / gather many nations. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Thus shall he scatter many nations.” The LXX

³⁷ Kalisch, M. M. *A Historical and Critical Commentary on the Old Testament with a new translation*. Leviticus, Part I. English or Abridged Edition. 1867. Urwick uses a different edition, p. 59. The 1867 edition has the quote in p. 46. Kalisch also points us to ISAIAH 53:12.

³⁸ Maxwell, Neal A. *If Thou Endure It Well*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1996, pp. 71–72.

(6) reads, “So many nations will express admiration at him.” Instead of *sprinkle*, the Peshitta (S) has *purify*. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “He shall sprinkle many nations.” ¶ Horsley accepts the word *sprinkle* but mentions that יִזְרֹק is a difficult word and many have looked for emendations of it. We shall look both at the KJV and Book of Mormon *sprinkle* as well as the inspired version *gather*. ¶ SPRINKLE, יִזְרֹק. Birks exquisitely says—and all of my soul rejoices to contemplate it—and the Spirit testifies of the truthfulness of the atonement: “When the first covenant was confirmed at Sinai, Moses sprinkled the people with the blood of sacrifice, Exodus 24:8.³⁹ But this Prophet, like unto Moses, will sprinkle not one, but many nations, with the blood, not of oxen or rams, but of His own perfect sacrifice, and thus will bring them within the pale of a new and better covenant. Their kings shall shut their mouths at Him in mute wonder and reverence.” Wordsworth has: “It [i.e., sprinkle] is specially applied both to describe the sprinkling with the blood of atonement, on the great day of atonement, and with the water of purification⁴⁰ (see Leviticus 4:6; 14:7; 16:14, 18, 19; Numbers 19:19).” ¶ GATHER. Some exegetes have suggested various possibilities including *scattered* have been offered—the very opposite of *gather*. Cheyne writes: “*So shall he *many nations*] A most difficult passage.” So much so that Cheyne puts an asterisk to replace the word. Lowth writes: “I retain the common rendering, though I am by no means satisfied with it.” The inspired version uses *gather*. Neubauer & Driver quote the Older Nizzahon: “If the prophet had meant to say that he would gather many nations to his religion, he should have written יִקְרֶב (will bring near or attract⁴¹), rather than יִזְרֹק (will sprinkle or scatter).” I find it interesting, however, that the Older Nizzahon even brings up the subject of gathering. But Schiller-Szinessy⁴² has, which coincide exactly with the

³⁹ See also the numerous references to the sprinkling of blood in the Day of Atonement, or Yom Kippur, and temple services in anticipation to the atonement by the Son of Man.

⁴⁰ Not a few Christian commentators mention that *sprinkling* meant baptism, so I was pleased to find Schiller-Szinessy’s comments here that the earliest form of baptism was through *immersion*, not by sprinkling.

⁴¹ Gesenius has “to draw near.”

⁴² The author of this dissertation says of himself: “I am now 61 years of age, and I so loved the Hebrew Bible in my youth that I knew the whole of it by heart before I was ten years old. But, although the whole Bible has ever been dear to me, my favourite prophet has always been Isaiah. Him I studied under Jews, Rabbanites and Quaraites; him I studied under Christian, Roman Catholics and Protestants. He has ever been my thought by day, my dream in the night; my comfort in trouble, my exultation in happiness” (pp.6–7). *An Exposition of ISAIAH 52:13–15; and 53*; Delivered before the Council of the Senate in the Law School on Friday, April 28, 1882, Cambridge.

Inspired Version: “The fact is, יִזְרֹק here comes from the root יִזְרֹק *to accumulate, to gather, to attract*.” I have been working hard for a few weeks trying to find additional information on the Hebrew יִזְרֹק. Gladly, a Logos Bible Software colleague directed me to the Gesenius reference which I had missed: “יִזְרֹק an unused root. Arab. وَزَى *to gather* selves together,” as well as the *Emphasized Bible*, which under ISAIAH 52:15 has: “*gather* to himself” and more importantly, gives *Fuerst’s Hebrew Lexicon* (Williams & Norgate, 1871) as a reference. In the 1867 version of the Fürst Lexicon (see pp. 917–918) we find additional information of great interest: “יִזְרֹק II. (Kal not used), *intr.* same as יִזְרֹק (which see) *to go together*. Deriv. the proper name יִזְרֵיאל.⁴³ Hif. (future יִזְרֹק) *to collect*, ISAIAH 52:14–15, *like as many were amazed at him*—and therefore fled from him—*will he now gather to himself many nations*. The versions have thought sometimes of *expiating*, *purifying*, sometimes of *causing to exult*; but the explanation now given is the most suitable.”⁴⁴ ¶ After speaking of the mortal Messiah in the meridian of times Isaiah returns to speak of the latter day, when the good news or the Gospel would be preached through the Book of Mormon and the Bible and help gather Israel from all the nations of the earth. This is what I believe the word *gather* means in the context of ISAIAH 52:15, but I also like the concept of attracting people to Christ, because else, why would they gather in the first place? ¶ *The kings shall shut their mouths at him*. The Targum (T) has, “Before Him kings shall keep silence: they shall put their hands upon their mouths.” The LXX (6) reads, “And kings will shut their mouths.” ¶ Rabbi Metsudath David, in Slotki/Rosenberg, has: “In amazement at the exaltation of the despised servant.” Keith has: “The expression ‘kings shall shut their mouths,’ denotes silence and subjection. Instead of taking counsel together any more against him, ‘all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him’ (Psalm 72:11).” Wade explains: “*Shall shut their mouths at him*] Better, shall shut their mouths because of him, i.e. shall be awed into silence at the wonderful change in his condition (cf. Job 29:9; 40:4; Micah 7:16).” Nägelsbach writes: “in the same degree that one was horrified at Him, He will also provoke joyful wonder and reverence.” Similarly Alexander: “His

⁴³ Pronounced something like Yiziyah, and in modern English it is sometimes written Izayah, both of which sound like the Hebrew pronunciation of Isaiah.

⁴⁴ Fuerst [Fürst], Dr. Julius, *A Hebrew & Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*, Professor at the University of Leipzig. Translated from the German by Samuel Davidson, D.D. of the University of Halle. London, Williams & Norgate. 1867 (3rd edition). First German Edition was published in 1857.

exaltation shall bear due proportion to his humiliation; the contempt of men shall be exchanged for wonder and respect.” Kay says: “As His degradation was most surprising, exceeding any in human history; *so* shall His exaltation be. *Many* had looked wonderingly on Him as a wretched criminal ...” ¶ Elder Orson Pratt has tied this verse to the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ *after* the restoration: “Now Moses has told us of that time, and it is repeated again in the 3rd chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, that the Lord would raise up a Prophet, and it should come to pass that every soul that would not hear that Prophet should be cut off from among the people. We are told that that Prophet was Jesus, and we believe it. Jesus Christ was that Prophet, and the day is to come, as sure as the Lord lives in yonder heavens, when every soul that will not repent, and receive his work, will be literally cut off from among the people, just as Moses has predicted.⁴⁵ And it shall come to pass that ‘kings shall shut their mouths: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they have not heard shall they behold,’ a marvelous work and a wonder, a work that the Lord would perform in the latter days. A strange work, a strange act, so-called by Isaiah the Prophet.”⁴⁶ ¶ Of some of these same verses in 3 Nephi 21, the Savior seems to liken some of these Scriptures to the latter-day restoration of the Gospel and even to Joseph Smith. For instance, the Savior said, “And when these things come to pass [such as the going forth of the Book of Mormon] that thy seed shall begin to know these things [speaking of the Lamanites]—it shall be a sign unto them, that they may know that the work of the Father hath already commenced unto the fulfilling of the covenant which he hath made unto the people who are of the house of Israel. And when that day shall come, it shall come to pass that kings shall shut their mouths; for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider. For in that day, for my sake shall the Father work a work, which shall be a great and a marvelous work among them; and there shall be among them those who will not believe it, although a man shall declare it unto them” (3 Nephi 21:7–9). ¶ *For that which had not been told them shall they see.* The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Because they, to whom no publication was made concerning him, shall see.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “For they to whom it was not told of him, have seen.” ¶ As we read in ISAIAH

40:5: “And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.” So it is that all shall see Him so that it will not be necessary for anyone to tell them about it. In Habakkuk 2:14 we read: “For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.” And finally, in Jeremiah 31:34a we read: “And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD.” ¶ *And that which they had not heard shall they consider.* The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And they, who had not heard, will understand.” Instead of *consider*, the Peshitta (Ⓔ) has *understand*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “And they that heard not, have beheld.” ¶ Skinner writes: “*for that which had not been told them*” The meaning is either that the exaltation of the Servant is an event of which they had received no announcement beforehand, or that it is one the like of which had never been known.”

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⁴⁵ “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren [Jesus Christ], like unto thee [Moses], and will put my words in his mouth [see ISAIAH 51:16]; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him [shall be cut off or suffer the consequences for such disobedience]” (Deuteronomy 18:18–19).

⁴⁶ Pratt, Elder Orson. “Gathering of Israel, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 18, No. 4, 11 April 1875, pp. 28–29.

Isaiah 53

Urwick wrote: “Whether or not the contemporaries of the prophet or the exiles in Babylon understood the prophet’s words in this fifty-third chapter as prophetic-Messianic, we cannot positively say. We know, however, that the Jews in Christ’s time did thus understand them. There are indications in the New Testament that the Baptist (John 1: 29) and Simeon (Luke 2:3435) thus regarded them. And the use our Saviour made of them in His discourses proves not only that He thus understood them, but that He expected His hearers as Jews thus to understand them; according to His own words: ‘*Search the Scriptures; they are they which testify of ME.*’” We quote extensively from the Jewish writings of former ages to show that these scriptures, as well as the last three verses of ISAIAH 52, point to the Messiah. Many of these quotes come from Neubauer and Driver’s book, *The Fifty-third Chapter of Isaiah according to Jewish Interpreters*, Volume II, printed at Oxford in 1877. The purpose of this book was to show the lack of proof for its Messianic signification, and there are plenty of quotes and allusions to show such a way of thinking, but the reader who is filled with the Holy Spirit will be pricked in the heart to know that the full measure of the fulfillment of these scriptures is as it refers to the Messiah, even Jesus the Christ. The number of references to the Messiah quoted from the Talmud and other Jewish writings are extensive. One can clearly see a transition between a belief in the Messiah, to a belief in two Messiahs—one who suffered and one who did not—to a number of other beliefs, including making Jeremiah, Hezekiah or Josiah or the nation of Israel the subject of these verses. There are some excellent books which summarize these perspectives and defend Christ as the subject of these chapters. Cowles, regarding the vicarious nature of Christ’s sacrifice writes: “We cannot be too grateful for these amplified, varied, and yet marvelously coincident and unanimous declarations to the effect of *vicarious atonement*—Christ suffering *for* his people ... and here it cannot be said too emphatically that these numerous, various, yet equivalent forms of expression are all borrowed from the Hebrew sacrificial system, and therefore must be interpreted in the light of that system ... that suffering must first be borne by some innocent being *for the guilty* before he can be forgiven ... Hence in this great illustrative sacrificial system, the Lord selected those animals which best personify innocence, gentleness, meekness, *e.g.*, lambs, goats, heifers, bullocks, doves; and made them symbols of the suffering, atoning ‘Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.’” Kay notes: “There are no fewer than *eleven* expressions in ISAIAH 53 which clearly describe the VICARIOUS character of the sufferings endured by the Lord’s Servant: (1) ‘He bore our griefs;’ (2) ‘He carried our sorrows;’ (3) ‘He was wounded for our transgressions;’ (4) ‘Bruised for our iniquities;’ (5) ‘The chastisement of our peace was upon Him;’ (6) ‘By His stripes we are healed;’ (7) ‘The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all;’ (8) ‘For the transgression of My people was He stricken;’ (9) ‘When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin;’ (10) ‘He shall bear (or, carry) their iniquities;’ (11) ‘He bare the sins of many. In [the 9th item in this list] the sacrificial nature of these sufferings is directly stated ... The terms ‘iniquities,’ ‘transgressions,’ and ‘sins,’ which all occur here, gather in like manner around the work of the high priest on the ‘*Day of Atonement*’ (Leviticus 16:16, 21, 22, 30, 34). The expressions in vv. 11–12, ‘*carry* their iniquities,’ and ‘*bare* the sin of many,’ are parallel to the one used in Leviticus 16:22; where it is prescribed that the scape-goat (over whose head Aaron had confessed ‘all the *iniquities* of the children of Israel and all their *transgressions* in all their *sins*,’ v. 21) should *bear upon him all their iniquities* into a land not inhabited.” Finally, McDonogh and Manton write that ISAIAH 53: “is so full and clear, that it rather needs meditation than comment—faith more than learning to conceive it, to admire it, and to learn from it.”

vv. 1–3. The vital question is asked: “Who will believe that Christ is indeed the Son of God and that He suffered for us so that if we turn to Him and walk in His ways, we can be saved?” Our Savior in mortality would not be recognized from His outer appearance.

1 ¶ WHO hath believed our report? ~ and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

✓ or, doctrine? HEB. hearing?

WHO hath believed our report? The LXX (6) reads, “Oh. Lord, who hath believed this report of ours.” Paul

makes reference to these scriptures: “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?” (Romans 10:13–16). ¶ Elder McConkie taught: “Will you join with me in considering these questions: If you had lived in Jerusalem in the days of Jesus, would you have accepted him as the Son of God as did Peter and

the Apostles? Or would you have said he had a devil and wrought miracles by the power of Beelzebub, as Annas and Caiaphas claimed? ... If you believe the words of Joseph Smith, you would have believed what Jesus and the ancients said. If you reject Joseph Smith and his message, you would have rejected Peter and Paul and their message.”¹ ¶ *And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?* The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been made manifest?” ¶ Jenour has: “*The arm of Jehovah*” i.e., the salvation of Jehovah, the power of Jehovah to save man exhibited in the gospel, which is called by the apostle, ‘*the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth*’ (Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 1:24).” Wordsworth writes: “The Prophet asks, Who hath recognized God’s glorious working in Christ, delivering the World from a worse bondage and exile than that of Babylon? The Prophet takes up the word of ISAIAH 51:9: ‘Awake, awake! put on strength, *O arm of the Lord*,’ and of ISAIAH 52:10: ‘The Lord hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all Nations.’” Govett has: “It is adduced, most justly, by St. John, among his closing observations on the public ministry of our blessed Lord, and its results, as regarded his nation. ‘But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him; that the saying of Esaias might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?’”² This prophecy, therefore, was fulfilled by the general unbelief of the Jews, and the fewness of those who believed the Saviour’s miracles and doctrines.” Jenour notes: “And so it is now; the doctrine of salvation through a crucified Saviour has no more attractions in the eyes of the self-righteous, nominal Christian, than it had in the eyes of the Jews.” Keith explains that the time will come, as we see in the previous chapter, when many shall accept the Gospel: “... he shall make bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see his salvation” (ISAIAH 52:10). Henderson explains that just as the hand, the arm “denotes power [to] act.”

2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, [there is] no beauty that we should desire him.

For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground. Cheyne suggests that this

is in the *perfect prophetic certitude* (see notes on ISAIAH 30:7; 42:16; also see Mosiah 16:6). Leeson translates as: “*Yea, he³ grew up* [יָצָא] like a small shoot before him, and as a root out of a dry land: he had no form nor comeliness, so that we should look at him; and no countenance, so that we should desire him.” Others who also use the prophetic perfect include AMP, ASV, BBE, Bishops, CEV, CJV, ERV, ESV, GW, HCSB, ISV, JPS, LBP, LBLA, LEB, LHI, NASB, NBLH, Rotherham, RV, TLV, WEB and WEBB. The Targum (Ⓙ) has, “The righteous shall be great before Him, behold, like branches that bud; and like a tree which sends forth its roots by the streams of water, thus shall the generation of the just multiply in the land, which hath need of Him.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “We have made proclamation as a child before him: as a root in a thirsty soil.” Instead of *tender plant*, the Peshitta (Ⓔ) has *infant*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has *thirsty* instead of *dry*. ¶ Driver & Neubauer quote Yepheth Ben ‘Ali as saying that this verse is of the Messiah, as rather the whole of the chapter. Urwick writes: “... the figure [of a tender plant] is not intended to describe a feeling or estimate, but a fact—the lowly birth and youth of the Servant.” Christ Himself says: “I Jesus ... I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star” (Revelation 22:16, also see ISAIAH 11). Wordsworth suggests: “Christ, Who has been described as the Arm of the Lord, revealed from *heaven* by reason of His Godhead, is now represented as a Shoot growing out of the *earth* by reason of His Manhood ... Then He, Who is ‘the Branch,’ sprouted forth from it [i.e., from the trunk that had been cut down.]” Birks explains these expressions as: “The figures of the tender plant or sucker, and the root or shoot, are resumed from ISAIAH 11:1, and express the low estate of the house of David when He appeared. The dry ground is expounded by the question of Nathanael, ‘Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?’” Govett suggests: “... also to the lowly and degraded state of the family of David, whence the Lord was to spring.” Jenour has: “The low condition of the parents of Christ, the obscurity of his birth, and the meanness⁴ of his education, are principally intended. In propagating and establishing his doctrines he was wholly unsupported by human power; indeed both the Jewish and Gentile authorities were opposed to him; and thus with his little band of followers he might well

³ The common ‘verb construction [יָצָא] normally has us look at the person who is spoken off regarding the verb, but can also stand for the person. For instance, in Genesis 2:18 we have וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים. And-(marker that indicates we should look for the person after the verb)-said-LORD Elohim, which means: “And the LORD Elohim said.”

⁴ Meanness here signifies insignificant. Of course we know the Savior had no mean education, but rather, was taught from on high. So also the Prophet Joseph Smith, who was taught from on High by the Savior.

¹ McConkie, Elder Bruce R. “Who Hath Believed Our Report?” *General Conference*, October 1981.

² See John 12:37–38, there is also an allusion to ISAIAH 6:8–11.

be likened to a tender plant, exposed to the rude blasts of the north⁵ wind.” ¶ President Brigham Young observed: “Christendom now acknowledge that Jesus was the Son of God; they look upon him as God manifested in the flesh according to the New Testament; yet the generation in which He lived did not see these tokens of divinity which this generation recognize. To them he was ‘a root out of dry ground’—‘a stumbling block,’ ‘a rock of offense.’”⁶ Elder Bruce D. Porter said: “In the premortal realm, he had been the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Creator of the earth, the great I AM. From these exalted heights, he descended, coming to earth in the most humble of circumstances ... Instead of worldly station, he chose to be born in a lowly stable and live the simple life of a carpenter. He grew up in an obscure village in a despised precinct of Palestine. He made himself of no reputation, and was ‘a root out of a dry ground,’ having ‘no beauty that we should desire him.’”⁷ ¶ *He hath no form* [לֹא תֵאֲרָה] nor comeliness. Targum (ט)⁸ has, “His visage shall not be the visage of a common person, neither His fear the fear of a plebeian (literally, טִיִּיל, ⁹ ‘and idiot,’ expressing a person of low birth).” The LXX (ϸ) reads, “He hath no appearance nor glory.” The Douay-Rheims (Ϲ) has, “There is no beauty in him, nor comeliness.” ¶ Alexander writes: “*Form* is here put for beautiful or handsome form, as in 1 Samuel 16:18 [where] David is called a *man of form* [שֵׂמֶךְ תֵּאֲרָה], i.e. a comely person.” President Joseph Fielding Smith explained: “There was nothing about [Christ] to cause people to single him out. In appearance he was like men; and so it is expressed here by the prophet that he had no form or comeliness, that is, he was not so distinctive, so different from others that people would recognize him as the Son of God. He appeared as a mortal man.”¹⁰ ¶ *THE ASCENSION OF ISAIAH*. In the pseudographical book, *The Ascension of Isaiah*, we come to understand what is meant by both *he hath no form nor comeliness* as well as *no beauty that we should desire him*. The Prophet is guided by an angel successively up to the seventh heaven, with each of the higher heavens being more glorious and full of light

than the former. The majesty, light, and glory of one of the personages Isaiah meets in the second heaven are so overwhelming that the Prophet Isaiah begins to prostrate himself. His angelic guide, however, restrains the Prophet from making the mistake of adoring a fellow-servant. Isaiah’s own countenance is changed in ever increasing glory as he ascends the heavens one by one. In the process of time, the Prophet arrives in the seventh heaven where he beholds the glory surrounding the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost and Isaiah is able to worship God. The main purpose of the trip embarked upon by the Prophet is to witness the *condescension* of the Son of Man. Isaiah arrives as the Messiah is making final preparations to depart from the presence of the Father, leaving behind “the glory which [He] had with [the Father] before the world was” (John 17:5b). So it is that Isaiah is able to behold the Savior as He leaves the seventh heaven and descends one heaven at a time. An exquisitely painful and humbling panorama is placed before us. As Christ descends further, beginning with the fifth heaven, He is *not* even recognized by the people as the Son of Man for He transforms Himself to match the glory of the lowest of those present. There is nothing external in Him that sets Him apart. The Savior of mankind is ignored completely and expected to give the required *passwords* “before the angels who stand as sentinels”¹¹ (Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses* 2:31) previous to entering each of the heavens. His beauty and glory are not perceived by those who inhabit those kingdoms. “And the angel who conducted me said unto me: ‘Understand, Isaiah, and see how the transformation and descent of the Lord will appear [or, ‘in order that thou mayest see the transformation of the Lord’] ... And I saw when He descended into the fifth heaven He made Himself like unto the form of the angels there, and they did not praise Him (nor worship Him); for His form was like unto theirs.”¹² The Holy One of Israel continues

⁵ In the Holy Land, better, *east wind* or *sirocco* (see ISAIAH 27:8).

⁶ Young, President, Brigham. “The True Church of Christ, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses* 12:206b.

⁷ Porter, Elder Bruce D. “Redeemer of Israel.” October 1995 *General Conference*.

⁸ Pauli gives this as verse 3. Beginning here, the Targum (ט) is one verse off from the KJV.

⁹ Pronounced *jedyot*, where the j stands for a Spanish *j* or a German *ch*.

¹⁰ Smith, President Joseph Fielding. *Doctrines of Salvation* 1:23. Compiled by McConkie, Bruce R.

¹¹ “Your endowment is, to receive all those ordinances in the House of the Lord, which are necessary for you, after you have departed this life, to enable you to walk back to the presence of the Father, passing the angels who stand as sentinels, being enabled to give them the key words, the signs and tokens, pertaining to the Holy Priesthood, and gain your eternal exaltation in spite of earth and hell” (*Journal of Discourses*, 2:31).

¹² Charles, Robert Henry (Editor). *Ascension of Isaiah*, 10:18, 20. Translated from the Ethiopic Version, which, together with the new Greek fragment, the Latin versions and the Latin translation of the Slavonic, is here published in full. London: Adam and Black, 1900, 72. While we do not consider the *Ascension of Isaiah* Scripture, Latter-day Saints have multiple reasons to be interested in this manuscript. There are important similarities to the Vision of Joseph F. Smith (see D&C 138), where the great disciples of Christ of ancient days were present, such as Adam and Enoch in the spirit world; as well as to things we learn in sacred places. *The Ascension of Isaiah*, shows that at least some early Christians believed that God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost were three distinct beings, but one in purpose. It is not known if this book was written by Isaiah, or at a

this process of transformation until Isaiah is permitted to see “a woman of the family of David the prophet, named Mary, a Virgin, and she was espoused to a man named Joseph, a carpenter ...” (*Ascension of Isaiah*, 11:2b). There were many things that Isaiah saw in this vision, but none more important than the *condescension of Christ*. Note how Nephi was likewise privileged to watch the *condescension* of the Son of Man. The young Book of Mormon prophet was explicitly told that he was there to be a *witness of Christ*: “and him shall ye witness; and after ye have witnessed him *ye shall bear record that it is the Son of God*” (1 Nephi 11:7, emphasis added, also see 1 Nephi 11:8 ff.). In ISAIAH 53:2, Isaiah is making it clear that the Son of Man did not come in His glory and that He—**עִמָּנוּ אֵל**, *God with us, Immanuel*—could only be recognized with the discernment of the Spirit. The purpose of Nephi’s vision, then, was not only to understand the individual elements of his father’s vision, but to be present—again, at the exact moment—when the Son of Man left behind His glory by the side of the Father to come down to earth to die for us that we might turn to Christ and live. ¶ John the Baptist bears witness of Him when he says: “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29b). The Baptist is telling us to *open our eyes, to behold*, to look upon the Holy One of Israel with the witness of the Holy Spirit and know that He is the Son of God. Recall that after the resurrection the Savior appeared to His disciples on the road to Emmaus: “But their eyes were holden that they should not know him” (Luke 24:16). Although they could not recognize Him with their eyes, there was something that witnessed peace to them: “And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. *And their eyes were opened, and they knew him*; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, *Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?*” (Luke 24:30–32, emphasis added). We can likewise have our eyes opened by hearing *the word* at General Conference and at other Church meetings, by immersing ourselves in Holy Scripture, by being open to the whisperings of the Spirit—and by walking in discipleship to Christ. ¶ In the *Bread of Life Discourse* in John 6, we see multiple allusions to the *condescension* of Christ. The Savior proclaims: “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me” (John 6:38). Many of those who surrounded Him did not recognize Him for He had no external form or comeliness: “The Jews then murmured at him, because

he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? (John 6:41–42). The Savior then teaches that He is the manna that came down from heaven: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world” (John 6:47–51). Even His own disciples were troubled by the Savior’s teachings about His condescension, to which He responded: “Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? *What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?*” (John 6:60–62, emphasis added). Except the Holy Ghost bear witness, we could not see the Divinity and Sonship of the Holy One of Israel. ¶ *And when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him*. Targum (ⲧ) has, “but a holy brightness shall be His brightness, that everyone who seeth Him shall contemplate Him (or, ‘consider’ or ‘meditate upon him’).” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “We have seen him; and he hath neither appearance nor beauty.” Instead of *that we should desire him*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *we denied him* (i.e., when man would see the Savior was as other men in appearance, they would deny Him). The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, “And we have seen him, and there was no sightliness, that we should be desirous of him.” ¶ Birks has: “Few will be found who have believed the prophet’s report; for, when the people look upon Messiah, He has no beauty in their eyes.” After I joined the Church I heard a lovely story about two men who had died and crossed the veil and were being interviewed. The first man shares his knowledge about the Savior and the restoration of the Gospel with the interviewer. When he is finished, he leaves the room and the second enters for his interview. As the second person enters the room and walks toward the interviewer “... he fell upon his knees and cried, ‘My Lord, my God.’”¹³ ¶ Then Elder Thomas S. Monson said: “As a boy, Jesus was found in the temple, ‘sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.’ And when Joseph and His mother saw Him, ‘they were

later date. It is suggested that the original book may well have existed before the time of Christ but may have been amended by early Christians. At any rate, what we have has not been preserved in its purity.

¹³ LDS *Young Women Manual* 3, (1994), 6–8. Lesson 2: “Coming to Know the Savior.”

amazed.” (See Luke 2:46–48.) To the learned doctors in the temple, the boy’s outward label may have conveyed brightness of intellect but certainly not ‘Son of God and future Redeemer of all mankind.’”

3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were [our] faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

✓ or, he hid as it were his face from us, HEB. as an hiding of faces from him, or, us.

Targum (T) has, “Although He shall be in contempt; yet He shall cut off the glory of the wicked (the Royal Polyglot reads מְלִכִּימָּה, ‘kingdoms’). They shall be weak and wretched. Lo, we are in contempt and not esteemed, as a man of pain and appointed to sickness, and as if He had removed the face of His Shekinah from us.” The LXX (G) reads, “But his appearance is mean and defective beyond the sons of men. Being a man in affliction and acquainted with grief, because his countenance was dejected, he was despised and disesteemed.” Instead of *rejected*, the Peshitta (S) has *humbled*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Despised, and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with infirmity: and his look was as it were hidden and despised, whereupon we esteemed him not.” ¶ *Turning their faces from Him*. Birks writes, “Their hosannas [from the triumphal entry into Jerusalem a few days earlier] turned to the cry, Crucify him! crucify him!” President Monson testified: “Who was this ‘man of sorrows, ... acquainted with grief’? ‘Who is this King of glory, this Lord of lords? He is our Master. He is our Savior. He is the Son of God. He is the Author of Our Salvation. He beckons, ‘Follow me.’”¹⁴ ¶ Some follow the margin ¶ and suggest that it was Christ who hid His face from us. Urwick well argues the fallacy of such a view by quoting ISAIAH 50:6b: “I hid not my face from shame and spitting.” Urwick reasons: “... the whole passage is describing not so much the Divine Servant’s conduct towards the people, as the people’s estimation of Him.” ¶ Sister Carole M. Stephens shared: “Elder Richard G. Scott explained that ‘we were taught in the premortal world that our purpose in coming here is to be tested, tried, and stretched.’ That stretching comes in as many forms as there are individuals experiencing it. I’ve never had to live through divorce, the pain and insecurity that comes from abandonment, or the responsibility associated with being a single mother. I haven’t experienced the death of a child,

infertility, or same-gender attraction. I haven’t had to endure abuse, chronic illness, or addiction. These have not been my stretching opportunities. So right now some of you are thinking, ‘Well then, Sister Stephens, you just don’t understand!’ And I answer that you may be right. I don’t completely understand your challenges. But through my personal tests and trials—the ones that have brought me to my knees—I have become well acquainted with the One who does understand, He who was ‘acquainted with grief,’ who experienced all and understands all. And in addition, I have experienced all of the mortal tests that I just mentioned through the lens of a daughter, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, and friend.”¹⁵ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland taught: “... it is not without a recognition of life’s tempests but fully and directly because of them that I testify of God’s love and the Savior’s power to calm the storm. Always remember in that biblical story that He was out there on the water also, that He faced the worst of it right along with the newest and youngest and most fearful. Only one who has fought against those ominous waves is justified in telling us—as well as the sea—to ‘be still.’ Only one who has taken the full brunt of such adversity could ever be justified in telling us in such times to ‘be of good cheer.’ Such counsel is not a jaunty pep talk about the power of positive thinking, though positive thinking is much needed in the world. No, Christ knows better than all others that the trials of life can be very deep and we are not shallow people if we struggle with them. But even as the Lord avoids sugary rhetoric, He rebukes faithlessness and He deplores pessimism. He expects us to believe! No one’s eyes were more penetrating than His, and much of what He saw pierced His heart. Surely His ears heard every cry of distress, every sound of want and despair. To a degree far more than we will ever understand, He was ‘a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.’”¹⁶

vv. 4–9. Christ would be weighed down by our sins and griefs, and yet people would assume He was paying the consequences for His own iniquities. Our sins were born by our Savior. Christ endured the required suffering, even to death. Elder Neal A. Maxwell testified: “The cumulative weight of all mortal sins—past, present, and future—pressed upon that perfect, sinless, and sensitive Soul! All our infirmities and sicknesses were somehow, too, a part of the awful arithmetic of the Atonement.”¹⁷ He was crucified by

¹⁴ Monson, President Thomas S., “The Divine Gift of Gratitude.” October 1987 General Conference.

¹⁵ Stephens, Sister Carole M. “The Family Is of God,” April 2015 General Conference.

¹⁶ Holland, Elder Jeffrey R., “An High Priest of Good Things to Come.” October 1999 General Conference.

¹⁷ Maxwell, Elder Neal A. “Willing to Submit,” *Ensign* (CR), May 1985, p.70.

thieves but buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, a wealthy man.

4 ¶ Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

Whitehouse renders this verse emphatically:

“Yet our diseases ‘twas *he* who bore,
And our sufferings, he bore their load;
While *we*, we thought him plague-struck,
Smitten of God and humiliated.”

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Therefore He shall pray for our sins, and our iniquities for His sake shall be forgiven us.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “This man beareth away our sins; and for us he is in sorrow.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has *infirmities* instead of *griefs*. ¶ Driver & Neubauer quote the Talmud: “The Messiah—what is his name? ... The Rabbis ... [say, The sick one], as it is said, ‘Surely he hath borne our sicknesses, etc.’ (Sanhedrin 98b).” Young explains that נָשָׂא here in essence has the meaning of “*lifting up* and *carrying*” (see more on נָשָׂא below, in ISAIAH 53:12). Urwick explains: “The idea clearly is that one *bearing as a burden* the consequences of the sins of others, see ISAIAH 53:11. The griefs and sorrows which He bore were our due, and belonged to us as the fruit and punishment of our sin.” Urwick also reminds us that the *surely* [אַיִן] in this verse has the same type of certitude as the one we saw in ISAIAH 40:7 where it is said that *surely the people is grass* [אַיִן הָעָם הַצֵּיִר]. Remember that in ISAIAH 40:7 the people were put in contrast to the Word of God, Christ. ¶ Elder Merrill J. Bateman has: “The prophet Abinadi further states that ‘when his soul has been made an offering for sin he shall see his seed.’ Abinadi then identifies the Savior’s seed as the prophets and those who follow them. For many years I thought of the Savior’s experience in the garden and on the cross as places where a large mass of sin was heaped upon Him. Through the words of Alma, Abinadi, Isaiah, and other prophets, however, my view has changed. Instead of an impersonal mass of sin, there was a long line of people, as Jesus felt ‘our infirmities’ ‘[bore] our griefs ... carried our sorrows ... [and] was bruised for our iniquities.’ The Atonement was an intimate, personal experience in which Jesus came to know how to help each of us.”¹⁸ Elder Erastus Snow taught: “The various pains and sorrows to be endured in life are all necessary in their time and place; the trials as we term them, are

all necessary ... they are all a part of the scheme of education or training to prepare us for the future. One of the sacred writers, in speaking of Jesus, said: ‘For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin’ (Hebrews 4:15). And again: ‘For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him’ (John 3:34). It is measured out to you and me in the providence of the Lord; but for him there was a storehouse to draw upon, as it were, without measure. He could continue to heal the sick and raise the dead and perform great and marvelous things ... he took upon himself our infirmities and bore our sickness, as had been predicted by Isaiah the prophet. He truly did heal the sick wherever he went.”¹⁹ ¶ Henderson, leaning on the Rabbinical Pesikta says: “When the blessed Creator made his world, he stretched out his hand under the throne of glory, and brought out the soul of the Messiah. He then said to him: Wilt thou heal and redeem my sons after six thousand years? He replied: Yes. Then God said to him: Wilt thou bear the inflictions in order to purge their iniquity, as it is written: *But it was our diseases he bore?* He said to him: I will bear them joyfully.”²⁰ Govett wrote: “The Evangelist Matthew quotes [this] verse in the following connection: ‘When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.’”²¹ From which we learn, that our blessed Lord’s curing of diseases was the fulfilment of this verse.” ¶ Cowles underscores: “The word for ‘griefs’ means primarily, sicknesses, yet is put here for all ailments and evils.” And this makes sense, for we know that the Savior died not only for our sins, but also for our sorrows and pains: spiritual, physical and emotional. ¶ *Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.* Targum (Ⲯ) has, “For we are considered crushed, smitten of the Lord and afflicted.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And we considered him as being in trouble and under a stroke and in affliction.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “And we have thought him as it were a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted.” The Rabbis consider this regarding Messiah (Seder Nezikin, Sanhedrin 98b). ¶ Driver & Neubauer quote Yepheth Ben ‘Ali: “By the words ‘surely he hath carried our sicknesses,’ they mean that the pains and sickness which he fell into were merited by them [i.e., by Israel], but that he bore them instead ... And here I

¹⁹ Snow, Elder Erastus, “Rest Signifies Change, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses* 21:25b. October 1879.

²⁰ See also Driver & Neubauer’s quote of P’siqtha (P’siqtha, *Theologia Judaica*, According to Sulsius, p. 328).

²¹ See Matthew 8:16–17.

¹⁸ Bateman, Elder Merrill J., “A Pattern for All.” October 2005 *General Conference*.

think it necessary to pause for a few moments, in order to explain why God caused these sicknesses to attach themselves to the Messiah for the sake of Israel.” Birks wrote: “We, for whom He suffered, mistook the cause of His griefs, and reckoned Him as one who lay, for His own sake, under the just displeasure of God.”

Rawlinson notes: “They who saw Christ suffer, instead of understanding that he was bearing the sins of others in a mediatorial capacity, imagined that he was suffering at God’s hands for his own sins. Hence they scoffed at him and reviled him, even in his greatest agonies (Matthew 27:39–44). To one only, and him not one of God’s people, was it given to see the contrary, and to declare aloud, at the moment of the death, ‘Certainly this was a righteous Man’ (Luke 23:47).”

5 But he [was] wounded ✓ for our transgressions, [he was] bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace [was] upon him; and with his stripes ✓ we are healed.

✓ or, tormented

✓ ✓ bruise

But *he* was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for *our* iniquities. The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “He shall build the house of the sanctuary (the Royal Polyglot reads ‘our sanctuary’), which has been profaned on account of our sins.” The LXX (Ⓢ) reads, “But he was wounded for our sins, and afflicted for our iniquities.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓢ) has, “But he was slain for our sins, he was afflicted for our iniquities.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓢ) for *transgressions* and *iniquities* instead has *iniquities* and *sins*. ¶ Driver & Neubauer quote Midrash Rabbah: “Another explanation (of Ruth 2:14):—He is speaking of the king Messiah: ‘Come hither,’ draw near to the throne; ‘and eat of the bread,’ that is, the bread of the kingdom; ‘and dip thy morsel in the vinegar,’ this refers to the chastisements, as it is said, ‘But he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities’ (Ruth 4).” From Yalqut, Driver & Neubauer quote “The chastisements are divided into three parts: one for David and the fathers, one for our own generation, and one for [the King Messiah; and this is that which is written, ‘He was wounded for our transgressions,’ etc. (Yalqut 2:620). Urwick has: “The לָנוּ is again emphatic, and contrasts with the הָיָא which begins the verse. Nothing can be stronger than the antithesis running through this verse, both between the pronouns *he*, him, his, on the one hand, and *our*, us, on the other; and that between the wounding, bruising, chastisement, stripes, on the one hand, and the peace and healing on

the other.” ¶ I had always thought that the Place of the Skull, or *Golgotha*, was a hill—one of my favorite hymns is “There is a green hill far away” (Hymns, 194). When Linda & I traveled to Israel, we had the opportunity to visit Gethsemane as well as the Garden Tomb. Near the tomb, there is a rock formation that looks like a skull, but sadly, some of this had been defaced with some construction. Even so, the skull is clearly apparent. It has been suggested that Christ was crucified by a public thoroughfare—and not elevated much from the ground—so that those who passed by could spit, mock and insult Him in other ways. ¶ Elder James E. Talmage spoke of our Savior’s anguish on the cross: “The spikes so cruelly driven through hands and feet penetrated and crushed sensitive nerves and quivering tendons, yet inflicted no mortal wound. The welcome relief of death came through the exhaustion caused by intense and unremitting pain, through localized inflammation and congestion of organs incident to the strained and unnatural posture of the body.”²² ¶ Frederick C. Grant tells us: “[At Golgotha] they stripped the three victims and nailed them to their crosses.”²³ Alfred Edersheim, after explaining the anguish that the Savior would experience by having the nails driven through His hands and feet, speaks about the anguish of crucifixion: “... the crucified hang for hours, even days, in the unutterable anguish, till consciousness at last failed. It was a merciful Jewish practice to give to those led to execution a draught of strong wine mixed with myrrh so as to deaden consciousness ... That draught was offered to Jesus ... but having tasted it, and ascertained its character and object, He would not drink it ... He would meet Death ... by submitting to the full.”²⁴ Cunningham Geikie speaks of the “hands and feet pierced by the nails ... driven through parts where many sensitive nerves and sinews come together ... Inflammation of the wounds in both hands and feet speedily set in ... Intolerable thirst and ever-increasing pain resulted ... The weight of the body itself, resting on the wooden pin of the upright beam ... made each moment more terrible than the preceding. The numbness and stiffness of the more distant muscles brought on painful convulsions ...”²⁵ Frederic Farrar reminds us that: “The feet were but a little raised above the earth. The victim was in full reach of every hand that might choose to strike, in close proximity to every gesture of insult and hatred. He might hang for hours to be abused, insulted, even tortured by the ever-moving multitude who, with that

²² Talmage, Elder James E. (1981). *Jesus the Christ*, p. 655.

²³ Grant, Frederick C. (1921). *The Life and Times of Jesus*, p. 212.

²⁴ Edersheim, Alfred (1886, 3rd New American Edition). *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, 2:589–590.

²⁵ Geikie, Cunningham (1896, Revised Edition). *The Life and Words of Christ*, 2:533.

desire to see what is horrible which always characterizes the coarsest hearts, had thronged to gaze upon a sight which should rather have made them weep ... For indeed a death by crucifixion seems to include all that pain ... all intensified just up to the point at which they can be endured at all, but all stopping just short of the point which would give the sufferer the relief of unconsciousness. The unnatural position made every moment painful ...”²⁶ ¶ *The chastisement of our peace was upon him.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “He was delivered over on account of our iniquities, and through His doctrine peace shall be multiplied upon us.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “The chastisement of our peace was upon him.” ¶ Kimhi, in Neubauer & Driver has: “Others explain שלומנו in its ordinary meaning: ‘the chastisements which ought to have come upon us for our sins while we were at peace have fallen on him.’” ¶ *And with his stripes we are healed.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And through the teaching of His words our sins shall be forgiven us.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “By his bruises we are healed.” Instead of *stripes*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *wounds*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has *bruises* instead of *stripes*. ¶ Govett has: “The vicarious nature of the Redeemer’s suffering is next opened to our view. The prophet teaches the atoning nature of Christ’s death. His afflictions were not for any sin of his own, but for our transgressions, because he bare the penalty of them, that by his ‘stripes we might be healed.’ Because ‘we like sheep have gone astray, the Lord hath made to light on him the iniquities of us all:’ in which words the extent of his atonements is made equal to the extent of man’s sinfulness: or as the New Testament Scriptures phrase the same truth, ‘He is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.’” Rawlinson has: “Besides the blows inflicted on him with the hand (Matthew 26:27) and with the reed (Matthew 27:30), our Lord was judicially scourged (Matthew 27:26). Such scourging would leave the ‘stripe-marks’ which are here spoken of.” ¶ President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “In my judgment the sacrament meeting is the most sacred, the most holy, of all the meetings of the Church. When I reflect upon the gathering of the Savior and his apostles on that memorable night when he introduced the sacrament, when I think of that solemn occasion, my heart is filled with wonderment and my feelings are touched. I consider that gathering one of the most solemn and wonderful since the beginning of time. There the Savior taught them of his coming sacrifice, which in their bewilderment they could not understand. He plainly told them of his death and that his blood should be shed, and this was said in the very hour of his agony for the sins of the world. It was a very solemn occasion; there the sacrament was instituted, and the

disciples were commanded to meet together often and commemorate the death and sufferings ... He was about to take upon him the responsibility of paying the debt brought upon the world through the fall, that men might be redeemed from death and from hell. He had taught the people that he was to be lifted up that he might draw all men unto him, and that all who would repent and believe in him, keeping his commandments, should not suffer for he would take upon himself their sins ... For this purpose we are called together once each week to partake of these emblems, witnessing that we do remember our Lord, that we are willing to take upon us his name, and that we will keep his commandments. This covenant we are called upon to renew each week, and we cannot retain the Spirit of the Lord if we do not consistently comply with this commandment. If we love the Lord, we will be present at these meetings in the spirit of worship and prayer, remembering the Lord and the covenant we are to renew each week through this sacrament as he has required it of us.”²⁷ On the sacrament, also see ISAIAH 6:1–7.

6 All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquities of us all. ✓

✓ made the iniquity of us all to meet on him

All we, like sheep, have gone astray. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “All we like sheep have been scattered.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “We all like sheep had strayed.” ¶ Alexander explains: “The original expression is like *the* sheep (or collectively the flock) i.e. not sheep in general, but the sheep that wander, or that have no shepherd.—The idea of a shepherd, although not expressed, appears to have been present to the writer’s mind, not only in the first clause but the last, where the image meant to be presented is no doubt that of a shepherd laying down his life for the sheep. This may be fairly inferred not merely from the want of connection which would otherwise exist between the clauses, and which can only be supplied in this way, nor even from the striking analogy of Zechariah 13:7, where the figure is again used, but chiefly from the application of the metaphor, with obvious, though tacit, reference to this part of Isaiah, in the New Testament to Christ’s laying down his life for his people (see John 10:11–18, and 1 Peter 2:24–25) ... The figure of wandering, or lost sheep is common in Scripture to denote alienation from God and the misery which is its necessary consequence (see Ezekiel 34:5; Matthew 9:36) ... a comparison with scattered sheep, whose running off in different directions [springs] from

²⁶ Farrar, Frederic W. (1874). *The Life of Christ*, 2:402–403.

²⁷ President Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation* 2:340–341.

confusion, ignorance, and incapacity to choose the right path ... [Theodoret] understands it to denote the vast variety of false religions ...” ¶ *We have turned every one to his own way.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Every one of us has turned to his own way.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “Every one hath turned aside into his own way.” ¶ Elder Charles W. Penrose taught regarding these words in Isaiah: “That is what is the matter with the Christian world. They are not walking in the Lord’s way. They are walking in the ways that men have invented. Any student of the Scriptures who is willing to receive truth when it is presented before him, can see by perusing the sacred books of the Old and the New Testaments, that the condition of the world at the present time was anticipated by the ancient prophets and apostles. They all saw that the time would come when the people would turn away from the truth; when they would walk in their own ways; when they would build up churches to themselves; when they would hire men to preach to them things which were wise and good in their own eyes; they would not be very anxious to find out the will of God, or that He might declare it to them, but would have preachers to teach them doctrines which seemed good to their ‘itching ears.’”²⁸ President Brigham Young shared: “Before I heard the gospel I searched diligently to know and understand whatever could be learned among the sectarians respecting God and the plan of salvation. It was so with the majority of the Latter-day Saints. But very little can be learned among Christian professors; they are ignorant about God and His kingdom, and the design He had in view in the formation of the earth and peopling it with His creatures. The Christian world are deficient in these matters; and many among them who believed the Bible was true have felt this, and Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Wesley, and other great Reformers and revivalists have felt this, and have had the spirit of conviction upon them that God was going to reveal something or other to His creatures. My brother Joseph [i.e., Joseph Young who also joined the Church] once said to me (and we were both Methodists at the time), ‘Brother Brigham, there is not a Bible Christian in the world; what will become of the people?’ For many years no person saw a smile on his countenance, in consequence of the burden of the Lord being upon him, and realizing that the inhabitants of the earth had all gone out of the way and had turned every man to his own views. I am ... speaking now of ... their ignorance of the gospel of the Son of God and of the way to be saved in the celestial kingdom of our Father.”²⁹ Elder Derek A. Cuthbert explained: “Anciently Isaiah lamented, ‘We have turned

every one to his own way.’”³⁰ ¶ *And the LORD hath laid on him the iniquities of us all.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “It pleased the Lord (literally, ‘it shall be the pleasure of the Lord’) to forgive the sins of all of us for His sake.” Instead of *iniquity*, the Peshitta (Ⲥ) has *sins*. ¶ The principle of *Divine Investiture* is found here, again (see introductory chapter). Even some of the Gentile authors, such as Birks, recognize this: “The question. Who speaks in this chapter? has received various answers ... The view which alone explains the whole, without requiring any abrupt change of person, is that it is ‘the Spirit of Christ, which was in’ the prophet, who here speaks by his lips.” ¶ Keith has: “The marginal || and literal meaning of the last clause, ‘The Lord caused the iniquity of us all to meet on him,’ is more expressive. It appears to refer to the act of the elders of Israel laying their hands on the head of the sacrifice, which was symbolical of the transference to it of the guilt of the people. It all met on the head of the victim.” Wordsworth has: “As the Apostle says, ‘He made Him to be sin for us. Who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him’ (2 Corinthians 5:21). And again, ‘Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us’ (Galatians 3:13); ‘He was once offered to bear the sins of many’ (Hebrews 9:28).”

7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “He shall pray and He shall be answered, yea, before He shall open His mouth, He shall be heard.”³¹ For *He was oppressed*, the Peshitta (Ⲥ) has *He drew near* (Lamsa) / *He offered himself* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “He was offered because it was his own will, and he opened not his mouth.” We have, for instance, associated with our Savior’s conviction: “And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, *he answered nothing*. Then said Pilate unto him, Hearst thou not how many things they witness against thee? *And he answered him to never a word*; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly” (Matthew 27:12–14). Jenour, of these verses, has: “Can anything correspond more exactly than the history and the prophecy in this case?” Schiller-Szinessy, leaning on the Targum (ⲧ) explain that all Christ could have

²⁸ Penrose, Elder Charles W., *Sincerity Alone Not Sufficient*, Etc. *Journal of Discourses* 25:44b, 20 May 1883.

²⁹ Young, President Brigham. “Condition of Apostates, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses* 12:95.

³⁰ Cuthbert, Elder Derek A. *The Spirituality of Service*, *Ensign* (CR), May 1990, p.12.

³¹ Allusion to ISAIAH 65:24.

opened His mouth and asked to be rescued and it would have been immediately done: “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matthew 26:53). Then, all would have been lost. ¶ Elder Erastus Snow taught: “[Christ] waged war constantly, and was well prepared for this work, having an inexhaustible source of strength to draw from, the Spirit having been given to him without measure. But at length the time came when the Father said, You must succumb, you must be made the offering. And at this dark hour the power of the Father withdrew itself measurably from him, and he was left to be taken by his enemies, and, like a lamb, was led to the slaughter, but he opened not his mouth because his hour had come. And when he was led to exclaim in his last agony upon the cross, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? [t]he Father did not deign to answer; the time had not yet come to explain it and tell him. But after a little, when he passed the ordeal, made the sacrifice, and by the power of God was raised from the dead, then all was clear, all was explained and comprehended fully. It was necessary that the Father should thus measurably forsake his Son ...”³² On this topic, see Elder Jeffrey R. Holland’s talk, *None were with Him* (April 2009 General Conference). ¶ *He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “He shall deliver over the mighty of the nations as a lamb to the slaughter.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “He was led as a sheep to be slaughtered.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter.” ¶ Birks has: “Messiah was the Lamb, whom God provided for a spotless offering (Genesis 22:8).” Govett points us to “The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus” (Acts 8:32–35). Govett testifies: “It is therefore evidently implied in the strongest manner that Jesus is the subject of this passage.” Urwick suggests: “The prophet’s comparison is to the sacrifice of the *paschal lamb*, and he says: ‘*As the lamb to the slaughter He is brought*’” (emphasis added on *paschal lamb*). Urwick reminds us that the word for sheep or ewe is also used for Jacob’s wife, *Rachel*, רָחֵל. ¶ *And as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And like a sheep before her shearers

is dumb, none shall in His presence open His mouth, or speak a word.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And as a lamb before its shearer is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “And shall be dumb as a lamb before his shearer, and he shall not open his mouth.” ¶ Govett also quotes Christ’s comment: “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matthew 26:53), as well as His refusal to answer the accusations of the High Priest (see Matthew 27:12; Mark 15:3) and of Pilate: “Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly” (Matthew 27:13–14).

8 He was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

He was taken from prison and from judgment. Schiller-Szinessy explains that Christ was taken “without rule and without justice [וּמִלֵּצָר וּמִשְׁפָּט].” The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “He shall gather our captives (literally, ‘captivity’) from affliction and pain.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “In this humiliation his legal trial was taken away.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “He was taken away from distress, and from judgment.” ¶ The prophet Abinadi, in the Book of Mormon, taught: “I would that ye should understand that God himself shall come down among the children of men, and shall redeem his people ... And thus the flesh becoming subject to the Spirit, or the Son to the Father, being one God, suffereth temptation, and yieldeth not to the temptation, but suffereth himself to be mocked, and scourged, and cast out, and disowned by his people. And after all this, after working many mighty miracles among the children of men, he shall be led, yea, even as Isaiah said, as a sheep before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. Yea, even so he shall be led, crucified, and slain, the flesh becoming subject even unto death, the will of the Son being swallowed up in the will of the Father. And thus God breaketh the bands of death, having gained the victory over death; giving the Son power to make intercession for the children of men—Having ascended into heaven, having the bowels of mercy; being filled with compassion towards the children of men; standing betwixt them and justice; having broken the bands of death, taken upon himself their iniquity and their transgressions, having redeemed them, and satisfied the demands of justice” (Mosiah 15:1a, 5–9). ¶ McFadyen, leaning on Marti, suggests the Servant, “*debarred from*

³² Snow, Elder Erastus, “Rest Signifies Change, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses* 21:26a. October 1879.

justice was taken away to death.” Cheyne has: “*He was taken away*] i.e., by a violent death.” ¶ *And who shall declare his generation?* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And who shall be able to narrate the wonderful works which shall be done for us in His days?” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Who will declare his manner of life.” ¶ Alexander notes: “Kimhi and Hengstenberg explain it to mean, who can declare his posterity or spiritual seed?” See also Abinadi in Mosiah 15:10–14 and 15 ff., so that the declaring of this generation is intimately related to both the seed of Christ as well as the preaching of the Gospel. ¶ Elder Bruce R. McConkie instead taught: “*Who shall declare his generation?*] This means, ‘Who will give his genesis? Who will reveal his genealogy? Who will give the source from whence he sprang? Who will announce the divinity of the mortal Messiah?’”³³ ¶ *For he was cut off out of the land of the living.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “He shall remove the rule of the nations from the land of Israel.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Because his life is taken from the earth.” ¶ Keith has: “By the expression ‘cut off,’ is implied the violence of his death.” In ISAIAH 38:12 we spoke of the idea, “I have cut off like a weaver my life.” While the Hebrew here is different, the idea is the same. It was the ultimate sacrifice. Cheyne says: “He drank his cup to the dregs.” ¶ *For the transgression of my people was he stricken.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The sins which my people have committed (literally, ‘have sinned’) have come upon them.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For the transgressions of my people he is led to death.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has “And the wicked of my people offered him up” (BPE) / “and some of the evil men of my people struck him” (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “For the wickedness of my people have I struck him.”

¶ Whitehouse complaints about the use of **עַם**, *my people*, here. Multiple exegetes wish to replace *my people* with *peoples*. While Cheyne thinks the change is possible he well notes: “Four places, it is true, are mentioned in the Massora in which the proposed substitution is possible, but this passage is not one of them.” Although Christ died for both Jew and Gentile, we read a special pathos into the scene, as in Zechariah 12:10: “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.” So also: “And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends [i.e., *my people*]” (Zechariah 13:6). ¶ Returning

back to the LXX (Ⲅ), see above, Lowth suggests that in the Hebrew we are missing *to death* **לָמוּת**, based on an interesting conversation between Origen and the Jewish scholars of his time, according to a note by Kennicott (see Lowth for the details).

9 And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no **violence evil**, neither [**was any**] deceit in his mouth.

And he made his grave with the wicked. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And He shall deliver the wicked into hell.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Therefore for his funeral I will give up the wicked.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “And he shall give the ungodly for his burial.” That is, the two thieves who were crucified with Him. ¶ *And with the rich in his death.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And the riches of treasures which they got by violence unto the death of Abbadon (literally, ‘destruction’).” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And the rich for his death.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “And the rich for his death.” ¶ Birks has: “Our Lord was buried among malefactors, a class, but with the rich man [Joseph of Arimathea³⁴], a single person, by the appointment of the judges who condemned Him, in minute agreement with the prophecy.” Alexander further comments: “Malefactors were either left unburied, or disgraced by a promiscuous³⁵ interment in an unclean place; a usage explicitly asserted by Josephus and Maimonides. As the Messiah was to die like a criminal, he might have expected to be buried like one; and his exemption from this posthumous dishonour was occasioned by a special providential interference.” ¶ When I visited Jerusalem I was sure I would weep at the Western Wall. Instead, I was surprised because I almost felt as if the Spirit of the Lord was saying: “I am no longer here. I have moved my Presence from what used to be the site of the Holy Temple.” On a different day, about a week later, we visited what is called the Garden Tomb. It was there that I was overcome by the Spirit, which seemed to proclaim: “Why seek ye the living among the dead?” (Luke 24:5) for “I am risen” (Matthew 26:32b). That day, in my Scripture journal I wrote: “I read John 20:1–18 here, today Friday, 7 September 2012, to Linda, just a few meters from the tomb of Christ, at the Garden Tomb site. Indeed, ‘He is risen.’ I was overcome by the Spirit. —7 Sep 2012.” ¶ *Because he had done no evil.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “That they who commit sin shall not remain.” Instead of *violence*, the LXX (Ⲅ), Peshitta (Ⲫ) and Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) use a synonym to *evil* (as in

³³ McConkie, Elder Bruce R. “Who Shall Declare His Generation?” BYU Studies, vol. 16 (1975–1976), Number 4 – Summer 1976, p.554.

³⁴ Matthew 27:57–60.

³⁵ Here, indiscriminate as to the class of people.

the Book of Mormon), *iniquity*. Delitzsch also follows close to the Book of Mormon: "... because He had done no wrong." Indeed, one of the acceptations for the Hebrew **חָמָס** is *wrong* (Gesenius). TDOT has "It is already apparent here that all **חָמָס** is ultimately directed against Yahweh." Urwick explains: "It [**חָמָס**] signifies active violation of the law. TDOT further has, "In Ezekiel 28:16, "be filled with **חָמָס**" is synonymous with "sin." In other words, our Redeemer was free from any sort of iniquity, wrong or sin—thus permitting Him to expiate for ours. ¶ *Neither was any deceit in his mouth*. The Targum (**ܬ**) has, "And that they should not speak folly (other copies read **ܢܚܠܝܢ**, 'guile') with their mouth." The LXX (**Θ**) reads, "Nor practised guile with his mouth." The Savior spoke only that which His Father had Him say.

vv. 10–12. Christ made the sacrifice willingly. All who become disciples of our Savior become His children, spiritually speaking. Christ will conquer Satan and death. He is the Lamb of God.

10 ¶ Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put [him] to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin he shall see [his] seed, he shall prolong [his] days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him. The Targum (**ܬ**) has, "And it was the pleasure of the Lord to refine and to purify the remnant of His people." The LXX (**Θ**) reads, "And the Lord determined to purify him from this stroke." Instead of *bruise*, the Peshitta (**ܣ**) has *afflict* (Lamsa) / *humiliate* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (**ϐ**) has, "And the Lord was pleased to bruise him in infirmity." ¶ Cheyne well says: "It was no mere accident, but the deliberate will of God that the Servant should suffer innocently ... [and then alluding to those who wish to take these scriptures away from the Messiah] The Servant is a person, not a personification of the pious kernel of Israel. His sufferings are vicarious and voluntary. Hence he who offers the Servant's 'soul,' or 'life,' as a sacrifice, must be the Servant himself ... may it not be one object of the prophet to show that in the death of the Servant various forms of sacrifice find their highest fulfilment?" Kay explains: "In the old sacrifices He had *no pleasure*, except so far as they foreshadowed this one all-perfect offering." ¶ Cheyne notes that the word *pleasure* is frequent in Isaiah and also means *purpose*. So, for instance, in this

verse **חָפַץ** appears twice (**חָפַץ! חָפַץ**). BDAG, when speaking of the translation of **חָפַץ** into the LXX (**Θ**), i.e., *βούλεται*, defines its meaning as: "to plan on a course of action, *intend, plan, will*." TDOT has, "especially when God is the subject of **חָפַץ** [t]his translation stresses above all the absolute certainty, sovereign self-assurance, and efficacy of the act; it refers to a deliberate and efficacious act of will (Cf. Schrenk, 47)." Was not the coming of Messiah to atone for our sins the central, most wonderful and vital part of the plan of salvation? ¶ Then Elder Russell M. Nelson shared: "While visiting the British Museum in London one day, I read a most unusual book. It is not scripture. It is an English translation of an ancient Egyptian manuscript. From it, I quote a dialogue between the Father and the Son. Referring to His Father, Jehovah—the premortal Lord—says: 'He took the clay from the hand of the angel, and made Adam according to Our image and likeness, and He left him lying for forty days and forty nights without putting breath into him. And He heaved sighs over him daily, saying, "If I put breath into this [man], he must suffer many pains." And I said into My Father, "Put breath into him; I will be an advocate for him." And My Father said unto Me, "If I put breath into him, My beloved Son, Thou will be obliged to go down into the world, and to suffer many pains for him before Thou shalt have redeemed him, and made him to come back to his primal state." And I said unto My Father, "Put breath into him; I will be his advocate, and I will go down into the world, and will fulfil Thy command.'" ('Discourse on Abbaton by Timothy, Archbishop of Alexandria,' in *Coptic Martyrdoms etc. in Dialect of Upper Egypt*, ed. and translated E. A. Wallis Budge (1914), 482. Timothy, archbishop of Alexandria, died in A.D. 385. Brackets are included in Budge's English translation)."³⁶ ¶ *He hath put him to grief. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin* [**עֹשֶׂה**] *he shall see his seed*. The Targum (**ܬ**) has, "In order to cleanse their souls from sin, that they might see the kingdom of their Messiah, that their sons and daughters might multiply." The LXX (**Θ**) reads, "When his soul shall be given up for a sin offering; of you he shall see a seed." The Douay-Rheims (**ϐ**) has, "If he shall lay down his life for sin, he shall see a long-lived seed." ¶ Wordsworth underscores the words of the Targum (**ܬ**): "The *Chaldee Targum* has here the remarkable words, 'They shall see the Kingdoms of their Messiah.'" ¶ Urwick has, regarding **עֹשֶׂה**: "a guilt-offering, from **עָשָׂה**, to be guilty (Leviticus 4:13, 22, 27; 5:2–4, 17, 19); the noun occasionally signifies simply guilt, Genesis 26:10;

³⁶ Nelson, Elder Russell M., "The Creation," *Ensign*, May 2000, p. 84.

Psalms 68:22; Proverbs 14:9, but usually *guilt-offering*. It occurs twenty-six times in Leviticus ... The **זָבִיחַ** was a sacrifice for individual sin ... As in ISAIAH 53:5 the Divine Servant is represented as a sin-offering. His death being an *expiation*, so here He is described as a *guilt offering* ... His soul, not simply for the pronoun, but with special reference to the nature of the **זָבִיחַ**, which was the *guilt-offering* in the case of individual sin (Leviticus 5:17; Numbers 5:6). Compare to Matthew 20:28.” ¶ Abinadi, much like Isaiah, testified of Christ expiatory sacrifice and the seed of Christ: “And now I say unto you, who shall declare his generation? Behold, I say unto you, that when his soul has been made an *offering for sin* he shall see his seed. And now what say ye? And who shall be his seed? Behold I say unto you, that whosoever has heard the words of the prophets, yea, all the holy prophets who have prophesied concerning the coming of the Lord—I say unto you, that all those who have hearkened unto their words, and believed that the Lord would redeem his people, and have looked forward to that day for a remission of their sins, I say unto you, that these are his seed, or they are the heirs of the kingdom of God. For these are they whose sins he has borne; these are they for whom he has died, to redeem them from their transgressions. And now, are they not his seed? Yea, and are not the prophets, every one that has opened his mouth to prophesy, that has not fallen into transgression, I mean all the holy prophets ever since the world began? I say unto you that they are his seed. And these are they who have published peace, who have brought good tidings of good, who have published salvation; and said unto Zion: Thy God reigneth!” (Mosiah 15:10–14). Right after this, Abinadi speaks of the beautiful feet of those who share the Gospel of Jesus Christ). In Mosiah 5 we likewise have: “And now, because of the covenant which ye have made ye shall be called the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters; for behold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you; for ye say that your hearts are changed through faith on his name; therefore, ye are born of him and have become his sons and his daughters. And under this head ye are made free, and there is no other head whereby ye can be made free. There is no other name given whereby salvation cometh; therefore, I would that ye should take upon you the name of Christ, all you that have entered into the covenant with God that ye should be obedient unto the end of your lives. And it shall come to pass that whosoever doeth this shall be found at the right hand of God, for he shall know the name by which he is called; for he shall be called by the name of Christ” (Mosiah 5:7–9). ¶ *He shall prolong his days*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And prolong *their* days.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Which shall prolong their days.” ¶ Cheyne, speaking of the Servant, explains that, “death hath no more

dominion over him.”³⁷ Urwick writes: “Though the Divine Servant die, yet shall He live.” Jenour has: “*He shall prolong his days*] The subject of this prophecy was to be cut off from the land of the living, to make his soul, or life, an offering for sin, and to be laid in the receptacle of the dead; yet here it is declared, he shall prolong his days: what can this mean, but that he shall rise from the grave and live again forever? (See Revelation 1:18).” So also Rawlinson, “A seeming contradiction to the statement (ISAIAH 53:8) that he should be ‘cut off’ out of the land of the living; and the more surprising because his death is made the condition of this long life: ‘When thou shalt make his soul an offering [or, “sacrifice”] for sin,’ then ‘he shall prolong his days.’ But the resurrection of Christ, and his entrance upon an immortal life, (Romans 6:9) after offering himself as a Sacrifice upon the cross, exactly meets the difficulty and solves the riddle (comp. Revelation 1:18).” ¶ *And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And those that keep (literally, ‘to do’) the law of the Lord shall prosper through His pleasure.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Moreover it is the determination of the Lord.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “And the will of the Lord shall be prosperous in his hand.” The Lord has power—for He will be the judge—to exalt and justify.

11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, [and] shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “He shall deliver their souls from the servitude of the nations, they shall see the vengeance upon their enemies; the shall be satisfied with the spoil of their kings.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “To remove him from the trouble of his soul.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “Because his soul hath laboured, he shall see and be filled.” ¶ Urwick has: “The prophet’s strain from this point becomes triumphant—after the sufferings, glory.” ¶ *By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “By His wisdom He shall justify the righteous, in order to make many to keep (literally, ‘to do’) the law.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “To shew him light and fashion him for knowledge—to justify the Righteous One who is serving many well.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has *just* instead of *righteous*. ¶ Urwick notes: “Here those justified are not righteous; they are sinners, as is clear from the words which immediately follow, where *their iniquities* are named. But though sinners, the righteous

³⁷ Romans 6:9, “Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.”

Servant justifies them, and is righteous in doing so, because *He bears* their iniquities.” (See notes on ISAIAH 44:22 regarding justification and sanctification.) Elder Jeffrey R. Holland provided some comfort on the topic of our imperfection: “First of all, if in the days ahead you not only see limitations in those around you but also find elements in your own life that don’t yet measure up to the messages you have heard this weekend, please don’t be cast down in spirit and don’t give up ... With the gift of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and the strength of heaven to help us, we *can* improve, and the great thing about the gospel is we get credit for *trying*, even if we don’t always succeed.”³⁸

¶ *For he shall bear their iniquities.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And He shall pray for their sins.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “When he shall bear away their sins.” Instead of *iniquities*, likewise, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *sins*. ¶ Urwick explains: “Now, according to the ceremonial law, the sin-stricken Israelite came bearing his own iniquity to the altar, and leading thereto an innocent victim, a bullock or a lamb, whose life he offers as a substitute for his own; thus confessing that the wages of his sin is death; that his own conscience, as well as divine and holy love, demanded an expiation; and that the common basis and fellowship of life involved the possibility of substitution. When within the precincts of the sanctuary, he was to put his hand, or rather to *press* (ⲡⲓⲛⲓ)³⁹ his hand, *heavily* (Psalm 88:7) upon the head of the animal (Leviticus 1:4; 4:24). This act was to be performed by the offerer himself; it could not be entrusted to anyone else; never to a priest, except when the sacrifice was presented for the priesthood collectively (Exodus 29:10, 15, 19); for the nation collectively, the elders were to do it, and on the day of atonement the high priest. This act was designed to indicate the personal and intimate relation between the sinner and the victim. We read (Leviticus 1:4): ‘It shall he accepted for him, to make atonement for him.’ The sinner had then with his own hands to perform the act of immolation, that the offering might be clearly marked as his own. The receiving of the blood as it streamed from the fatal wound, and the sprinkling of it, were the exclusive work of the priests. This ritual must be kept in view in the explanation of the words: ‘*Upon Him was laid the iniquity of us all; He shall bear their iniquities.*’ It finds its fulfilment in the atoning death of the Divine Servant,

and the truths it embodied are fully met and satisfied thereby.”

12 Therefore will I divide him [a portion] with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Therefore, I will divide to Him the spoil of many people, and the treasures of strong fortifications.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Therefore he shall inherit many.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “Therefore will I distribute to him very many.” ¶ Barnes suggests: “The words here used are taken from the custom of distributing the spoils of victory after a battle, and the idea is, that as a conqueror takes valuable spoils, so the Messiah would go forth to the spiritual conquest of the world, and subdue it to himself ... the spoils of his conquests would be among the mighty or the many; that is, that his victories would not be confined to a few in number, or to the feeble, but the triumphs of his conquests would extend afar, and be found among the potentates and mighty people of the earth.” I wonder if this verse is related to: “And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father’s kingdom; therefore all that my Father hath shall be given unto him” (D&C 84:38); “He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son” (Revelation 21:7); and “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (John 17:21). Without the atonement, none of this would have been possible. ¶ *And he shall divide the spoil with the strong.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “He shall divide the spoil.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And divide the spoils of the strong.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “And he shall divide the spoils of the strong.” ¶ Gill writes: “... he shall spoil principalities and powers, destroy Satan and his angels, and make an entire conquest of all his mighty and powerful enemies.” Barnes explains: “It was from language such as this that the Jews obtained the notion that the Messiah would be a distinguished conqueror, and hence, they looked forward to one who as a warrior would carry the standard of victory around the world. But it is evident that it may be applied with much higher beauty to the spiritual victories of the Redeemer, and that it expresses the great and glorious truth that the conquests of the true religion will yet extend over the most formidable obstacles on the earth.” Delitzsch explains: “... the great ones of the earth will

³⁸ Holland, Elder Jeffrey R. Tomorrow the Lord Will Do Wonders among You. April 2016 *General Conference*.

³⁹ This word not only includes the idea of placing or leaning but also that of the *laying on of hands* (TDOT). This last concept has numerous significations, including that of *transference*: “By means of this gesture, Moses transfers his authority to his successor, the priest transfers sins to the scapegoat, and the offerer transfers them to the sacrificial animal (Jewish tradition)” (TDOT).

be brought to do homage to Him, or at all events to submit to Him.” And once again, the idea of becoming one with the Father and His Beloved and the Holy Ghost comes to mind. ¶ *Because he hath poured out his soul unto death:* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Because He has delivered His life unto death.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Because his soul was delivered up to death.” Instead of *soul*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *life*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲫ) has *delivered* instead of *poured out*. ¶ Cheyne has: “*Poured out his soul*” The prophet again emphasizes the voluntary nature of the Servant’s sufferings.” We especially saw this in Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice and Isaac’s disposition to be sacrificed, as a type of Messiah’s expiatory sacrifice. Gill explains: “Because he hath poured out his soul unto death; as water is poured out (Psalm 22:14), or rather as the wine was poured out in the libations or drink offerings; for Christ’s soul was made an offering for sin, as before; and it may be said with respect to his blood, in which is the life, that was shed or poured out for the remission of sin; of which he was emptied.” Delitzsch has: “The blood of the typical sacrifice, which has been hitherto dumb, begins to speak. Faith, which penetrates to the true meaning of the prophecy, hopes on not only for the Lion of the tribe of Judah, but also for the Lamb of God, which beareth the sin of the world.” ¶ Elder Bruce D. Porter testified: “There is yet another dimension of a broken heart—namely; our deep gratitude for Christ’s suffering on our behalf. In Gethsemane, the Savior ‘descended below all things’ as He bore the burden of sin for every human being. At Golgotha, He ‘poured out his soul unto death’ and His great heart literally broke with an all-encompassing love for the children of God. When we remember the Savior and His suffering, our hearts too will break in gratitude for the Anointed One.”⁴⁰ ¶ *And he was numbered with the transgressors.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And He shall make the rebellious to keep (literally, ‘to do’) the law.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And he was numbered among transgressors.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲫ) has, “And was reputed with the wicked.” ¶ Barnes has: “... he suffered himself to be numbered with the transgressors, or to be put to death with malefactors.” ¶ *And he bare the sins of many.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “He shall pray for the sins of many.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And bore away the sins of many.” ¶ Driver & Neubauer quote Yepheth Ben ‘Ali, speaking of the Messiah: “The prophet next says, ‘When his soul makes a trespass-offering,’ indicating thereby that his soul was compelled to take Israel’s guilt upon itself, as it is said below, ‘And he bare the sin of many.’ Another commentator however understands the phrase as meaning that ‘his soul gave itself in place of a trespass-offering,’ i.e., he gave himself up freely to be slain.”

⁴⁰ Porter, Elder Bruce D., “A Broken Heart and a Contrite Spirit,” October 2007 *General Conference*.

Urwick explains: “It is true that the verb נשא also expresses the idea of *bearing away*, and this with reference to sin; because the Israelite, *bearing* his sin with his sacrifice to the sanctuary, there to offer the victim, had his sin thus cancelled and his guilt removed. The ceremonial of the *Day of Atonement* [יום כפר] confirmed this, because the scapegoat was ‘to *bear* upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited’ (Leviticus 16:22 [וְנָשָׂא הַשָּׂעִיר עָלָיו] —And the goat shall *bear* upon him)); but even here the words נשא עָלָיו convey the idea of a burden *borne*. The word, however, thus came to mean not only the means of forgiveness, but forgiveness itself; and thus we find it used in Psalm 32:1: אֲשֶׁר־נְשִׂי-פָשַׁע [Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven] and Psalm 32:5: וְנָשָׂאתָ עֲוֹן חַטָּאתִי [forgavest the iniquity of my sin].” ¶ *And made intercession for the transgressors.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And as for the transgressors, each shall be pardoned for His sake.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And on account of their iniquities was delivered up.” The BPE (Ⲫ) has, “And he was found among the transgressors,” while Lamsa repeats the idea that He died the death of transgressors. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲫ) has, “And hath prayed for the transgressors.” See also ISAIAH 59:16. ¶ Gill has: “... as he did upon the cross, even for those that were the instruments of his death, (Luke 23:34) and as he now does, in heaven, for all those sinners for whom he died; not merely in a petitionary way, but by presenting himself, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; pleading the merits of these, and calling for, in a way of justice and legal demand, all those blessings which were stipulated in an everlasting covenant between him and his Father, to be given to his people, in consequence of his sufferings and death.” Barnes has: “It may not refer here to the mere act of making prayer or supplication, but rather perhaps to the whole work of the intercession, in which the Redeemer, as high priest, presents the merit of his atoning blood before the throne of mercy and pleads for people.” ¶ Elder Bruce R. McConkie explains: “According to the law of intercession, as ordained and established by the Father, the Lord Jesus has ‘power to make intercession for the children of men.’ (Mosiah 15:8.) That is to say, he has the role of interceding, of mediating, of praying, petitioning, and entreating the Father to grant mercy and blessings to men. One of Isaiah’s great Messianic prophecies says: ‘He bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors (ISAIAH 53:12). Of this ministry of intercession Paul affirms: ‘It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us’ (Romans 8:34). And it is Lehi who tells us: Christ ‘is the

firstfruits unto God, inasmuch as he shall make intercession for all the children of men; and they that believe in him shall be saved. And because of the intercession for all all men come unto God; wherefore, they stand in the presence of him, to be judged of him according to the truth and holiness which is in him' (2 Nephi 2:9–10)."⁴¹ ¶ Henderson notes: "So manifestly is the doctrine of atonement taught in this important section of the prophet, that Gesenius himself is compelled to acknowledge it in the following terms: 'Most Hebrew readers, who were previously familiar with the ideas of sacrifice and substitution, must necessarily have taken this view of the passage; and it cannot be doubted, that the apostolic representation of the death of Christ as an atonement pre-eminently rests

upon this basis' (Comment, ii, Theil. p. 191)." Urwick wrote: "It is true, as the Epistle to the Hebrews says: '*The blood of bulls and of goats could never take away sins*,'⁴² they were effectual only as types of the one great sacrifice offered for the sin of the world by the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross; but the penitent Israelite, by means of them, obtained the hope of the forgiveness which God in Christ can grant."

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⁴¹ McConkie, Bruce R. *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1985.

⁴² Hebrews 10:4.

Isaiah 54

In the Book of Mormon, before quoting ISAIAH 54, the Lord teaches: “But if they [i.e., the Gentile nations] will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance; And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem. And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem. And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst. And then shall the work of the Father commence at that day, even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people. Verily I say unto you, at that day shall the work of the Father commence among all the dispersed of my people, yea, even the tribes which have been lost, which the Father hath led away out of Jerusalem. Yea, the work shall commence among all the dispersed of my people, with the Father to prepare the way whereby they may come unto me, that they may call on the Father in my name. Yea, and then shall the work commence, with the Father among all nations in preparing the way whereby his people may be gathered home to the land of their inheritance. And they shall go out from all nations; and they shall not go out in haste, nor go by flight, for I will go before them, saith the Father, and I will be their rearward” (3 Nephi 21:29). Then, after quoting ISAIAH 54 the Savior says: “For surely [Isaiah] spake as touching all things concerning my people which are of the house of Israel; therefore it must needs be that he must speak also to the Gentiles” (3 Nephi 23:2). The Savior also speaks about the Book of Mormon going forth among the Gentile nations with an invitation to baptism (3 Nephi 23:4–5). ¶ Elder Orson Pratt explained these verses in 3 Nephi 21, which I believe must be understood in order to comprehend ISAIAH 54 in its proper context. Elder Orson Pratt quotes 2 Nephi 16:6–10: “‘And thus commandeth the Father that I should say unto you: At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel’—that is the Gospel contained in this book which he promised to bring forth unto them [i.e., the Book of Mormon—GB]—‘and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations, and above all the people of the whole earth,’—you can judge whether this is true or not so far as the American nation is concerned—‘... and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them.’” Elder Pratt goes on to explain that this removal meant moving away from Jackson County and eventually setting in the Rocky Mountains ... “There is one thing which I am now about to read which has not yet been fulfilled, and which we must fulfill before Zion is redeemed. I will read it—‘And then I will remember my covenant which I have made unto my people, O house of Israel, and I will bring my gospel unto them’ (3 Nephi 16:11).” Elder Pratt then explains the importance of taking the Gospel to “the remnants of Joseph,” that is, to the Lamanites. “The Lord said when their record [i.e., the Book of Mormon—GB] should come forth in the latter days that he would send his messengers to them ... After having foretold a great many things that should transpire in the latter days our Lord and Savior also spoke of that portion of the Gentiles which would repent and receive this book called the Book of Mormon, and he makes the following promise unto them—‘If they will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them’ (3 Nephi 21:22) ... This the Lord has done, and the Church now numbers over a hundred thousand right here [this was written back in 1875—GB] ... Another thing mentioned in prophecy is that they, ‘the Gentiles, shall assist my people, the house of Israel, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem. And then shall they assist my people, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, that may be gathered in unto the New Jerusalem. And then shall the power of heaven come down and be in the midst of this people; and I also will be in their midst. And then shall the work of the Father commence at that day, even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people. Verily I say unto you, at that day shall the work of the Father commence among all the dispersed of my people’ (3 Nephi 21:23–26).” Elder Pratt explains that members need to pray fervently for the conversion of the Lamanites which will lead to the building of the New Jerusalem. “The Lord says—‘They,’ the Gentiles, who believe in the Book of Mormon, ‘shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem’ (3 Nephi 21:23) ... [this gathering must take place] to all the tribes that dwell in the Territories of the United States, also to all those who are scattered through Mexico, and Central and South America, and the object of our going will be to declare the principles of the Gospel unto them, and bring them to a knowledge of the truth ... ‘then shall the powers of heaven come down and be in the midst of this people; and I also will be in your midst’ (3 Nephi 21:25) ... Now I do not say that this will be a period after his second coming in the clouds of heaven, but I believe that it will be a coming prior to that time, when he comes to manifest himself to all the nations and kindreds of the earth” (Elder Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*, 17:297b–302a.). ¶ Does not the *power of heavens* so spoken off above seem to include the building of all these temples to the Lord? And the pouring out of the Holy Ghost? Does not the gathering of the Ten Lost

Tribes seem to be included? So also the chapter heading for 3 Nephi 21 seems to indicate. So, who is *the barren that didst not bear* mentioned in ISAIAH 54? I believe Judah and Israel are meant and it is they to whom the Lord speaks in so much tenderness. The latter-day restoration and gathering of Israel has begun. All are being invited to come unto Christ. Truly, there is reason to shout for joy. Through the principle of telescoping, the Prophet Isaiah was permitted to see the restoration of the Gospel, the preaching of the same throughout the world, as well as the New Jerusalem and the millennial day.

vv. 1–5. After all that Israel has suffered she is invited to shout for joy for she is no longer the desolate wife. The Restored Church is commanded to enlarge her tent and strengthen her stakes, and gather Israel from throughout the nations. The Holy One of Israel is Israel’s husband.

1 ¶ **AND then shall that which is written come to pass:** SING, O barren, thou [that] didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou [that] didst not travail with child; for more [are] the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD.

AND then shall that which is written come to pass: SING, O barren, thou that didst not bear. Targum (Ⓢ) has, “Sing, O Jerusalem, who was like a barren woman that beareth not.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “Rejoice thou barren, who bearest not.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, “Give praise, O thou barren, that bearest not.” ¶ The expression “And then shall that which is written come to pass,” I would propose in this instance, is an allusion to the fulfillment of the promises in *Rain in Due Season* where the later-day gathering of Israel to her Lord is promised: “And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee” (Deuteronomy 30:2–4). The Hebrew *sing* [שִׁיר] from the root, [שָׂרָה] is translated by Gesenius as “shout for joy.” Jennings points out that indeed we have reason to sing—or to shout for joy—when we receive the news of the completed atonement. In Job 38:4–7 we read of mankind’s reaction to the Plan of Salvation in the premortal world—a plan whose foundation was Christ’s atoning sacrifice: “Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast

understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?” ¶ ISAIAH 54:1 is intimately related to ISAIAH 49:21, “Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been?” Both allude to the lost ten tribes as well as the Lamanite nation. But it will not end there and rather continue forth unto the calling of all the tribes ending up with Judah. ¶ In ISAIAH 5 we can read the allegory of the Zenos regarding the olive vineyard. Why are we to weep with joy, it is because the Lord has once again restored His Church (Jacob 5:70) and called His servants for the last time to go forth into the vineyard calling both Jew and Gentile into the fold and grafting back the natural branches into the tree. All are invited to come unto Christ. The last shall be first and the first, last (Jacob 5:63). We are all called, but each one of us decides if we will be among the chosen. We decide if we will choose to believe the report (ISAIAH 53:1) or turn our backs on Christ. ¶ To *travail with child* means to bear gospel fruits. Many of the Gentile commentators have discarded the Jews and the rest of Israel. In the affectionate expressions of this chapter we find that while Israel has felt *forsaken* and *desolate*, that she will bring forth the fruits of repentance mentioned in Deuteronomy 30:3 and Jacob 5. The Lord will gather her with great and *tender mercies*. Keith observes: “The same call to sing and rejoice, in reference to the same period, is often addressed to the nation: ‘Sing, daughter of Zion; shout, Israel; be glad, and rejoice with all the heart, daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord hath taken away thy judgments. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy,’ (Zephaniah 3:14–17). The view given of the verse is corroborated by other passages, as in Hosea 2, where Israel’s calamities are represented as arising from, and continuing during, her separation from God her husband; but by judgment she will be brought to return to the Lord, when she shall sing as in the days of her youth, and shall call the Lord *Ishi* [אִשִּׁי], *my husband*.” The Hosea quote is of particular interest as it points to Ephraim, the Northern Kingdom, or the Ten

Tribes who would soon be taken captive. ¶ *Break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou [that] didst not travail with child.* Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Rejoice with praise and be glad.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Break forth with shouts of joy, thou who sufferest not the pangs of child birth.” Instead of *cry aloud*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *rejoice* (Lamsa) / *exult* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, for the first half, “Sing forth praise, and make a joyful noise.” ¶ Regarding צְהִל, As a horseman I could not pass up what Whitehouse says here: “... the verb rendered cry aloud is descriptive of a high-pitched voice (cf. ISAIAH 10:30), employed in Jeremiah 5:8 in reference to the neighing of horses. It is the natural expression of strong emotion, whether of joy or fear.” So also Gesenius, who defines צְהִל as: “an acute and clear voice; hence to neigh as a horse, (compare הִלֵּל and צָלַל), Jeremiah 5:8; to shout for joy, to cry out (for joy), used of persons, ISAIAH 12:6; 54:1.” ¶ Regarding barren, Wade explains: “The word is used here, not in the sense of one that has never yet had offspring (as in 1 Samuel 2:5), but of one who has been bereaved of her children and separated from her husband.” ¶ *For more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Who was like a woman that conceiveth not: for more shall be the children of Jerusalem that was laid desolate, than of the inhabited city, saith the Lord.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “For many more are the children of the desolate than of her who hath a husband.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “For many are the children of the desolate, more than of her that hath a husband, saith the Lord.” ¶ Nägelsbach has: “For the Israel to which he speaks here is the שְׁמֵמָה ‘desolate,’ that is no more בְּעוּלָה ‘married,’ but is forsaken and repudiated by her husband.” The expression “Children of the desolate [בְּנֵי-שְׁמֵמָה]” is an interesting one. ¶ The Pulpit Commentary in Galatians 4:27 (where this verse in Isaiah is used as an allegory) explains that *desolate* is the same word used in 2 Samuel 13:20, “And Absalom her brother said unto her, Hath Amnon thy brother been with thee? but hold now thy peace, my sister: he is thy brother; regard not this thing. So Tamar remained *desolate* [שְׁמֵמָה] in her brother Absalom's house.”

Gesenius explains the word שְׁמֵמָה, as *silent* as well as *desolate* in the sense of *laid waste*. TDOT speaks of both psychological as well as geographical desolation. ¶ The Pulpit Commentary in Galatians has: “It points in the present case to the solitary and unhappy condition of a woman ‘forsaken by her husband.’” Most exegetes in Galatians speak of Sarah as being the barren who could not conceive, in contrast to Agar who was fertile. For those who may be interested, Govett, here in

Isaiah, does an excellent job of presenting that perspective. However, if we look at the scriptures carefully, we can note that it has been Israel who has now been the *desolate* and *forsaken* one. As the times of the Gentile nations come closer to being fulfilled, the gospel will go with much strength to all of the world. Jennings well notes: “We must not press this [what was said in Galatians] so far as to take the whole prophecy away from the Jew altogether, and apply it solely to the [Christian] Church, leaving Israel cast away permanently—that all Scripture clearly forbids. Nor, indeed, can this whole prophecy be applied to the Church; for, as in Christ, God never hides His face from her ‘in a little wrath’; nor is the figure of a married wife applied to the Church, but that of a ‘chaste virgin’ (2 Corinthians 11:2); so that the whole scope of Scripture demands that this address be seen as directed primarily to the penitent remnant, representing the redeemed nation [of Israel].” Paul also warned the Gentiles not to boast that they have replaced Israel, in Romans 11:17–26. ¶ Rabbi Rosenberg, leaning on Redak, observes: “*the children of the married woman*” This refers to the gentiles ... as opposed to the bereaved widow, who is desolate, symbolizing Jerusalem ... [and] alludes to the fourth kingdom mentioned by Daniel (Daniel 2:40), which will dominate the world prior to the coming of the Messiah.” As LDS we would say, compare it to Daniel 2:45, a kingdom to be established precisely before the Second Advent of Messiah. ¶ Horsley suggests: “The converted race of Israel is represented under the image of the wife turned out of doors for misbehaviour, forgiven and taken home again.” Certainly Judah and Israel have been repudiated—but not forever. Nägelsbach writes: “In so far Israel is despised, repudiated, forsaken by its husband. But from the broken shell issues the kernel that from the beginning was hid in the shell till the period of ripeness. And this kernel now enters on a new existence, in which it develops to a greatness and glory, in comparison with which the greatness and glory of its former stage of existence almost vanish. For the narrow house becomes a mighty edifice under which all nations of the earth find room.”

2 Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes;

Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Enlarge the place of the house of thy dwelling, and from the cities of the land do not keep back the inhabitants; multiply the people of the camp, and increase the number of thy governors.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “For the Lord said, Enlarge the place of thy tent and thy curtains; fix up; spare not; lengthen thy

cords and make thy stakes strong.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, for the first half, “Enlarge the place of thy tent, and stretch out the skins of thy tabernacles.” ¶ Cheyne, leaning on Dr. Weir, points to Jeremiah 10:20, where the opposite thought is found: “My tabernacle is spoiled, and all my cords are broken: my children are gone forth of me, and they are not: there is none to stretch forth my tent any more, and to set up my curtains.” Leeson renders the Jeremiah text: “*But now* my tent is laid waste, and all my cords are torn asunder; my children are gone away from me, and they are not *here*; there is no one to stretch forth my tent any more, and to set up my curtains.” ¶ Henderson explains: “This beautiful metaphor is taken from the pastoral life, which, in the East, renders movable habitations absolutely necessary. The Orientals have two kinds of tents, the one larger, and the other smaller; but both constructed much in the same way. They are sustained by poles, more or fewer in number, according to the size of the tent, but the tallest is always in the midst; while the others suspend the covering round the sides. This covering is made of a stuff woven from wool and camel’s hair; it hangs down like a curtain over the side-poles, and is fastened by cords to wooden pegs, which are firmly driven into the ground. Other cords, fastened at the one end to the tops of the poles, and at the other to pegs or stakes, keep the tent steady, and secure it against the violence of storms. As the family increases, it is proportionally enlarged, and requires the cords to be longer, and the stakes to be stronger in proportion.

By אֹהֶל, *tent*, is meant the entire habitation; by מִשְׁכָּנָה, *dwelling*, the different compartments into which it was divided by the smaller curtains suspended from the roof.” Cowles says: “With the figure of oriental and nomadic life in tents before the mind, Zion is exhorted to enlarge her tent-room; to spread out far more widely the tent-curtains within which she dwells; to push this enlargement with unsparing hand; to make her tent-cords longer and her tent-pins stronger; for she must enlarge (‘break forth’) on every hand.” Keith writes: “The increase of the nation is here farther developed in an allusion to the usage with a tent. As an eastern family dwelling in a tent would require, in order to provide for an increase to their numbers, to extend the curtain or covering, and to lengthen the cords and strengthen the stakes which supported it, so Israel is represented as requiring enlarged room for her population which are said to burst forth on all sides.”

¶ Nägelsbach explains: “נָטָה here does not mean ‘to stretch or strain’ (ISAIAH 44:13), but ‘to expand ... The Prophet implies that Zion may become concerned lest her dwelling be too much extended, and that she would check the expansion. He therefore calls on her not to do so: אַל-תִּחְשָׁב ‘do not oppose, hinder it’ (ISAIAH

58:1). In other words, do not oppose the expansion of this “tent” but rather embrace it. ¶ For all the nations of the earth are to find their spiritual dwelling under this tent. Corresponding to the greatness of the tent, the ropes must be lengthened and the pins be set firmly. But it has been justly remarked that strengthening the stakes refers not only to the greater resistance required for a tent of greater dimensions, but also to the fact that this is to be no more a nomadic tent, but is to be a tabernacle continuing forever (ISAIAH 33:20).” ¶ Elder Merrill J. Bateman, who has frequently quoted ISAIAH 54:1–2, also explains that this verse includes an allusion to the Tabernacle built in the desert, during the time of Moses. And then tells us that as the curtains and cords are expanded, they represent the idea that temples will cover the earth.¹ ¶ Brewster writes: “The clarion call to ‘enlarge’ and ‘strengthen’ the stakes of Zion was given anciently to Isaiah (ISAIAH 54:2), repeated to the Nephites (3 Nephi 22:2), and reiterated in our day (D&C 109:59; 133:9). A stake is an ecclesiastical unit of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and covers a specific geographical area. According to the Lord, stakes are ‘curtains or the strength of Zion’ (D&C 101:21). They are places where the Saints of God may be instructed more perfectly in the doctrines of salvation.”² President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “Isaiah speaks of Zion as a tent, or tabernacle, having in mind the Tabernacle which was built and carried in the wilderness in the days of Moses, and the cords are the binding cables that extend from the tent, or tabernacle, to the stakes which are fastened in the ground. Now, the Lord revealed that Zion was to be built and surrounding her would be the stakes helping to bind and keep her in place ... Zion is the tent, the stakes of Zion are the binding pegs that support her.”³ Bishop Merrill J. Bateman shares: “[the tent] represents the gospel of Christ. [Isaiah] states that in the last days the cords of the tent would be stretched across the earth and stakes would be planted in every land. We literally are seeing that fulfilled today. As I have thought about these passages, I have thought of the awesome task of supporting the Brethren in carrying the gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.”⁴ President Ezra Taft Benson teaches: “In revelation the Lord states: ‘For Zion must increase in beauty and in holiness; her borders must be enlarged; her stakes must be strengthened; yea, verily I say unto you, Zion must arise

¹ Bateman, Elder Merrill, BYU devotional, 11 January 2000.

² Hoyt W. Brewster, Jr., *Doctrine and Covenants Encyclopedia*, p. 271, 328, 559; *Isaiah Plain and Simple: The Message of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, p. 263.

³ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Church History and Modern Revelation*, 2:88.

⁴ Bateman, Bishop Merrill J. *Stretching the Cords of the Tent*, *Ensign* (CR), May 1994, p.65.

and put on her beautiful garments’ (D&C 82:14). Here the Lord declares a great purpose of a stake: to be a beautiful emblem for all the world to see. The phrase ‘put on her beautiful garments’ refers, of course, to the inner sanctity that must be attained by every member who calls himself or herself a Saint ... The Lord gives this explanation of the purpose of stakes: ‘Verily I say unto you all: Arise and shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations; And that the gathering together upon the land of Zion, and upon her stakes, may be for a defense, and for a refuge from the storm, and from wrath when it shall be poured out without mixture upon the whole earth’ (D&C 115:5–6).”⁵

¶ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, in one of my all-time favorite talks (part of which we quoted under ISAIAH 33:23)—warning against those who criticize the Church or lean on false doctrines—pleads: “I speak carefully and lovingly to any of the adults of the Church, parents or otherwise, who may be given to cynicism or skepticism, who in matters of whole-souled devotion always seem to hang back a little, who at the Church’s doctrinal campsite always like to pitch their tents out on the periphery of religious faith. To all such—whom we do love and wish were more comfortable camping nearer to us—I say, please be aware that the full price to be paid for such a stance does not always come due in your lifetime. No, sadly, some elements of this can be a kind of profligate national debt, with payments coming out of your children’s and grandchildren’s pockets in far more expensive ways than you ever intended it to be ... When erecting their sacred tabernacle in the wilderness of Sinai, the ancient children of Israel were commanded to make firm their supporting cords and strengthen the stakes which held them. The reason? Storms arise in life—regularly.”⁶

3 For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left. Targum (ⓧ) has, “For thou shalt spread abroad to the south and to the north.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “Extend still farther to the right and left.” Instead of *break forth*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *expand* (Lamsa) / *multiply* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “For thou shalt pass on to the right hand, and to the left.”

¶ Nägelsbach writes: “There appears in these words to be an allusion to Genesis 28:14, ‘and thy seed shall be

as dust of the earth, and thou shalt break forth (וְיִצְרָא) to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south.” Several exegetes suggest that they shall expand on all sides. In Genesis, these words were given to Jacob (or Israel) in continuation of the Abrahamic covenant. This is also the meaning for us today.

Nägelsbach continues: “We learn from these passages that the seed of Israel shall not merely take possession of some nations, but of all nations, and not of lands by expelling the inhabitants, but actually of the inhabitants themselves. For these themselves shall become the seed of Israel.” And most of the seed, rather than being adopted into Israel, will be literal descendants who have been spread throughout the nations of the world, where the Lord would “gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee”

(Deuteronomy 30:3b). ¶ *And thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.*

Targum (ⓧ) has, “And thy children shall inherit the nations, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.”

The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “And thy seed shall inherit nations and thou shalt inhabit wasted cities.” Instead of inherit the *Gentiles*; I prefer to translate גוֹיִם here as *nations*,

as in the ASV. Govett quotes the John the revelator, wherein those of every tribe (Juda, Reuben, Gad, Asser, Naphtali, Manasseh, Simeon, Levi, Issachar, Zebulon, Joseph, Benjamin) are sealed and “After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands” (Revelation 7:1–9).

4 Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame; for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.

Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame. The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “Be not terrified because thou hast been exposed to shame; nor blush because thou hast been reproached.” Instead of *confounded*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *rebuked* (Lamsa) / *overcome* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) instead of *confounded* and *blush* has *ashamed* and *confounded*. ¶ Gesenius explains that בִּישׁוֹ not so much means *blush* but rather “paleness and terror.” Westermann points out that “With Israel and the nations round about her, suffering and shame went together as the outside and the inside of the same

⁵ Benson, Ezra Taft. *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1988, pp. 149–151.

⁶ Holland, Elder Jeffrey R. “A Prayer for the Children,” *General Conference*, April 2003.

phenomenon.” Westermann goes on to explain that just as a barren woman suffered and also felt shame, so it was with Israel in her defeat. And we might say that military defeat was the small part and portion of it, compared to the knowledge that God had refused to continue, for the time, to be her God and to consider her His people. The shame spoken of here is that of Israel’s apostasy. We have heard the injunction often from the Lord, not to fear but to trust in His strength and in His arm. ¶ *For thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.* The LXX (6) reads, “For thou shalt forget the shame of ancient times, and the reproach of thy widowhood thou shalt remember no more.” Horsley has: “... ‘the shame of thy youth—the reproach of thy widowhood.’ —‘the shame,’ her transgressions, described under the image of incontinence;⁷ ‘the reproach,’ the punishment. The pardon shall be so complete that the memory both of the offence and the punishment shall be obliterated.” Regarding barrenness, Luther explains: “This is a Hebraism. Since virginity is the greatest kind of disorder [not virginity but rather the unmarried state for a woman of marriageable age; or the state of barrenness for a married woman—GB], fertility receives the highest praise. Where there was no fertility, there was disgrace, as the mother of John shows, ‘Behold, the Lord has taken away my reproach’ (cf. Luke 1:25).” Delitzsch has: “It was no real widowhood, however, but only an apparent one (Jeremiah 51:5), for the husband of Jerusalem was living still.” ¶ Better, Kay explains that the *shame of thy youth* is associated with apostasy. So also Rawlinson who has: “Israel became a ‘widow’ when Jehovah withdrew his presence from her, when the Shekinah disappeared from the temple, and the temple itself was destroyed, and Jerusalem was a desolation, and the peoples captives in a far land.”

5 For thy Maker, [is] thine husband, the LORD of hosts [is] his name; and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel—the God of the whole earth shall he be called.

For thy Maker, thine husband, the LORD of hosts is his name. The LXX (6) reads, “For the Lord who is thy maker, whose name is the Lord of Hosts.” Instead, the Peshitta (5) has, for the first half, “For your LORD shall do thus to you.” The Douay-Rheims (2) has, “For he that made thee shall rule over thee, the Lord of hosts is his name.” Ibn Ezra has: “בועלִיךְ ‘Thine husband’ is here used for מלְכֶךָ ‘thy King,’ and עֹשֶׂיךָ ‘thy Maker’

for אֱלֹהֶיךָ ‘thy God.’” Rabbi Rosenberg, leaning on Ibn Ezra and on Redak explains: “These terms are grammatically plural, used as the plural of majesty.” Cowles has: “The magnificent thoughts of this verse are clothed in the richest poetical conceptions and in the finest style of Hebrew parallelism.—The God who made thee is thy Husband, and he is truly the Lord of Hosts, God of the celestial armies ... Thy redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, their very Savior, their dearest Friend, to be particularly appropriated by them as their own Holy One. He is also truly ‘the God of the whole earth’ ... In Hebrew life, the redeemer was nearest of kin, and especially bound to the sacred duties of personal protection, redress of wrongs and vindication of rights ... Next to that of husband toward wife, his was in Hebrew life the relation that combined in itself most of the elements of a near and faithful friend, bound to make any possible sacrifices and efforts for the welfare of his brother. In this sense Jehovah appears here as the Redeemer as well as the Husband of his people.” ¶ Keith reminds us: “This comparison is often employed in describing the restored favour of God to Israel: ‘I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness and in judgment, and in lovingkindness and in mercies:’ and what is meant by this is taught when it is added, ‘I will say to them who were not my people. Thou art *my people*; and they shall say, Thou art *my God*’ (Hosea 2:19, 23, emphasis added). The same reference as here to the power of God, along with the reference to his relation to Israel as peculiarly their God, is often introduced, as if intended as a pledge that he was able to perform what he promised.” ¶ *And thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel—the God of the whole earth shall he be called.* The LXX (6) reads, “Even he who delivered thee, shall be called the God of Israel, in the whole earth.” ¶ Birks has: “The Redeemer hoped for ... [t]he Holy One of Israel has now made himself the near kinsman (Leviticus 25:48); and He it is that will ransom His people from their bondage.” In 1 Kings 20:28b we read: “Because the Syrians have said, The LORD is God of the hills, but he is not God of the valleys, therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, and ye shall know that I am the LORD.” Just like the Lord is not just the Lord of the hills, nor is He simply the Lord of the valleys, so also the Lord, the Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel is not limited in His power: He is *the God of the whole earth*. And not just the earth, but worlds without number. The day will come when this shall be openly recognized, and *every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess* this truth.

vv. 6–10. The Lord speaks tenderly to Israel. This is the last dispensation, the dispensation of the fullness of times, where the Church will never fall away again.

⁷ Lack of chastity: “failure to restrain sexual appetite” (Webster).

6 ¶ For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.

For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “For as a woman forsaken, and afflicted in spirit, the Shekinah, the Lord, met thee.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “The Lord hath not called thee as a wife forsaken and disconsolate.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has *mourning* instead of *grieved*. ¶ Birks has: “The figure is that of a wife under double grief, not only as barren, but as rejected and disowned by her husband.” Leiser renders the verse: “For as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit did the Lord call thee back, and as a wife of youth, that was rejected, saith thy God.” Keith writes: “The act is represented as already past and done [prophetic perfect]—thy Maker is thine husband—the Lord hath called thee—as in other places, although the events were still future, a form of prophecy fitted to give increased assurance of the certainty of its accomplishment.” Alexander has: “Reduced to a prosaic form and order, this verse seems to mean, that Jehovah had espoused her in her youth, then cast her off for her iniquities, and now at last recalled her from her solitude and grief to be his wife again.” Orelli explains: “Israel was a wife of youth, the Lord’s first love, whom He only temporarily rejected.” It is this wife that the Lord so tenderly invites back to the fold in ISAIAH 54. In ISAIAH 50:1 (for those concerned with the implications of Deuteronomy 24:4) we spoke that the repudiated wife could be taken back by the Husband because she did not enter into a covenant relationship with another husband—and thus in this sense was not defiled. ¶ *And a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And a woman of youth when she was forsaken.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Nor as a wife that hath been hated from her youth. Thy God hath said.” Instead of *a wife of youth*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *a wife forsaken from her youth*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “And as a wife cast off from her youth, said thy God.” Cowles writes: “Thy Maker surely is thy Husband, *for* he now invites thee to return into this relationship, despite of its suspension because of thy past sins ... The spirit of the passage is, Thou shalt be recalled with renewed and yet stronger love, to a married life far more rich in its fruits of joy, and those fruits far more enduring.” Keith has: “The expression ‘a wife of youth,’ may denote the keenness of grief when forsaken or refused, as it is in the text, the affections being warmest in youth; or rather, it may refer to the circumstance that Israel was such, that it was in her youth as a nation that she was selected as the object of divine favour: or both ideas may be included,

as in the following passage:—‘I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals’ (Jeremiah 2:2).⁸ Skinner explains: “Although Zion is temporarily estranged from Jehovah, she is yet a ‘wife of youth’ holding a permanent place in her husband’s affections.” Note the expression אֱלֹהֶיךָ, *thy God*. Here the Lord is reminding Israel of His covenant relationship with her, as we saw in *Rain in Due Season*, “And I will walk among you, and will be *your God*, and ye shall be *my people*” (Leviticus 26:12). Israel may have been forsaken *for a small moment*, but she was not put away forever.

7 For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee.

For a small moment [בְּרִנָּה קָטָן] have I forsaken thee.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “In a little anger have I forsaken thee.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “I left thee for a little while.” ¶ Wordsworth has: “*In a little wrath*] *In an outburst of wrath*, breaking forth like the Flood, to which there is a reference in what follows [ISAIAH 54:9], and which was of short duration.” Keith writes: “There is here a contrast between the sorrows and the future joys of the nation when gathered and blessed. Protracted in duration and grievous in character as has been her shame, it will yet be short and light in comparison of her glory: how great, then, must that glory be?” Luther explains that despite the brevity of our difficult moments, we tend to elongate them in our minds. The Prophet Joseph Smith was comforted by the Savior: “My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a *small moment*; And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high” (D&C 121:7–8a, emphasis added). These words also remind us of “Reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reproved, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy; That he may know that thy faithfulness is stronger than the cords of death” (D&C 121:43–44). For a *small moment*, then, puts mortality in the context of eternity. ¶ *But with great mercies will I gather thee.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “But with great mercies will I bring together thy captivity.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “But with great mercy I will compassionate thee.” ¶ There are few topics that give me more joy than that of the gathering of Israel. She is no longer considered the rejected

⁸ “Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown” (Jeremiah 2:2).

לֹא עַמִּי *not my people* of Hosea 1:9, but rather,
בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים *sons of the living God* (Hosea 1:10).

8 In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.

In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment. The Targum (T) has, “For a little moment I removed the presence of my Shekinah.” The LXX (G) reads, “In a short wrath I turned away my face from thee.” Instead of *in a little wrath*, the Peshitta (S) has *in a raging wrath* (Lamsa) / *with great indignation* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “In a moment of indignation have I hid my face a little while from thee.”

¶ Henderson points out the paronomasia in the first two words, *in a little wrath*, כֶּזֶר קָצֵף. Gill says: “The Syriac version renders it, ‘great wrath’; and so Schultens thinks the word signifies ‘overflowing wrath,’ and the vehemency of it; to which agrees R. Menachem [Apud Jarchi, Kimhi & Ben Melech, in loc.], who interprets it, ‘the heat of wrath.’” Ibn Ezra explains: “The kingdom of Israel will remain forever (comp. Daniel 7:27); and the days of the exile [or we may add, the days before the restoration of the Gospel—GB], though many, will be like a moment in comparison with the everlasting days of the future happiness.” Young says, “The loving-kindness that God will show ... is eternal. The designation *Redeemer* suggests that mercy has indeed been shown ... The lesson, however, is true for each time when because of our sins the Lord removes His presence from us.” Indeed, it is us who hide from the presence of the Lord. ¶ *But with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.* The Targum (T) has, “Yea, for a short time from thee, but with everlasting kindness, which shall not cease, will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.” The LXX (G) reads, “But with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on thee.”

¶ Birks notes that both here and in ISAIAH 54:10, “... the sacred name stands with emphasis at the very close.” The Lord had to permit Israel to be scattered but with great mercies He gathers her. Indeed, the Lord stands with outstretched arms. Our Redeemer invites us to follow Him and be embraced by His *everlasting kindness* [חֶסֶד עוֹלָם].

9 For this, [is-as] the waters of Noah unto me, for [as] I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth,

so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.

For this, the waters of Noah unto me, for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth. The Targum (T) has, “This shall be before me as the days of Noah, when I swore by my Word, that the waters of the deluge, which were in the days of Noah, shall no more pass over the earth.” The LXX (G) reads, “The Lord who delivered thee hath said, ‘From the flood which was in Noah’s time this is my purpose.’” Instead of the first *waters of Noah*, the Peshitta (S) has *days of Noah*. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “This thing is to me as in the days of Noe, to whom I swore, that I would no more bring in the waters of Noe upon the earth.” ¶ Alexander writes [as do several others]: “Instead of בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים [For waters—GB], one or two

manuscripts have כִּי־יָמֵי all in one word, meaning *as the days* of Noah, and Kimhi speaks of this division as existing in some ancient codices of his day. This reading likewise appears in all the ancient versions but the Septuagint, and is preferred by Lowth (as in the days of Noah). It is also a remarkable coincidence that this expression occurs twice in the New Testament (Mathew 24:37, 1 Peter 3:20), but not in reference to this place or to the comparison here instituted. All the latest writers seem to be in favour of adhering to the common text, which is probably the only safe conclusion.” Cowles writes: “The case is like that of Noah’s flood in this respect, viz., that as God bound himself by a solemn oath never to drown the earth again with water; so had he bound himself never again (as before) to be wroth with and to rebuke his Zion.” Nägelsbach writes: “The Prophet supports the foregoing promise of ‘everlasting kindness’ by giving it equal rank with the promise made to Noah (Genesis 8:21 ff., 9:9 ff.). Jehovah Himself calls this promise an everlasting covenant (Genesis 9:16). And on this covenant, as on an immovable basis, rests the present stability of the earth. Here then the promise that the LORD will no more be wroth with Zion is put on a par with this covenant.” ¶ *So have I sworn⁹ that I would not be wroth with thee.* The Targum (T) has, “Thus I swear by my Word, that my anger shall not be hurled upon thee, O Jerusalem, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that will have mercy on thee.” The LXX (G) reads, “As I solemnly promised him at that time that I would no more be angry with the earth on thine account.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “So have I sworn not to be angry with thee, and not to

⁹ שָׁבַע (to swear (denom. from שֶׁבַע seven; inasmuch as the septenary number was sacred).” Gesenius, W., & Tregelles, S. P. (2003). *Gesenius’ Hebrew and Chaldee lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures* (p. 802).

rebuke thee.” ¶ Keith explains: “The expression, ‘I have sworn,’ implies that the Lord had given assurance in the most solemn way, and implies that all his declarations of ultimate peace to Israel would be observed as sacredly as his promise that the waters of the flood should not a second time destroy all flesh.” While there have been many periods of apostasy on the earth, the Lord has promised that with the restoration associated with the dispensation of the fulness of times, the Church would never fall away again.

10 For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace* be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee.

* KJV and Book of Mormon, *peace*; JST, *people*.

For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness [חֲסֶדִי] shall not depart from thee. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “rent” for *removed*, and ends with “O Jerusalem.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Nor in rebuking thee overturn the mountains; and that thy hills should no more be moved.” The Peshitta (Ⲥ) has “For the mountains shall be brought low” (Lamsa) / “Thou the mountains be abased” (BPE) and the hills bent downward.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, “For the mountains shall be moved, and the hills shall tremble; but my mercy shall not depart from thee.” ¶ Alexander explains: “The meaning is not that God’s promise is as stable as the mountains, but that it is more so; they shall be removed, but it shall stand for ever.” Wade has: “A second interruption of God’s mercy to Israel is even more impossible than the removal of the unchangeable mountains.” Cowles has: “This declares not merely that the mountains shall *sooner* depart and the hills be *sooner* shaken on their foundations than God’s kindness shall depart and his covenant be shaken—(although it fully covers and implies this) but it means more, viz., that God’s kindness shall outlast the mountains and his covenant stand firm after the hills shall have been shaken to their deep foundations.” Birks has: “The rendering ‘may depart’ (Vitringa, Knobel) or ‘should the mountains depart’ (Henderson), is grammatically lawful. But the simpler version is confirmed by the words of our Lord himself,—‘Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.’” Kay explains: “... the earth itself, with its granite mountains, shall decay; but not so God’s *kindness* [חֲסֶדִי].”

¶ *Neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee [חֲסֶדִי].* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “So my kindness for thee shall not fail, nor shall the covenant of thy peace ever be changed.”

Instead of *hath mercy on thee*, the Peshitta (Ⲥ) has *the Merciful One*. ¶ Elder Russell M. Nelson taught: “Wearing the temple garment has deep symbolic significance. It represents a continuing commitment. Just as the Savior exemplified the need to endure to the end, we wear the garment faithfully as part of the enduring armor of God. Thus we demonstrate our faith in Him and in His eternal covenants with us. The Lord assured that even though ‘the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my people be removed’ (JST, *Inspired Version*, ISAIAH 54:10). Surely we would not ever want knowingly to discard from us an emblem of His everlasting covenant.”¹⁰ Henderson suggests: “That these promises cannot apply to the past history of the Jews as a nation, is evident from the fact of their present dispersion, which has continued nearly eighteen centuries.” But now, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, Ephraim and Judah will be brought back from their dispersion.

vv. 11–17. Elder Parley P. Pratt explains these verses: “Having traced the great restoration of the earth and its inhabitants, until we find them in the full enjoyment of the promises made to their fathers; and having learned that a future state is not a state of shadows and fables, but something tangible, even a more enduring substance; we shall now take a view of the division of their land, and the laying out of their city, even the holy city, where the tabernacle of God and his sanctuary shall be forever more; for of course this was the city sought for by Abraham and others, who found it not. This view is given in the last chapter of Ezekiel, where he divides the land, by lots to the whole twelve tribes; and lays off the city, and sanctuary in the midst, with its twelve gates, three on each side, the whole lying four-square. But in his 47th chapter, we have a description of a beautiful river, which will issue forth from the eastern front of the temple from under the sanctuary, and run eastward into the Dead Sea, healing the waters and causing a very great multitude of fishes spread from Engedi and Eneglaim, the fishers spread forth their nets; while the miry places shall not be healed, but shall be given to salt. And on either side shall grow all trees for meat,¹¹ whose leaf shall not fade, nor shall the fruit thereof be consumed; it shall bring forth new fruit according to its months, because of the waters issuing from the sanctuary, and their fruits shall be for meat, and their leaves for medicine. But to set forth more fully the building of the city, and the materials of which it will be built, we quote ISAIAH 54:11, to the end of the chapter: ‘O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not

¹⁰ Elder Russell M. Nelson, Personal Preparation for Temple Blessings, *Ensign* (CR), May 2001, p. 32.

¹¹ *Meat* here means *food*, as in much of the Old Testament.

comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee. Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake. Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.”¹² Some of these verses seem particularly pointed to the construction of the New Jerusalem, and to the Millennium, but also have application to Zion, or the restored Church. Evil forces will form against the Saints but the Lord will comfort and protect His disciples.

11 ¶ O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, [and] not comforted! Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.

O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, [and] not comforted! The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “O distressed city that receiveth affliction, concerning her the nations say, She shall not be comforted.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “For he said for thee, Be appeased, Lord.’ thou afflicted and storm beaten! art thou not comforted?” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “O poor little one, tossed with tempest, without all comfort.” ¶ Cowles explains: “In these verses the church appears first as a lone female, long afflicted, tempest-tossed, and not comforted: then as a city, walled and adorned magnificently; the very conception of Zion in that ancient age.” Wordsworth suggests: “Here is another allusion to the Flood.” Nägelsbach notes: “Now the blessing is extended to all. Zion was wretched, hunted, comfortless in her youth and widowhood. **לֹא נִחְמָה** [not comforted] recalls **לֹא רָחַמָה** [not having obtained mercy] (Hosea 1:6) ... What a contrast between this past and the future which the Prophet has in mind.” Barnes writes: “The idea is that of a ship that is driven by the tempest; or any object that is tossed about with a whirlwind.”

¹² Pratt, Parley P. *A Voice of Warning and Instruction to All People Or, an Introduction to the Faith and Doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4 December 1846), pp. 127–129.

¶ *Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.* The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “Behold, I lay the stoned of thy pavement with Mosaic (the Royal Polyglot reads **סִבְיָ**, ‘stibium’), and thy foundations with costly stones.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Behold I am preparing for thee carbuncles for thy building stones, and the sapphire for thy foundations.” Instead of *fair colors*, the Peshitta (Ⓔ) has *beryl*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, for the first half, “Behold I will lay thy stones in order.” ¶ Birks has: “The figure now changes, from a wife restored to favour and blessed with children, to a city after storms and ruin rebuilt in magnificence and beauty ... The true meaning is that the stones would not be coarse and rude, but costly and beautiful, like the sapphire foundations.” And it would not be just any city, there being an allusion to the New Jerusalem. Keith writes: “A similar but more detailed description of the holy, the new Jerusalem, is given in Revelation 21:18.” Cowles has: “God will rebuild her walls from their very base; will lay her stones in the fine paint used by the ancients upon and about the eye: will make sapphires her foundations; her battlements (not ‘windows’) of rubies (‘agate’) sparkling and gleaming in the sunbeams; and her gates of flashing gems (‘carbuncles’) and all her borders with stones most beautiful.—This passage is the quarry of thought and figure whence the Revelator John drew out his material for the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21). —Remarkably the Hebrew word, ‘I will lay,’ *i.e.*, thy stones, is always used elsewhere for the quiet lying down of animals to take their rest. The conception seems to be pastoral—an image of peaceful repose. —‘Windows,’ from the word which means the *sun*, probably refer to the shining battlements and gilded towers which reflected the sunbeams.” I studiously avoid trying to determine what plants, animals or precious stones are meant from the Hebrew. But as a Chilean I could not help notice that for **סִבְיָ**, LHI, and several others, suggests what amounts to our national stone, “lapis-lazuli.” Whitehouse mentions: “The word here rendered by fair colours (**פִּינִי**) properly means the *stibium*, ‘antimony,’ or, more accurately stated, sulphuret of antimony, corresponding to the kohl used by the Orientals at the present day. This substance was used in painting the eyes and eyebrows of fashionable women (such as Jezebel in 2 Kings 9:30) in order to give them a more distinctive appearance. The stibium consisted of black metallic powder, which was applied partly in a dry state and partly as ointment to the eyelids and brows. It was supposed that the dark rim enhanced the brilliant appearance of the eyes ... Ewald and Dillmann held that the meaning of the passage is that instead of the stones being laid in ordinary mortar they were to be laid in this black stibium, so that they would gleam forth like a woman’s brilliant eyes.” Some exegetes point us to

Tobit 13:16–18: “For Ierusalem shall be built vp with Saphires, and Emeralds, and precious stone: thy walles and towres, and battlements with pure golde. And the streets of Ierusalem shal be paved with Berill, and Carbuncle, and stones of Ophir. And all her streets shall say, Halleluiah, and they shall praise him, saying, Blessed be God which hath extolled it for euer” (KJV 1611).

12 And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.

The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And I will place thy timbers with gems, and thy gates shall be of carbuncles, and all thy borders with precious stones.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And for thy battlements I will lay jasper; and crystal, for thy gates; and for thy circumambient walls, precious stones.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓟ) has, “And I will make your walls of jasper and your gates of crystal and your borders of precious stones. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) renders it, “And I will make thy bulwarks of jasper: and thy gates of graven stones, and all thy borders of desirable stones.” ¶ Govett writes: “Following this gracious promise is the description of the new Jerusalem, agreeing beautifully with that in the Revelation. ‘I will prepare sapphires as thy foundations,’ saith Isaiah. ‘The second’ (foundation) saith St. John, ‘a sapphire.’ ‘And thy gates of crystal.’ ‘And the twelve gates,’ saith the beloved disciple, ‘were twelve pearls: every several gate was one pearl.’ It need scarcely be noticed how well the ‘crystal’ of Isaiah agrees with ‘the pearl’ of St. John, the pearl being of a crystalline semi-transparent texture. ‘And the circumference of precious stones.’ Even so St. John: ‘And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones’ (Revelation 21:19–21).” Slotki/Rosenberg, leaning on Rashi and Kimhi, explain for שַׁמֶּשׁ תִּי, “The Hebrew noun denotes windows through which the sun (שֶׁשֶׁשׁ) shines.” One exegete suggested that each stone, similarly to those on the breastplate of the High Priest, stands for each tribe of Israel.

13 And all thy children [shall be] taught of the LORD; and great [shall be] the peace of thy children.

And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD. The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “learn the law” instead of *taught*. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Even thy sons, all instructed of God.” The Peshitta (Ⓟ) renders it, “And all thy children shall learn of me.” ¶ Henderson explains that by

לְמוֹדֵי יְהוָה (see also Gesenius) we literally have *disciples of Jehovah*. Leeser translates “*And all thy children shall be disciples of the Lord*,”

וְכָל-בְּנֵיךָ לְמוֹדֵי יְהוָה. Alexander renders it: “And all thy children disciples of Jehovah ... The promise is not one of occasional instruction, but of permanent connection with Jehovah as his followers, and partakers of his constant teaching.” Govett says: “But its [the New Jerusalem] chief bliss shall not be the splendor of its decorations, but the fact ‘that they shall be all,’ as the Savior remarked, ‘taught of God.’” In Jeremiah 31:33–34 we read: “But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be *their God*, and they shall be *my people*. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: *for they shall all know me*, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” (emphasis added). This verse is quoted by our Redeemer: “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me” (John 6:44–45). Faussett also points to these New Testament references: 1 Corinthians 2:10; Hebrews 8:10; 10:16; and 1 John 2:20. While the most complete fulfillment of this prophecy may point to the Millennium, I feel that in the Lord’s Church this already happens, that we are continually instructed from on high. ¶ President Gordon B. Hinckley taught mothers that despite the challenges they might be facing, to make sure to teach the children in the way of the Lord: “But if when they are very small there is much of affection, there is shown much of love, there is prayer together, then there will more likely be peace in the hearts and strength in the character of your children. Teach them the ways of the Lord. Declared Isaiah, ‘All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children’ (ISAIAH 54:13).¹³ Furthermore, “I hope you keep nurturing and loving your children, leading them in light and truth. They are the most precious things you have in all the world. Among all the assets you possess nothing is so precious as your children.”¹⁴ And also: “If you want to see peace in the lives of your children, then teach them the ways of righteousness and truth ... Peace comes of

¹³ Hinckley, President Gordon B., Stand Strong against the Wiles of the World, *Ensign* (CR), November 1995, p. 98.

¹⁴ Messages of Inspiration from President Hinckley, *LDS Church News*, 1996, 3 February 1996.

living the gospel of Jesus Christ.”¹⁵ ¶ *And great shall be the peace of thy children.* The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And thy children in great prosperity.” ¶ As disciples of Christ permit themselves to be taught by the Spirit, and have continual communication with God, truly, great shall be their peace. Once again, while some of these scriptures will be fulfilled more fully as righteous spirits move on to Paradise in the Spirit world, and come forth in the morning of the Millennium, I testify that this peace is available today, even in the midst of the chaos we live in.

14 In righteousness shalt thou be established; thou shalt be far from oppression for thou shalt not fear, and from terror for it shall not come near thee.

In righteousness shalt thou be established. The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And with righteousness thou shalt be rebuilt.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “And thou shalt be founded in justice.” ¶ The Lord expects us to move forward in righteousness for in doing right there is safety and peace. But note that this righteousness *is of me*, our Lord (ISAIAH 54:17). To be established means to be sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise and prepared to come forth in the morning of the first resurrection as candidates for the Celestial Kingdom. ¶ *Thou shalt be far from oppression for thou shalt not fear, and from terror for it shall not come near thee.* The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Abstain from injustice and thou shalt not be affrighted; and as for terror, it shall not approach thee.” Instead of *terror*, the Peshitta (Ⓔ) has *destruction* (Lamsa) / *devastation* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “Depart far from oppression, for thou shalt not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near thee.” ¶ Luther suggests that we ought *not* fear “slander and injury.” Once again, the Lord is offering the enduring peace of discipleship; a peace that will give comfort and diminish fear. The promise is that terror will be kept from the disciples. This is not a promise that disciples will be protected in a bubble from the vicissitudes of life (for as the next verse shows, such challenges *shall gather together*), but rather, that the companionship of the Holy Ghost will provide unending comfort.

15 Behold, they shall surely gather together, [but] not by me; whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake.

Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me. The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “Behold, the captivity of thy people shall surely be gathered unto thee.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Behold proselytes shall come to thee for my sake.” The Peshitta (Ⓔ) has something like, “All who are brought back by my hand shall enter into you; and they shall be as a place of refuge to your inhabitants.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “Behold, an inhabitant shall come, who was not with me.” Birks has: “All enemies, however mighty, who fight against this city of God, shall ‘stumble, and fall, and not be found,’ (Daniel 11:19). There seems a special reference to the last revealed gathering of God’s enemies (Revelation 20:7–9 [at the *end* of the Millennium—GB]), and to the solemn issue which is there foretold.” There also seems to be an allusion to Jerusalem surrounded by her enemies in the last days, at the time of Christ’s Second Advent. So also Keith: “The previous allusion to the righteous manner of the re-establishment of the nation in their own land, and to their liberty and peace there, introduces a notice of the destruction of their enemies. The gathering together of all the nations against Jerusalem, so often referred to, will be followed by their downfall.” Nägelsbach explains: “First [Isaiah] does not deny that there may be hostile conspiracies against Israel. Behold, they shall surely gather ... in a hostile sense ... But though that may happen *it is not from Me*, says the LORD.” Young has: “God Himself does not instigate the gathering of enemies against His people.” So also Ibn Ezra who has: “The meaning of the whole verse is accordingly: ‘Is it possible, that any alliance should be made except [i.e., contrary to—GB] with my permission?’ (The alliance between Gog and Magog is here referred to).” Henderson suggests that there are cases when those who have turned against Zion have been permitted to succeed, but that this would not be the case at the times spoken of in these verses: “The meaning of this verse is, that whatever enemies might assault the church, they were not to be viewed as commissioned by God to execute wrath upon her, as the Assyrians and Babylonians had been, and consequently should not succeed in their attempts to remove her.” ¶ *Whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake.* The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “In the end, the kings of the nations, who are gathered together to oppress thee, O Jerusalem, shall be cast down in the midst of thee.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And they shall sojourn with thee and fly to thee.” The Peshitta (Ⓔ) is missing this clause. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “He that was a stranger to thee before, shall be joined to thee.” ¶ JUB renders it, “shall fall before thee.” Those who fight against Zion are fighting against God and kicking against the pricks. They will not succeed. Luther reminds us that “If God be for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31).

¹⁵ Messages of Inspiration from President Hinckley, *LDS Church News*, 1998, 3 January 1988.

16 Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy.

Behold, *I have created* [בְּרָאתִי] the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work. The LXX (6) reads, “Behold I have created thee, not like a coppersmith blowing coals and using a tool for the work.” ¶ Better, *I formed*,

בְּרָאתִי. Birks suggests: “The pronouns are emphatic. The great Creator permits the plots of evil men to prosper for a season, but condemns them at last to disappointment and utter shame.” The essence of this verse is explained by Skinner: “No weapon formed against Zion shall prosper, because both the makers of weapons [the smith] and those who use them [the waster] are alike created by Jehovah, and all their activity is under His control.” Alexander also: “The general meaning evidently is, that God can certainly redeem his pledge, because all instruments and agents are alike at his disposal and under his control. He is not only the maker of the weapons of war, but the maker of their maker, as well as of the warrior who wields them.—The pronoun in both clauses is emphatic. It is I (and not another) who created them.” The idea seems to be that the activity against Jerusalem or against Zion will be limited in its ability to do harm. ¶ *And I have created the waster to destroy.* The LXX (6) reads, “But I have created thee, not for destruction.” Instead of *waster*, the Peshitta (5) has *ravager* (Lamsa) / *destroyer* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (1) has *killer* instead of *waster*. ¶ Rabbi Rosenberg, leaning on Redak, explains this as an allusion to the great battle of Gog and Magog against Jerusalem. In it, a large number shall fall before the Lord will make His appearance in great majesty and power.

17 No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue [that] shall ~~rise~~ *revile* against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This [is] the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness [is] of me, saith the LORD.

No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper. The Targum (2) adds, “O Jerusalem,” after *against thee*. The LXX (6) reads, “Perish every weapon formed against thee! I will not prosper it.” ¶ Elder Packer eulogized President Ezra Taft Benson, and said that the latter had much opposition during his mission to

England and ‘always kept this verse from the Book of Mormon in his wallet: “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall revile against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord’ (3 Nephi 22:17).”¹⁶ Indeed, no weapon made can triumph against the Lord and His disciples. Also see notes on ISAIAH 7:12, “The Standard of Truth.” ¶ *And every tongue that shall revile against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn.* The LXX (6) reads, “Though every voice should rise up against thee for judgment, thou shalt overcome them all and in the trial they shall be condemned.” The Douay-Rheims (1) has *resisteth thee* instead of *revile against thee*. ¶ Govett writes: “The next promise of Isaiah, that ‘every tongue which riseth against them in judgement they shall condemn,’ receives a glorious illustration from the words of Paul, ‘Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?’ (Romans 8:33–35).” Rabbi Rosenberg, leaning on Redak, beautifully explains: “they will harm you neither with their deeds nor with their speech.” Elder Robert D. Hales spoke exquisitely about *the need for Church members to respond to attacks with love*, and further, that the Church does not feel a need to defend herself from verbal assaults from others: “Paul reminded the Corinthians that his preaching was ‘not with the enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power’ (1 Corinthians 2:4). Because that power resides in the Spirit of the Lord, we must never become contentious when we are discussing our faith. As almost every missionary learns, Bible bashing always drives the Spirit away. The Savior has said, ‘He that hath the spirit of contention is not of me.’ More regrettable than the Church being accused of not being Christian is when Church members react to such accusations in an un-Christlike way! May our conversations with others always be marked by the fruits of the Spirit—‘love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, [and] temperance.’ To be meek, as defined in Webster’s dictionary, is ‘manifesting patience and longsuffering: enduring injury without resentment.’ Meekness is not weakness. It is a badge of Christian courage. This is especially important in our interactions with members of other Christian denominations. Surely our Heavenly Father is saddened—and the devil laughs—when we contentiously debate doctrinal differences with our Christian neighbors. This is not to suggest that we compromise our principles or dilute our beliefs. We cannot change the doctrines of the restored gospel, even

¹⁶ Avant, Gerry. President Benson Eulogized. *Church News*, 11 June 1994.

if teaching and obeying them makes us unpopular in the eyes of the world. Yet even as we feel to speak the word of God with boldness, we must pray to be filled with the Holy Ghost (see Acts 4:29, 31). We should never confuse boldness with Satan’s counterfeit: overbearance (see Alma 38:12). True disciples speak with quiet confidence, not boastful pride.”¹⁷ ¶ *This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD.* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “There is an inheritance for them who serve the Lord.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲅ) has *inheritance* instead of *heritage*. Nägelsbach writes: “This (זאת) refers back to the rich promise of blessing of the chapter. This is given to the servants of Jehovah [עֲבָדֵי יְהוָה]. Isaiah intentionally speaks here for the first and only time of servants of Jehovah. Manifestly there is intended an antithesis to the Servant of Jehovah that plays so prominent a part in ISAIAH 53. After that chapter the Prophet has nothing more to say concerning the Servant of Jehovah. But he has still to indicate how the salvation from the Saviour will be conveyed to those that need and are worthy of salvation.” And what is this heritage that the Prophet

speaks about here? Exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom of God. ¶ *And their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Therefore you are to be just for me, saith the Lord.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲅ) has, “And their justice with me, saith the Lord.” It is clear to me that the Lord lends us His righteousness and helps us to improve and become better persons little by little as we progress through life. It is indeed a job for a lifetime and “it will be a great while after you have passed through the veil,” that this effort will continue, as taught by the Prophet Joseph Smith.¹⁸ ¶ *Saith the Lord.* Several translators used the expression *declares the LORD*. Young points out that the final *saith the LORD*, or *oracle of the LORD*, אָמֵן־יְהוָה, stands as a “strong affirmation, an Amen, to the truth of this assertion.”

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¹⁷ Hales, Elder Robert D. “Christian Courage: The Price of Discipleship,” October 2008 *General Conference*.

¹⁸ Smith, Joseph & Roberts, B.H. *History of the Church*, Volume 6.

Isaiah 55

All are invited to come unto Christ, partake of the living and cleansing waters of the Gospel, and be healed by the atoning sacrifice of our Redeemer. If we turn unto Christ, He will pay the price for us, else, we will have to suffer anguish untold. We are often hard in our judgment of others and of ourselves and assume that God will likewise treat us. Christ assures us that His ways are higher than ours and that He has His arms stretched out toward us and bids us come to Him. This earth will once again take upon herself her paradisiacal glory which she possessed while Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden.

vv. 1–5. Come and partake of the waters of the Gospel. Do not spend your efforts for things that do not lead to joy in this life and life eternal. Heed the invitation to partake of the Gospel and enter into the new and everlasting covenant. Christ is a witness to the people. Israel shall one day realize that many of dispersed of the children of Jacob from the nations of the world have joined her in her love for the Lord.

1 ¶ **HO**, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

HO, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, for the second clause, “let him come and learn.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “HO! ye who are thirsting, come to water!” ¶ This is the same **הוֹ** *Ho* or cheerful salutation we saw in ISAIAH 18. It is at times used as an exclamation of threat. Oswalt has: “*Ho* is the same word translated elsewhere as “Woe!” or “Alas!” ... most [commentators suggest it is a] general call for attention. Its presence here along with the five imperatives in this verse gives a strong sense of urgency and importance to what follows.” Jennings well says: “[ISAIAH 55] begins with a cry of a ‘Ho!’ for now the glad tidings of what those sufferings have effected must go to the furthest bounds of human dwelling, and wherever there is a burdened, a sorrowing, a dissatisfied heart, there this silvery invitation is welcomed. Is it not beautifully appropriate that such a call should be broadcast with trumpet-strength that it may reach afar to all, awaken the attention of all? Thus the ‘Ho’ must not be overlooked.” Rashi, in Rosenberg, explains that **הוֹ** can be an “expression of calling, inviting, and gathering.” ¶ Alexander interestingly notes (though he has a different perspective) that “some of the Fathers [see a] reference to the water of baptism ... in this verse.” It is interesting because in ISAIAH 48:1 we have

that wording in the Book of Mormon (see 1 Nephi 20:1, “and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, or *out of the waters of baptism*, who swear by the name of the Lord” emphasis added). ¶ Abarbanel, according to Rabbis Slotki-Rosenberg well suggest that the *thirst* is for the “word of God.” Barns says, “The word *thirst* often indicates intense *desire*.” Redak, in Rosenberg, explains that “just as the thirsty yearn for water, so does the soul yearn for Torah and wisdom ...” Also see Amos 8:11. Ibn Ezra has: “With these words the Lord will address those who will then be desirous to accept the Law.” ¶ Ironside says: “If it were not for the truth set forth in chapter 53 of ISAIAH, there would be no possibility of this gracious invitation ... So Isaiah, after having set forth so clearly the atoning death the Anointed of God was to die, called upon all needy, troubled souls to appropriate by faith the gracious provision thus depicted. His message to thirsty souls was identical with that proclaimed by the Lord Jesus at a later date (John 7:37),¹ and it is with a similar proclamation that the New Testament draws to a close (Revelation 22:17).² ... We may be reminded of our Lord’s words to the Samaritan woman, ‘Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but it ... shall be in him a well [or fountain] of water springing up into everlasting life’ (John 4:14).” Jenour says: “These blessings [of the gospel covenant] are figuratively represented by the terms, *water*, *wine*, and *milk*; and those who are invited to partake of them are the *thirsty* ...” ¶ *And he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And he that hath no silver, come, hear and learn.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And ye who have no money, come buy and eat.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has “and you that have no money make haste, buy, and eat.” ¶ Jenour notes: “They have *no money* ... no merits to offer in exchange for the promised mercies. These therefore are offered freely;

¹ “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink” (John 7:37).

² “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely” (Revelation 22:17).

without money, &c. There is a peculiar emphasis in the original, which can scarcely be conveyed in a translation. It implies not only that the promised blessings are to be had *without* money, &c.; but that they *cannot* be had with it; ‘*not* for money nor for price.’ And that is because no one can say that the blessings have been merited. We are all beggars before the Lord. Kay has: “They must come (John 6:35, 45), and procure it; though it be given away *without price* (ISAIAH 52:3, ‘For thus saith the LORD, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money.’).” ¶ *Yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Come, hear and learn, without price and money, doctrine that is better than wine and milk.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Without money and without price, wine and the choicest bread.” The Talmud tradition (Seder Mo’ed, Ta’anith 7a; also see Seder Nezikin, Baba Kama 17a, 82a and so on) has: “Rabbi Hanina ben Ida said: Why are the words of the Torah likened unto water—as it is written, ‘Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye for water’? This is to teach you, just as water flows from a higher level to a lower, so too the words of the Torah endure only with him who is meekminded. Rabbi Oshaia said: Why are the words of the Torah likened unto these three liquids, water, wine and milk — as it is written, ‘Ho, everyone that thirsteth come ye for water’; and it is written, Come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money, and without price? This is to teach you, just as these three liquids can only be preserved in the most inferior of vessels, so too the words of the Torah endure only with him who is meekminded” (Talmud, Soncino). ¶ Ibn Ezra asserts regarding וַיִּבְרַח אֶת־הַלֵּב: “Wine and milk are mentioned because the Law is compared with them.” Rashi, in Slotki-Rosenberg, suggests that “learning ... is better than wine and milk.” Cowles has: “The central idea is, the best and most needful things for the body made the symbols of the best and most vital blessings for the soul. The abundance and freeness of the former represent the yet richer abundance and free ness of the latter.” As Wordsworth mentions: “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled” (Matthew 5:6). ¶ Elder Moses Thatcher shared: “... the standards of value are established by the cost of things received, and by this rule we know that no good thing has ever come into this world without having cost the equal of its value. Nor has any great thought or noble idea ever been introduced that had not to fight its way inch by inch. Think of what the principles of the everlasting Gospel, that are freely given, has without money, without price, cost? Agony that caused the Son of God to sweat great drops of blood. And that being too little, He must needs be insulted, spat upon, scourged, adjudged to die ... and

finally He was ignominiously crucified by those whom He came to save. Humiliated, deprived of judgment and sacrificed, the Lamb of God descended beneath all things that He might arise above all things, leading captivity captive and giving gifts to men, while holding the keys of death, hell, and the grave.”³ ¶ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland invited: “I do not know who in this vast audience today may need to hear the message of forgiveness inherent in this parable, but however late you think you are, however many chances you think you have missed, however many mistakes you feel you have made or talents you think you don’t have, or however far from home and family and God you feel you have traveled, I testify that you have not traveled beyond the reach of divine love. It is not possible for you to sink lower than the infinite light of Christ’s Atonement shines. Whether you are not yet of our faith or were with us once and have not remained, there is nothing in either case that you have done that cannot be undone. There is no problem which you cannot overcome. There is no dream that in the unfolding of time and eternity cannot yet be realized. Even if you feel you are the lost and last laborer of the eleventh hour, the Lord of the vineyard still stands beckoning. ‘Come boldly [to] the throne of grace,’ and fall at the feet of the Holy One of Israel. Come and feast ‘without money and without price’ at the table of the Lord.”⁴

2 Wherefore do ye spend money for [that which is] not bread? and your labour for [that which] satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye [that which is] good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

✓ weigh

Wherefore do ye spend money for [that which is] not bread? The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Wherefore do ye weigh out your silver for that which is not food?” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Why are you expending money.” The Hebrew for *spend money* literally means, according to the margin ׁ, to weight out money (or silver), thus “Why do ye weigh out silver?” or לָמָּה תִּשְׁקֹלֶנּוּ כֶּסֶף. So also the Targum (Ⲯ). In Spanish we also use the word *silver*, *plata*, when speaking about money. For instance, do you have money? ¿Tienes plata? Henderson explains: “to weigh, to weigh out money, in reference to the custom of weighing uncoined gold and silver in mercantile transactions, which anciently

³ Moses Thatcher, “The Speaker’s Pleasure, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses*, 26: 208b–209a, 13 April 1885.

⁴ Holland, Elder Jeffrey R., “The Laborers in the Vineyard,” *Ensign*, May 2012, p. 31.

obtained, not only among the Hebrews, but among other nations; and still [Henderson’s book was printed in 1857] obtains in Turkey and other parts of the East.” As Wordsworth mentions: “Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed” (John 6:27).

¶ *Not bread*, לֹא־לֶחֶם. Cowles explains: “‘No-bread’ as here used is a compound word, like ‘no-wood’ (ISAIAH 10:15), and ‘no-God’ and ‘no-spirit’ (ISAIAH 31:3), meaning the opposite of bread, *i.e.*, ... whatever is not life-sustaining but life-destroying. The ‘no’ prefixed carries the sense beyond the mere negation of bread, over to the opposite idea.” It points to that which is no-life, that is, does not lead to exaltation. ¶ This verse is an invitation to not get distracted with poor choices in life. Ibn Ezra suggests this relates to the philosophies of men: “Wherefore will you labour in profane science.”⁵ Horsley speaks of the “the laborious researches of human *philosophy*.” Gill says it of those who “Lavish away time, opportunities, and strength, in reading and hearing false doctrine, which is not bread, but chaff; is not wholesome, does not nourish, but is harmful and destructive; eats as does a canker, instead of feeding and refreshing; such as the vain philosophy of the Gentiles, the traditions of the Jews, and the errors and heresies of false teachers.” ¶ *And your labour for [that which] satisfieth not?* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And your wealth (literally, ‘and that gotten by fatigue’) for that which satisfieth not?” The LXX (Ⓢ) reads, “And labour for that which will not satisfy?” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓢ) has, “Doth not satisfy you?” instead of *satisfieth not?* Oswalt points us to Proverbs 9:5–6: “Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding.” Skinner has: “... worldly life is a continual spending without lasting profit or satisfaction.” ¶ Elder Spencer J. Condie applied these words of Isaiah to our temporal occupations: “Happy is the man who can truthfully say: ‘I never went to work a day in my life—I have always enjoyed my job so much.’ More commonly we are likely to hear of fathers and mothers who love each other and their family so much that they do what it takes to support and sustain them. Occupational pursuits are seen as part of a greater plan, not as the means to immediate self-gratification. It would be well to initially define the problem in terms of its eternal consequences for the family. Isaiah asked the provocative question in this regard: ‘Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not?’”⁶ I was truly

blessed in my lifetime to have occupations which I absolutely loved. I was fortunate enough to have jobs that permitted me plenty of time with my family, Church callings, and that were fulfilling at the same time. Now years have transpired since I retired and I still have nightmares in which I am retiring. I think that whether a job is satisfying, is partly, dependent on our mindset. Also, we decide, to a great extent, how happy we are with retirement. I believe I am just as busy with productive happy work now as before I retired. ¶ *Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye [that which is] good.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “Hearken diligently to my Word, and ye shall eat that which *is good*.” The LXX (Ⓢ) reads, “Hearken to me and you shall eat good things.” Cowles says that instead of no-bread and that which does not satisfy, we here have a “repetition [in the original שְׂמַעְנִי שְׂמַעְנִי] expressing the earnestness of the call” to hearken. ¶ The Savior Himself taught: “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal” (Matthew 6:19–20, also see 3 Nephi 13:19–20). ¶ *And let your soul delight itself in fatness.* The LXX (Ⓢ) reads, “And your soul will be regaled with delicacies.” Instead of *fatness*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) also has *delicacies*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓢ) has, “And your soul shall be delighted in fatness.” ¶ Kimhi in Slotki-Rosenberg explains that fatness represents “spiritual satisfaction.” So also Cowles who explains: “‘Fatness’ represents the choicest spiritual good.” See notes on ISAIAH 25:6: “And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.” This is also an invitation to the nations to come unto the *banquet of the Lord*. ¶ *Your soul*, נַפְשְׁכֶּם. It is interesting here, to LDS, that regarding the soul, Oswalt explains that to the Hebrews, the soul: “It is not the ‘flesh’ or the ‘heart’ or the ‘spirit.’ In some ways it is the sum of all these [and then again of the use of נַפְשְׁכֶּם in ISAIAH 55:3] Again, the use of ‘soul’ here is not in contrast to the body or the spirit. It is speaking about the fullest reality of human life.” The LDS definition is: “The scriptures speak of souls in three ways: (1) spirit beings, both premortal and postmortal (Alma 40:11–14; Abraham 3:23); (2) a spirit and a body united in mortality (Abraham 5:7); and (3) an immortal, resurrected person whose spirit and body have become inseparably connected (Alma 40:23; D&C 88:15–16).”

3 Incline your ear, and come unto me:
hear, and your soul shall live; and I will

⁵ Friedländer suggests that for Ibn Ezra *profane science* means “speculative philosophy, metaphysics.”

⁶ Spencer J. Condie, *Your Agency, Handle with Care*, p.78

make an everlasting covenant with you, [even] the sure mercies of David.

Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Incline your ear and receive *instruction of my law*, obey my Word and your soul shall be quickened.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Incline your ears and follow in my paths; hearken to me and your soul shall live on good things.” ¶ *Your soul shall live* is an allusion to exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom of God. ¶ Elder Eduardo Gavarret invited: “You who are not yet members of the Church will receive this invitation through the voice of the missionaries with the words, ‘Will you read the Book of Mormon? Will you pray? Will you attend church? Will you follow the example of Jesus Christ and be baptized by those who have authority?’ How will you answer this invitation today? I invite you to listen to and accept the message by saying, ‘Yes, Lord, I will follow Thee!’”⁷ Then Elder Russell M. Nelson taught us to listen: “To all of God’s children, either able to hear or deaf to mortal sound, He offers this reward: ‘Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live.’ Your soul will be blessed as you learn to listen, then listen to learn from children, parents, partners, neighbors, and Church leaders, all of which will heighten capacity to hear counsel from on high. Carefully listen to learn from the Lord through the still small voice—the Holy Spirit—which leads to truth. Listen to learn by studying scriptures that record His holy mind and will. Listen to learn in prayer, for He will answer the humble who truly seek Him.”⁸ ¶ Slotki-Rosenberg point to the Targum (ⲧ) in suggesting that inclining the ear to hear is intimately associated with obedience. Surely, the expression *come unto me*, is Christ’s frequent invitation to *turn* (שׁוּבוּ) from our ways and follow Him: “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). ¶ Ibn Ezra has: “That is, your soul shall live forever after the death of the body, or you will receive new life through Messiah, when you will return to the Divine Law.” Skinner has: “The condition imposed is simply the consent and submission of the

heart to the divine will.” ¶ *And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, [even] the sure mercies of David.* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And I will make with you an everlasting covenant—the gracious promises to David which are faithful.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, for the second clause, “The faithful mercies of David.” ¶ Rawlinson points us to Hosea 2:18a, 19, where that Prophet speaks of this future covenant: “And in that day will I make a covenant for them ... And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies.” And one of my favorites, from Jeremiah’s prophecies: “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” (Jeremiah 31:31–34). ¶ NEW AND EVERLASTING COVENANT. The LDS Guide to the Scriptures explains: “The fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ (D&C 66:2). It is new every time it is revealed anew following a period of apostasy. It is everlasting in the sense that it is God’s covenant and has been enjoyed in every gospel dispensation where people have been willing to receive it. The new and everlasting covenant was revealed again to men on earth by Jesus Christ through the prophet Joseph Smith. It contains sacred ordinances administered by priesthood authority—such as baptism and temple marriage—that provide for man’s salvation, immortality, and eternal life. When people accept the gospel and promise to keep God’s commandments, God covenants to give them the blessings of his new and everlasting covenant.” ¶ The *sure mercies of David*, מְרַחֵם דָּוִד, make reference to Christ’s invitation to come unto Him. This is the Second David or Jesus Christ. Henderson points us to Psalm 89:1–4: “I will sing of the *mercies of the LORD* [מְרַחֵם יְהוָה] for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens. I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah” (emphasis added).

⁷ Gavarret, Elder Eduardo, “Yes, Lord, I Will Follow Thee,” *Ensign*, November 2014, p. 37. In that same talk I was struck by the story of 14 year old Norma—who would one day become his wife—as she felt prompted to stop adding coffee to her milk after hearing the missionaries speak of the Word of Wisdom. When my friend Randy Homrig shared with me that coffee was against the Word of Wisdom, the Spirit likewise prompted me to stop drinking it long before I read the Book of Mormon and became baptized. These are examples of how the Spirit places a stamp of approval on the words we speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost.

⁸ Nelson, Elder Russell M., “Listen to Learn,” *Ensign*, May 1991, p. 22.

Henderson explains: “The benefits, therefore, or mercies promised to David, were those of the everlasting reign of his Illustrious Descendant; and, as such, sure and permanent.” We can clearly see, also, that **חֲסִדֵי יְהוָה** is put for **חֲסִדֵי יְהוָה**, that is, the *tender mercies of David* stand for the *tender mercies of the Lord*. Ibn Ezra similarly observes: “It is also possible, that by ‘David’ in this verse Messiah is meant, who will be of the family of David.” Wordsworth has: “I have appointed Christ, Who was in David, and came forth from him, and Who is called ‘David’ (by Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 34:23; 37:24; Hosea 3:5) ...” Rabbi Rosenberg also explains it of ‘the Messiah, a scion of David’s family ...’ Cheyne has: “*The loving-kindnesses of David*] Not ‘the *mercies* of David’ (Auth. Vers.) ... ‘Of David’ means ‘promised to David;’ ‘the loving-kindnesses of Jehovah’ is the more natural phrase, comp. ISAIAH 63:7, Psalm 89:49, 107:43, Lamentation 3:22 (‘the loving-kindnesses of David’ occurs elsewhere only in 2 Chronicles 6:42).” Cheyne offers some possibilities but prefers that proposed by Hengstenberg: “Hengstenberg thus admits that the historical covenant with David is primarily referred to, but, as the covenant extended to David’s seed, he maintains that it only attained complete fulfilment in the Messiah.”

4 Behold, I have given him [for] a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.

Behold, I have given him [for] a witness to the people. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Behold, I have appointed him a prince, a king.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Behold for a testimony to nations I gave him.” Horsley notes that in both cases in ISAIAH 55:4, the word is *peoples* (also *nations*), **לְאֻמִּים**, **לְאֻמִּים**, from the root **לָאָם**. The Second David, or Messiah, has been given *for a witness to the people*. Cowles explains: “The word ‘witness’ contemplates the Messiah as testifying to the great truths of God, revealing them and confirming them as true, even as he said of himself before Pilate; ‘I am a king,’ and my empire is that of truth. ‘To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world that I should bear witness to the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice,’ and so proves himself to be one of my subjects (John 18:37) ... This descriptive term appears among the attributes of the Messiah in Revelation 1:5, and 3:14: ‘Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness;’ ‘the faithful and true Witness.’” ¶ *A leader and commander to the people*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And a ruler over all the kingdoms.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “A chief and a lawgiver to nations.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, “For a leader and a master to the

Gentiles.” ¶ Cowles says: “... a ‘leader and commander to the people,’ requires us to refer it to the Messiah.” Brothers McConkie and Parry point out that Christ was also known as the “Lord of Sabaoth,” or “Lord of Hosts.”⁹ Barnes suggests a *lawgiver*. This reminds us of, “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh [Christ] come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be” (Genesis 49:10).

5 Behold, thou shalt call a nation [that] thou knowest not, and nations [that] knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee.

Behold, thou shalt call a nation [that] thou knowest not. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Behold, a people which thou knowest not shall serve thee.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Nations which knew thee not will fly to thee.” ¶ Israel is the focus of this verse. Because of the Messiah, even the Holy One of Israel, all the nations of the world will turn to Zion to receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This verse alludes to the theme in ISAIAH 54:1 and 49:21. Judah will be surprised that she is not alone, but that her sister tribes of Israel also love the LORD. I believe that ISAIAH 55:5, then, speaks of Israel as she is restored back beginning with Ephraim and encompassing all the tribes until Judah. ¶ Rabbis Slotki-Rosenberg, representing the Jewish perspective, say, *thou*, “God is addressing Israel.” Skinner has, “*Thou (Israel) shalt call a nation &c.*] i.e. many a nation hitherto unknown to thee.” Wade has: “Israel, by its exceptional experiences and the evidence it supplied of the Lord’s supremacy over human fortunes, is destined to receive the homage of the heathen, who will seek to attach themselves, as servants, to the favoured people of so potent a Deity (cf. 45:14, 49:7).” May I suggest it is not that Israel itself is the homage of the nations, but rather, the Gospel of Jesus Christ which is associated with Israel. ¶ *And nations [that] knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And a people which hath not known thee shall run to offer tribute unto thee.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For the sake of the Lord thy God.” ¶ Baltzer says, “‘*Your God*’ here (**אֱלֹהֶיךָ**) corresponds to ‘*my people*’ (**עַמִּי**)” in ISAIAH 40:1. Also see *Rain in Due Season*. Israel will come to the knowledge of her God through the Book of Mormon (see Ezekiel 37:15 ff., see especially 37:23b:

⁹ Joseph Fielding McConkie and Donald W. Parry, *A Guide to Scriptural Symbols*.

וְטַהַרְתִּי אֹתָם וְהָיִי-לִי לְעָם וְאֲנִי אֶהְיֶה לָהֶם
(לְאֱלֹהִים).

Leeser renders the Ezekiel verse: "... and I will cleanse them, and they shall be unto me **for** a **people**, and I will be to them **for** a **God**. The AV has: "... and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God." ¶ *And for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "Because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee." The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "The Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee." ¶ The Holy One of Israel has glorified Zion. All the nations of the earth will place their attention on the restored Church who sends out missionaries to both sides of the veil.

vv. 6–13. Seek the Lord in prayer. Turn unto the Lord who is ready to forgive. God's thoughts are higher than man's. God's words will be fulfilled. Their joy when we repent and turn unto God. During the Millennium, the earth will take upon itself its paradisiacal glory. While I was first working on this chapter some weeks ago, I applied these words of Isaiah when speaking to a person who was combating feelings of unworthiness—I believe that we are only made *worthy* as Christ lends us of His worthiness and as His atoning sacrifice is applied to our lives. ¶ Can someone who is unworthy be a partaker of revelation in order to improve his or her life? While it is true that the constant guide and companionship of the Holy Ghost is based on having been confirmed a member of the Church, having accepted and received the Holy Ghost and living righteously, may I suggest that the Holy Ghost may be imparted to others who do not meet all of these criteria? I believe the Book of Mormon has healing influences as the word brings us closer to Christ and that everyone who reads that book with a seeking heart can feel the Spirit. I was not a member of the Church when the Holy Ghost bore a strong witness of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. I was not even seeking for the truth at the time! ¶ We must pray to the Father and be filled with confidence that the Lord will answer—He will let us know we have been heard and give guidance as needed. We must put aside the thought that we cannot pray to the Father because we are unrighteous. In April 1982 General Conference, Elder Gene R. Cook warned: "May I share a few of Satan's cunning illusions which undermine spirituality. Satan, with an illusion, leads a man to puff himself up with pride to say, 'I am my own man. I know the Lord lives, but he expects me to handle this particular matter on my own and not bother him with any details.' Not being familiar with the scriptures, the man may not know that Satan teaches the world there is no God. But to the Saints he simply says, 'There is a God, but he is only *generally* involved in your life.

He would not *specifically* help you today.' Or he teaches the world not to pray, but to the Saints he simply says, 'Don't pray now. You don't feel like praying right now' (see 2 Nephi 32:8–9.) The net effect is the same." It is, then, not a proper thought for a man to think that he cannot approach God in prayer or seek help in repenting. We can refuse to listen to that voice that teaches us not to pray. The Lord is there, with stretched out arms inviting, beckoning, pleading with us to come unto Him that He may bless and heal us. Indeed, He will *abundantly* pardon. ¶ Why does not the Lord heal us immediately of our unrighteous behavior? The Lord gives us weaknesses for a wise purpose; perhaps the most important of all is to fight our natural prideful tendencies. Surely, His thoughts are not our thoughts, for His thoughts and His ways are higher than ours. I can testify that the Lord has reasons for what He does. His timing is truly perfect and He always keeps His promises. None of His promises go unfulfilled. In other words, His words *never return to Him void*, nor do they *fall to the ground* without being accomplished. If we put our trust in our Father, He will abundantly bless us. The day will come when we will burst out in joy and be filled with peace—that is, salvation. Even the trees of the fields will clap their hands in joy for us.

6 ¶ Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "Seek ye the fear of the Lord whilst ye are alive, supplicate before His presence whilst ye remain." The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "Seek ye the Lord; and when you find him call upon him. And when he draweth near to you." The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has something like, "Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near." ¶ Elder Eyring taught: "As the risen Savior, He is this day and forever the Light of the World. It is He who invites us to come unto Him and serve Him, without delay. His encouragement to you and to me is this: 'I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me ... There is a danger in the word *someday* when what it means is 'not this day.'"¹⁰ Elder Eyring also quotes Alma 34:33–34: "And now, as I said unto you before, as ye have had so many witnesses, therefore, I beseech of you that ye *do not procrastinate the day of your repentance until the end*; for after this day of life, which is given us to prepare for eternity, behold, if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be no labor performed. Ye cannot say, when ye are brought to that awful crisis, that I will repent, that I will return to my God. Nay, ye cannot say

¹⁰ Eyring, Elder Henry B., "This day." April 2007 General Conference.

this; for that same spirit which doth possess your bodies at the time that ye go out of this life, that same spirit will have power to possess your body in that eternal world.” Rabbi Rosenberg points to Targum (Ⓢ) suggesting that we need to call upon the Lord while we live. Keith warns that otherwise, if we do not turn to the Lord, we might be one of the unwise virgins: “Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, *I know you not*. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh” (Matthew 25:11–13, emphasis added). ¶ Calvin has: “We ought to draw high consolation from being assured that it is not in vain for us to seek God. ‘Seek,’ says Christ, ‘and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened; ask, and it shall be given to you’ (Matthew 7:7).” Nyman points us to the Doctrine and Covenants: “And again, verily I say unto you, my friends, I leave these sayings with you to ponder in your hearts, with this commandment which I give unto you, that ye shall call upon me while I am near—Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you; seek me diligently and ye shall find me; ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (D&C 88:62–63). ¶ Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: “... there are no limitations placed upon any of us. Revelations are not reserved for a limited few or for those called to positions of importance in the Church. It is not position in the Church that confers spiritual gifts. It is not being a bishop, a stake president, or an apostle that makes revelation and salvation available. These are high and holy callings which open the door to the privilege of great service among men. But it is not a call to a special office that opens the windows of revelation to a truth seeker. Rather it is personal righteousness; it is keeping the commandments; it is seeking the Lord while he may be found. God is no respecter of persons. He will give revelation to me and to you on the same terms and conditions.”¹¹ Elder Delbert L. Stapley quoted ISAIAH 55:6–7 and counseled: “Man cannot afford to forsake God, depending solely upon his own intelligence. Such a course can only lead to utter confusion and ultimate destruction. Not knowing the mind, will, and purpose of an infinite God, man does not have, regardless of his advanced knowledge, the wisdom and judgment, nor the correct answers to solve all world problems. With implicit faith we must all turn to the God of our fathers in humility and sincere prayer for counsel and guidance.”¹² President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “Have we not forgotten to pray and to thank the Lord for His mercies and for His guidance in all that we do?

If at times we have been requested to seek the help of the Lord in this great struggle which has deluged the world, have we prayed in the true spirit of prayer? What good does it do for us to petition the Lord, if we have no intention of keeping His commandments? Such praying is hollow mockery and an insult before the throne of grace. How dare we presume to expect a favorable answer if such is the case? ‘Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.’ So said Isaiah. But is not the Lord always near when we petition Him? Verily no! He has said, ‘They were slow to hearken unto the voice of the Lord their God; therefore, the Lord their God is slow to hearken unto their prayers, to answer them in the day of their trouble. In the day of their peace they esteemed lightly my counsel; but, in the day of their trouble, of necessity they feel after me.’ If we draw near unto Him, He will draw near unto us and we will not be forsaken; but if we do not draw near to Him, we have no promise that He will answer us in our rebellion.”¹³ So also Elder Richard R. Lyman, who taught: “‘Seek ye the Lord while he may be found.’ Today is the time to call; tomorrow may be too late. O youth of our nation, ‘Seek ye the Lord while he may be found. Call ye upon him while he is near.’ ... The following familiar words from the Holy Book explain briefly and clearly what I mean: ‘If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.’ If we are losing faith, if it seems our prayers are unanswered, let us reflect upon these words which the Lord has given to us in D&C 101: ‘In the day of their peace they esteemed lightly my counsel; but, in the day of their trouble, of necessity they feel after me. They were slow to hearken unto the voice of the Lord their God; therefore, the Lord their God is slow to hearken unto their prayers, to answer them in the day of their trouble.’”¹⁴

7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. ✓ ✓

- ✓ the man of iniquity
- ✓ ✓ multiplicity to pardon

¹¹ McConkie, Elder Bruce R., “The Rock of Salvation,” *Conference Report*, October 1969, pp. 80–84.

¹² Delbert L. Stapley, “The Path to Eternal Glory,” *Ensign*, July 1973, p. 99.

¹³ Smith, President Joseph Fielding, “Blessed Is the Nation whose God Is the Lord,” *Conference Report*, April 1943, pp. 11–16.

¹⁴ Elder Richard R. Lyman, General Conference, April 1934, pp. 111–112.

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “the man of violence” for *unrighteous*. The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “Let the wicked man forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his counsels.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has *unjust* instead of *unrighteous*. ¶ Certainly, *ways* and *thoughts* are intimately connected. We must forsake *the vain imaginations and thoughts of the heart* (see Moses 8:22). No wonder we read in Mosiah that we will be judged not only by our *deeds* and by our *words*, but also by our *thoughts* (Mosiah 4:30). It is easy to think that our thoughts are somehow disassociated from our words and acts. That perhaps we can entertain unkind feelings, and that this is somehow natural. It has now become clearer than ever to me that surely, “For as [man] thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7). While we often excuse our unrighteous thoughts, we take these excuses even further when we give ourselves permission to say something that is unkind rather than tame our tongue. “I probably shouldn’t say this, but....” Indeed, it is a good thing when we can rule our tongue and not excuse ourselves for our thoughts, our words, and our deeds are inseparably connected.¹⁵ ¶ *And let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, for the first clause, “And let him return to the worship of the Lord.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “And turn to the Lord and he shall find mercy.”

¶ *And he return to Jehovah, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ.* Alexander has: “We are here taught that the seeking of Jehovah, and the calling upon him just enjoined, involve an abandonment of sin, and a *return* to righteousness of life. The imperative version of the futures is warranted, if not required, by the abbreviated form יְיָ.” ¶ *And to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, for the first clause, “And unto the fear of our God.” The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “For he will abundantly pardon your sins.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “And to our God: for he is bountiful to forgive.” ¶ Faussett points us to the margin||, “Literally, ‘multiply to pardon.’” Cheyne directs us to Jeremiah 29:11 (I also include verse 12), where we similarly find: “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.” Our hearkening and inclining our ear to the Lord means that He also, will listen to us. “Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the LORD of hosts” (Zechariah 1:3).

¹⁵ For more information on how our thoughts determine our actions, see *Party-Directed Mediation*, a free on-line PDF book that may be downloaded from the University of California, especially see Chapter 4.

Alexander, speaking of mercy, adds a reminder from Matthew 19:26: “But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.” ¶ President James E. Faust testified: “As Isaiah wrote, if we will return unto the Lord, ‘he will abundantly pardon.’ We are commanded to remember the singular events of the mediation, Crucifixion, and the Atonement by partaking of the sacrament weekly. In the spirit of the sacramental prayers, we partake of the bread and water in remembrance of the body and the blood sacrificed for us, and we are to remember Him and keep His commandments so that we may always have His Spirit to be with us. Our Redeemer took upon Himself all the sins, pains, infirmities, and sicknesses of all who have ever lived and will ever live. No one has ever suffered in any degree what He did. He knows our mortal trials by firsthand experience.”¹⁶

8 For my thoughts [are] not your thoughts, neither [are] your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

For my thoughts [are] not your thoughts. The LXX (ⓖ) reads, “For my counsels are not as your counsels” (also see Abraham 3:19). In my handwritten journal on Isaiah I wrote about an experience I had when I belonged to the Modesto, California High Council. A decision was to be made about whether a member needed to be disfellowshipped or excommunicated. I was so sure it was the latter. But the Lord’s love and compassion for this individual were higher thoughts than mine. I was the *only* one to feel that excommunication was called for. As the evening progressed I aligned my thoughts with the rest of the brethren in attendance but felt greatly embarrassed. The Stake President asked me to give the closing prayer where I wept openly for being so far off the will of the Lord. Those in attendance tried to console me and explained that in these councils it is important to hear all perspectives in love, but once a decision has been made, to get squarely behind the decision. At that time I wrote, “I hope I will never pursue an idea with so much strength and be so far off the mark.” Years have passed since that awful day, and I feel I have yet a long way to go as I still seem to argue too vehemently for points I believe in. While it is true that I completely get behind the decision made by my leaders, I am embarrassed to say that I am still way too harsh in my judgments. It is Ok to give an opinion in love, but I must remember that: “For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again”

¹⁶ Faust, President James E., *The Atonement: Our Greatest Hope*, *Ensign* (CR), November 2001, p.18.

(Matthew 7:2, or 3 Nephi 14:2, where I have been repeatedly reading this verse lately). ¶ Ibn Ezra suggests: “You thought that I should punish you even after your return to me; but your thoughts are not mine; my intention is to do good to you.” Such thoughts remind us of Joseph in Egypt and his kind dealings with his brothers. Ibn Ezra suggests that turning to the Lord will bring us joy. Indeed, *He will abundantly pardon*. ¶ Elder Theodore M. Burton quoted ISAIAH 55:7–11 and warned: “We are trying to solve our problems by man’s philosophy and learning and by human wisdom ... What the world then needs is direction from a true prophet who, knowing the mind and the will of God, can speak in his name with power and authority and say, ‘Thus saith the Lord!’”¹⁷ Elder Bernard P. Brockbank admonished: “Religions and doctrines originating with men cannot bring salvation to a child of God. The Lord counsels man in the Holy Bible that God’s ways did not come from man or from this earth ... The thoughts and ways of God provide for man the greatest opportunities and blessings of this life ... To know and love God are sacred blessings.”¹⁸ ¶ President S. Dilworth Young testified: “As with me, it will thrill you that the Lord takes a pure boy and teaches him the truth before he can be taught what uninspired men conceive to be truth. Perhaps you will remember that the Lord puts into the minds and hearts of his prophets what he wants them to think and say rather than the thoughts of philosophical men. Remember what he said to Isaiah: ‘For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.’”¹⁹ Also, Elder George A. Smith, “... we are told that the Savior, when he visited the earth, selected as his ministers and messengers fishermen and other individuals from the lower orders of the people—men with but little learning, and less reputation, to proclaim the Gospel, testify of the truth, and be witnesses of his advent into the world—of his miracles and resurrection from the dead. So it was in the present generation ... He passed over the learned institutions of the day, and went into a field and laid his hand on the head of Joseph Smith, a ploughboy—upon one who cultivated the earth, and had scarcely education enough to read his Bible—whom he inspired, appointing him to translate the Book of Mormon, and authorizing him to proclaim the Gospel and administer the plan of salvation. Ere long, this young man became the scoff, the by-word, and hiss of all the learned Christians on the earth. But the Lord said, ‘My ways are

not as your ways, nor my thoughts as your thoughts.’”²⁰ ¶ *Neither [are] your ways my ways, saith the LORD*. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And your ways are not right, as the ways of my goodness, saith the Lord.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Nor are my ways as your ways, saith the Lord.” Elder Delbert L. Stapley admonished: “Every individual in the Lord’s church is entitled to the sure knowledge, received by personal revelation through the Holy Ghost, that the Church is true. Personal revelation to the individual is the strength of the church of Jesus Christ in any age. We must learn the truth for a surety and not merely suppose we are right. It is our responsibility to know—and by the aid of the scriptures and the Holy Ghost one can know without any doubt. One cannot prayerfully study the scriptures without gaining the knowledge and testimony that there is only one way to exaltation. The scriptures point the way very clearly. It must be God’s way and not man’s way, for God has said: ‘For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.’”²¹

9 For [as] the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

For [as] the heavens are higher than the earth. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “But distant as the heaven is from the earth.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “For as the heavens are exalted above the earth.” ¶ Wade points us to Psalm 103:11: “For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.” Elder Lance B. Wickman spoke about the “Why” questions that we ask ourselves, “... do not ever doubt the goodness of God, even if you do not know ‘why.’ The overarching question asked by the bereaved and the burdened is simply this: Why? Why did our daughter die, when we prayed so hard that she would live and when she received priesthood blessings? Why are we struggling with this misfortune, when others relate miraculous healing experiences for their loved ones? These are natural questions, understandable questions. But they are also questions that usually go begging in mortality. The Lord has said simply, ‘My ways [are] higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.’ As the Son’s will was ‘swallowed up in the will of the Father’ so must ours be.”²² Then Elder John Taylor testified: “... the kingdom of God can only be

¹⁷ Theodore M. Burton, “Thus Saith the Lord,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1971, p. 78.

¹⁸ Brockbank, Elder Bernard P., “Prayer to Our Heavenly Father,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, p. 58.

¹⁹ Young, President S. Dilworth, “For Thy Servant Heareth,” *Ensign*, November 1974, p. 90.

²⁰ George A. Smith, “Divine Origin, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses* 7:111, 10 January 1858.

²¹ Delbert L. Stapley, “What Constitutes the True Church,” *Ensign*, May 1977, p. 21.

²² Wickman, Elder Lance B., “But If Not,” *Ensign*, November 2002, p. 30.

comprehended by the spirit of revelation and the principle of eternal truth, unless men are in possession of this principle, and have the light of revelation, they do not appreciate, neither can they understand correctly the work in which we are engaged.”²³ President Brigham Young, Jr. testified: “We know, brethren, that it is impossible to please the Lord by following the counsels of our own minds, unless they are enlightened by the Spirit of the Almighty. The wisdom of man is not the wisdom of God, and to be successful in extending and strengthening the cause of God on the earth, we must have his Spirit to guide us. If our ways were as God’s ways, we would do as he would have us do; but it is evident to all who are acquainted with the actions of the human family, not excluding the Latter-day Saints, that the mind of man is not as God’s mind. A verse of Scripture, which now occurs to my mind, will illustrate this. It will be found in the 11th verse of the 2nd chapter of the 1st epistle to the Corinthians—‘For what man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.’”²⁴ ¶ Elder Neal A. Maxwell taught: “Since knees often bend long before minds, holding back this ‘part’ deprives God’s work of some of mankind’s very best intellects. Far better to be meek like Moses, who learned things he ‘never had supposed.’ Yet, sadly, brothers and sisters, in the subtle interplay of agency and identity, there is so much hesitation. The surrender of the mind is actually a victory, because it then introduces us to God’s stretching and ‘higher’ ways!”²⁵ ¶ President Thomas S. Monson explained: “A patriarchal blessing literally contains chapters from your book of eternal possibilities. I say eternal, for just as life is eternal, so is a patriarchal blessing. What may not come to fulfillment in this life may occur in the next. We do not govern God’s timetable. ‘For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.’”²⁶ ¶ *So are my ways higher than your ways.* The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “So is my way distant from your ways.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “So are my ways exalted above your ways.” ¶ Elder David A. Bednar explained: “The limitations that are the natural consequence of advancing age can in fact become remarkable sources of spiritual learning and insight.

²³ Taylor, Elder John, “Men’s Learning,” *Journal of Discourses* 11: 314–320, 24 February 1867.

²⁴ Young, President Brigham, “God’s Ways not as Man’s Ways,” *Journal of Discourses* 15:139–145, 25 August 1872.

²⁵ Maxwell, Elder Neal A., “Consecrate Thy Performance,” *Ensign* (CR), May 2002, p.36.

²⁶ Monson, President Thomas S., “Your Patriarchal Blessing: A Liahona of Light,” *Ensign*, November 1986, p. 65.

The very factors many may believe limit the effectiveness of these servants can become some of their greatest strengths ... I have observed in my Brethren at least a part of the Lord’s purpose for having older men of maturity and judgment serve in senior leadership positions of the Church. These men have had a sustained season of tutoring by the Lord, whom they represent, serve, and love. They have learned to understand the divine language of the Holy Spirit and the Lord’s patterns for receiving revelation. These ordinary men have undergone a most extraordinary developmental process that has sharpened their vision, informed their insight, engendered love for people from all nations and circumstances, and affirmed the reality of the Restoration. I have witnessed repeatedly my Brethren striving diligently to fulfill and magnify their responsibilities while struggling with serious physical problems. These men are not spared from affliction. Rather, they are blessed and strengthened to press forward valiantly while suffering in and with affliction.”²⁷ So, the Lord at times chooses the very young and sometimes the old—but whoever He chooses He qualifies. ¶ *And my thoughts than your thoughts.* The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And your thoughts from my understanding.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “And my thoughts above your thoughts.” ¶ Elder Sam K. Shimabukuro observed: “The greatest of all achievements that we can attain in our long and challenging journey through immortality is when our claim to discipleship of the Lord Jesus Christ reaches the stage where we can say, with all honesty, His ways are our ways and His thoughts our thoughts.”²⁸

10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth. The Targum (Ⓒ) has, for the third clause, “And it is impossible (in the Chaldee, ‘impossible for it’) that it should return thither.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “For as the rain when it descendeth, or snow, from the heavens, doth not return thither, till it hath watered the earth.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “And as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return no more

²⁷ David A. Bednar, ““Chosen to Bear Testimony of My Name”,” *Ensign*, November 2015, p. 128.

²⁸ Shimabukuro, Elder Sam K., “What Doest Ye for Christ?,” *Ensign*, May 1992, p. 84.

thither, but soak the earth, and water it.” ¶ The earth is watered by the life-sustaining moisture that comes from the clouds. There is a cycle, for these waters evaporate and form new clouds. ¶ *And maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And maketh it to sprout, and to be fruitful, that it may give sufficient (literally, ‘according to the sufficiency’) grain of seed to the sower, and food sufficient for the eater.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And caused it to generate and bloom and yield seed for the sower and bread for food.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “And make it to spring, and give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater.” ¶ In much of ancient agriculture, part of the harvest was used as seed to plant again, and the rest for food that had to last until next harvest. Famines would put people’s self-discipline to the test, as they were tempted to eat the seed, and thus make matters worse. Where crops grew solely on that year’s rain, having rain in due season was imperative. Just like having plentiful rain for good crops just about guaranteed sufficient seed for planting as well as foodstuff for eating, even more so, God’s word would never be poured out for naught but His purposes would be accomplished. Just as water comes down in the form of rain provides plants and people with the needed moisture, so also, in a more perfect way, God’s word would never go forth without accomplishing its purpose.

11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper [in the thing] whereto I sent it.

So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Thus shall the word of my kindness, which proceeds from my presence, it is not possible that it shall return to my presence void.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “So shall it be with my word: when it hath proceeded from my mouth, it shall not be reversed.” ¶ Kay brilliantly observes and applies this verse to Christ: “... the final application of the parable is to Him who *came down from heaven and gave life unto the world* (John 6:33); who said, “I came down from heaven ... *to do the will of Him that sent me*” (ib. 38; cp. 39, 40; Matthew 26:39; cp. also Psalm 72:6).” ¶ Ibn Ezra summarizes as: “I shall fulfil all I spake to the prophets.” Oswalt, leaning on Muilenburg, has: “It is not rain that is the source of life but the word of God.” ¶ Then Elder Wilford Woodruff shared: “If we had correct understanding, we should all see as the Lord does, and should understand how his purposes will be accomplished; but we are to

walk by faith, and not by sight. I feel to rejoice in knowing that the kingdom of God is established on the earth, and that it will spread itself abroad, become like a great mountain, and finally fill the earth. The words of the Lord will not return to him void; but whether he speaks by his own voice or the voice of his servants, those words will have their fulfillment.”²⁹ ¶ *But it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper [in the thing] whereto I sent it.* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Till all are accomplished which I willed; and till I prosper thy ways and my commandments.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “But it shall do whatsoever I please, and shall prosper in the things for which I sent it.” ¶ President Brigham Young taught: “In the progress of the age in which we live, we discern the fulfillment of prophecy, and the preparation for the second coming of our Lord and Savior to dwell upon the earth ... The word has gone forth from the Almighty, and will not return unto Him void. It becomes us, therefore, one and all, to have on our wedding garments, to have our lamps trimmed and burning, well filled with oil, lest we also be taken unawares, and share the fate of the foolish virgins. May the Lord bless us with the inspiration of His Holy Spirit, that our minds may be enlightened, our understandings enlarged and strengthened; and may His grace, wisdom, and intelligence be given unto us for our preservation and sanctification according to our day and generation, for the Redeemer’s sake.”³⁰ As our minds are enlightened, we will surely *see eye to eye* (ISAIAH 52:8).

12 For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap [their] hands.

For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: The Targum (ⲧ) has, “For ye shall go out with joy from among the nations, and with peace ye shall be carried to your land.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For with gladness you shall go forth; and with joyfulness you shall be taught.” ¶ Cowles suggests that this verse makes an allusion to the Exodus from Egypt. We can also speak of the removal from mystic Babylon. ¶ *The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “The mountains and the hills shall rejoice before you with praise.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For the mountains and hills shall leap for joy, expecting you.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “The

²⁹ Woodruff, Elder Wilford, “Testimony of the Spirit of Truth, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses* 8: 261–267, 22 April 1860.

³⁰ Young, President Brigham, “The Constitution of the United States, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses* 2:170–178, 18 February 1855.

mountains and the hills shall sing praise before you.” ¶ Elder Orson Pratt testified: “We shall roll down from the mountains, and though we may be considered but a little stone cut out of the mountains without human ingenuity, without mankind undertaking to carry on this work of their own accord, the time will come when God will cause the stone of the mountains to roll, and then it will roll down and build up the central city of Zion, and that, too, long before this gathering from the distant nations shall cease. I do not know how much before the ten tribes will come from the north; but after Zion is built in Jackson County, and after the Temple is built upon that spot of ground where the cornerstone was laid in 1831; after the glory of God in the form of a cloud by day shall rest upon that Temple, and by night the shining of a flaming fire will fill the whole heavens round about; after every dwelling place upon Mount Zion shall be clothed upon as with a pillar of fire by night, and a cloud by day, about that period of time, the ten tribes will be heard of, away in the north, a great company, as Jeremiah says, coming down from the northern regions, coming to sing in the height of the latter-day Zion ... In that day the trees of the field will clap like hands, says the Prophet, and in that day the Lord will open waters in the wilderness, and streams in the desert, to give drink to his chosen, his people Israel.”³¹ ¶ *And all the trees of the field shall clap [their] hands.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And all the trees of the field shall clap with their branches.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And all the trees of the field will clap with their branches.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “And all the trees of the country shall clap their hands.” ¶ This is one of my father’s favorite scriptures. We spoke again about this verse shortly after he turned 90. Sister Elaine L. Jack shared: “We will climb our spiritual mountains rejoicing. Our hearts will resonate to Isaiah’s words, ‘For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.’ Each insight, each spiritual view should fill us with a spirit of thanksgiving that spills over into the lives of those around us. We sisters in Zion have the best reasons to thank the Lord. Thank the Lord for your testimony. Thank Him for being alive now. When your challenges come, thank the Lord for your knowledge that He lives, and feel peace knowing He loves you ... With each new lesson learned and each answer to personal prayer, say, ‘I rejoice exceedingly that [my] Lord Jesus Christ hath been mindful of [me].’”³² ¶ Elder Orson Pratt speaks of the gathering of Israel: “Now I will quote a parallel prophecy, delivered to Joseph Smith, one of the greatest Prophets who has

lived on the earth in any generation, save it be our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Some forty-three years ago, in speaking of the lost ten tribes of Israel, the Lord says— ‘They who are in the north countries shall come in remembrance before the Lord; and their prophets shall hear his voice, and shall no longer stay themselves; and they shall smite the rocks, and the ice shall flow down at their presence. And an highway shall be cast up in the midst of the great deep. Their enemies shall become a prey unto them, And in the barren deserts there shall come forth pools of living water; and the parched ground shall no longer be a thirsty land. And they shall bring forth their rich treasures unto the children of Ephraim, my servants. And the boundaries of the everlasting hills shall tremble at their presence.’ To show that they come with power, they come on a highway cast up for them; the ice feels the power of God and flows down, making room for them; and the barren deserts of the north, wherever they may go and need water, will yield forth pools of living water to quench their thirst. As they come to sing in the height of Zion, the everlasting hills, this great Rocky Mountain range, extending from the arctic regions south to the central portions of America, will tremble beneath the power of God at the approach of that people. Then will be fulfilled the saying of David, that the mountains shall skip like rams, and the little hills like lambs, before his people. The very trees of the field will clap like hands, as the Psalmist David has said.”³³ Elder Pratt, a few years earlier, also associated the clapping of hands to the return to Jackson County: “We shall go back to Jackson County. Not that all this people will leave these mountains, or all be gathered together in a camp, but when we go back there will be a very large organization consisting of thousands, and tens of thousands, and they will march forward, the glory of God overshadowing their camp by day in the form of a cloud, and a pillar of flaming fire by night, the Lord’s voice being uttered forth before his army. Such a period will come in the history of this people, and when it arrives the mountains and the hills will be ready to break forth with a loud voice before the Lord’s army, and the very trees of the field will wave to and fro by the power of God, and clap like hands. The everlasting hills will rejoice, and they will tremble before the presence of the Lord; and his people will go forth and build up Zion according to celestial law.”³⁴ ¶ Rashi, in Slotki-Rosenberg, suggest that “The bare mountains and desolate hills will be clothed with luxuriant vegetation and all the trees of the field will produce rich fruits.” This, indeed, fits well

³¹ Pratt, Elder Orson, “Resurrection of the Saints, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses* 18: 57–69, 25 July 1875.

³² Elaine L. Jack, “Look Up and Press On,” *Ensign*, May 1992, p. 98.

³³ Pratt, Elder Orson, “Gathering of Israel, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses* 18:24–29, 11 April 1875.

³⁴ Pratt, Elder Orson, “Consecration, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses* 15: 354–366, 9 March 1873.

with context of the earth's transformation into its paradisiacal glory that we see in ISAIAH 55:13.

13 Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign [that] shall not be cut off.

Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Instead of the wicked the righteous shall rise up.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And instead of the briar, shall spring up the cypress.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) renders it *shrub* rather than *thorn*. The earth shall once again enter into its terrestrial glory, and become like the Garden of Eden. ¶ Wade says: “The treeless waste, where nothing but desert plants grow, will be changed into a park.” Margalioth, as mentioned in ISAIAH 3, considers the *thesis and antithesis* of this verse, using the words *instead of* / *and instead of*, תַּחַת / תַּחַת, “And it shall come to pass, that INSTEAD OF sweet smell there shall be stink; AND INSTEAD OF a girdle a rent; AND INSTEAD OF well set hair baldness; AND INSTEAD OF a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning INSTEAD OF beauty,” and contrasts it to several like verses in these later chapters of Isaiah. Whereas in ISAIAH 3 the comparison was of something good turned into something bad through תַּחַת / תַּחַת, the same words are inverted so that instead of difficulties there would be something better. “INSTEAD OF the thorn shall come up the fir tree, AND INSTEAD OF the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for

a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off” (ISAIAH 55:13). See also ISAIAH 60:17 and 61:3. ¶ *And instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree:* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And instead of sinners shall rise up those that fear sin.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And instead of the thistle, shall come up the myrtle.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) renders it *nettle* rather than *brier*. ¶ Cowles explains: “Another figure conceives of the thorns and briars that came upon the earth, the curse for man’s fall (Genesis 3:17–19), as now giving way to growths alike beautiful and useful ... making this sin-cursed earth again a paradise of moral purity and beauty.” ¶ Elder Charles W. Penrose taught regarding the Millennial renewal of this orb: “The earth itself shall feel the influence of that divine spirit [when ‘the Spirit of God shall be poured out upon all flesh’ as mentioned in Joel 2:28], and cease to bring forth thorns and briars, and in the place thereof ‘shall spring up the fir and the myrtle tree;’ and ‘the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God, as the waters cover the sea.’”³⁵ ¶ *And it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign [that] shall not be cut off.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And it shall be before the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign, that shall not cease.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And the Lord shall be for a name, and for an everlasting sign which shall not fail.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “And the Lord shall be named for an everlasting sign, that shall not be taken away.” ¶ Whitehouse has: “These transformations in nature shall be the everlasting sign of Yahweh’s new covenant with His Redeemed People (cf. the ‘new heaven and new earth’ of ISAIAH 65:17; 66:22) which convey the same idea of an ‘everlasting sign.’”

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³⁵ Penrose, Elder Charles W., “Prophecies Relating to Our Day, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses* 24:203–217, 18 May 1883. Also see, “The Work of the Restitution, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses* 20: 293–299, 17 August 1879.

Isaiah 56

Most exegetes apply this chapter to ancient Israel, a valid application. Yet there are numerous modern-day usages that seem even more fitting. The restoration of the Gospel is the ideal setting for understanding this chapter. The Lord invites us to hold on to righteousness. Keeping the Sabbath is put for a greater number of righteous activities. All those who partake of the new and everlasting covenant will have eternal increase. False pastors are reprimanded.

vv. 1–2. This is an invitation to turn unto the Lord and be righteous. Two measures of righteousness include avoiding evil and delighting in the Sabbath.

1 ¶ THUS saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, ✓ and do justice: for my salvation [is] near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.

✓ or, equity

THUS saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: The LXX (Ⓜ) reads, “Thus saith the Lord, Keep judgment and practise righteousness.” ¶ Bishops’ Bible renders it: “Thus saith the Lorde, Kepe equitie, and do right [יִצְדִּיקָהּ]: for my sauyng health shal come shortlye, and my righteousness [יִצְדִּיקָתִּי] shalbe opened.” Skinner explains: “The exhortation to righteousness is based on the nearness of Jehovah’s salvation. Righteousness occurs twice in ISAIAH 56:1 but in different senses. In the first case righteousness means conformity to the law of God (cf. ISAIAH 58:2), in the second it is, as often, equivalent to salvation. The thought that salvation is near is as characteristic of the later chapters of this book ...” ¶ Horsley suggests: “Keep ye judgment] Judgment, מִשְׁפָּט, signifies here, as in many other places, the entire rule of faith and practice as laid down in the Gospel.” The words righteousness, judgment and justice are also associated with the scriptural injunction to bless the lives of the foreigner, the widow, the orphan and the poor. ¶ For my salvation [is] near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. The LXX (Ⓜ) reads, “For my salvation is near, just ready to come, and my saving kindness to be revealed.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has justice instead of salvation. ¶ Govett writes: “On the first verse of this prophecy Jerome remarks, ‘Isaiah is speaking to the listeners of that time that they should do all things which are right, and prepare themselves for the advent of the Saviour, for he is the justice and mercy of God.’ The context shows that this advent of the Lord is his second advent; and the interpretation is confirmed by a

similar warning from the pen of St. John, just before the time of Christ’s second appearing. ‘Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame’ (Revelation 16:15).” Faussett also applies these verses to the second coming.

2 Blessed [is] the man [that] doeth this, and the son of man [that] layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “every one that shall keep the Sabbath,” for keepeth the sabbath. The LXX (Ⓜ) reads, “Happy the man who doth these things and the mortal who adhereth to them; and who is careful not to profane my sabbaths, and who restraineth his hands from doing evil.” ¶ Wordsworth has: “Blessed—the man—the son of man] Blessed is every one, every child of Adam (בְּנֵי-אָדָם}, as the original has it, in whatever Nation), however feeble he may be (every אָנוּשׁ, see Psalm 8:4¹, מִהָאָנוּשׁ כִּי-תִצְדִּיקֶנּוּ וּבֶן-אָדָם כִּי תִפְקְדֶנּוּ}, that keeps right, and does righteousness, for My salvation is near to come to him who was once afar off, and to he revealed to him who once sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, in heathen lands.” Whitehouse writes: “We note here the characteristic use of the expression man and son of man. The word ‘man’ (אָנוּשׁ) is a man in his frailty and limitation—‘mortal.’

‘Son of man’ [בֶּן-אָדָם] also designates man as a member of the human race in his relation to God. It is the constantly recurring term of address by God to Ezekiel.” As LDS we also understand that Son of Man is a title of Christ because the Father is the Man of Holiness. “Wherefore teach it unto your children, that all men, everywhere, must repent, or they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God, for no unclean thing can dwell there, or dwell in his presence; for, in the language of Adam, Man of Holiness is his name, and

¹ “What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” (Psalm 8:4).

the name of his Only Begotten is the Son of Man, even Jesus Christ, a righteous Judge, who shall come in the meridian of time” (Moses 6:57, see also Moses 7:35). ¶ Several translators and exegetes prefer to translate **שָׂרָא**, as does the LXX (Θ), “*Happy* is the man &c.” Leeser has: “Happy is the mortal that ever doth this.” AMP renders it: “Blessed, happy, and fortunate is the man who does this.” In Alma 41 we read: “Behold, I say unto you, wickedness never was happiness” (Alma 41:10b). Here we have the same rendered positively; we will find joy in serving the Lord and sanctifying His Sabbaths. Indeed, in 2 Nephi 2:25b, 27–28 we read: “men are, that they might have joy ... Wherefore, men are free according to the flesh; and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil; for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself. And now, my sons, I would that ye should look to the great Mediator, and hearken unto his great commandments; and be faithful unto his words, and choose eternal life, according to the will of his Holy Spirit.” ¶ Alexander testifies: “A great variety of reasons have been given for the special mention of the Sabbath here. It has especially perplexed those writers who regard the Sabbath as a temporary ceremonial institution. Some of these endeavour to evade the difficulty, by supposing that the Sabbath here meant is a mystical or spiritual Sabbatism, a repose from suffering, sin, or ceremonial impositions. But how could such a Sabbath be *observed*, or how could they be called upon to *keep* it, as a condition of the divine favour?” Oswalt explains: “Isaiah declares that the ‘happy’ person, the person who is experiencing the true blessings of life, manifests an attitude that expresses itself in two behaviors. This person is careful or watchful to avoid two things: *profane the Sabbath*, and *do any evil*.” Keeping of the Sabbath is an outer reflection of an inner commitment of our love for the Savior (see also ISAIAH 58). Both here and in *Rain in Due Season* (Leviticus 26:2), the Lord gives the observance of the Sabbath day as one of the keys to righteous living. For many Christians the importance of the Sabbath has been diminished, but not for the members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. With the resurrection of our Savior on the first day of the week the *Law was fulfilled* and the Sabbath day observance (under the name, *Day of the Lord*) was now celebrated on the first day of the week, or Sunday.² Cowles has: “Remarkably,

revelation that the Sabbath day, for most nations, is to be kept on the first day of the week, or Sunday, I will limit my comments here to those which might be of interest to our friends from other Christian faiths who may desire additional proof. ¶ Remember that Χριστοῦ (Christ) came to *fulfill* the Law, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil” (Matthew 5:17). ¶ Χριστοῦ was crucified on Friday, before the setting of the Shabbat. As Shabbat approached, and not just any Shabbat, there was a concern about leaving His body on the cross: “The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away” (John 19:31). Χριστοῦ died on Friday, then, and on the third day He rose from the dead. So, His spirit left His soul part of Friday [יום ששי] before the onset of שבת, all of Saturday [שבת] and part of Sunday [יום ראשון]. ¶ The third day, then means we count *each day*, Friday [יום ששי] before the onset of שבת, Saturday [שבת] and Sunday [יום ראשון] as a day. This is the way the Hebrews counted their days. ¶ Χριστοῦ resurrects on the first day of the week. When did Mary Magdalene come to the sepulchre? “The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre” (John 20:1); “... toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene” (Matthew 28:1); “And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun” (Mark 16:2). ¶ Before continuing I must again testify of the truthfulness of this resurrection. I solemnly testify that *He is risen!* I was overcome by the Spirit as I read John 20:1–18 to Linda (7 September 2012) only a few meters from what is believed to be Christ’s tomb, at the Garden Tomb site outside the city walls of Jerusalem. ¶ Returning to the σάββατον, let us look at the Greek text which is more literal and correct than the AV: Matthew 28:1 has: “In the end of [the] sabbath [σάββατον], as it began to dawn toward [the] first [day] of [the] week [σάββατον], came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre (οψε δε σάββατον τη επιφωσκουση εις μιαν σάββατον ηλθεν μαρια η μαγδαληνη και η αλλη μαρια θεωρησαι τον ταφον).” ¶ Note that the word Sabbath or σάββατον appears twice in the Greek? The word “day” *does not even appear* in the Greek but is an elliptical interpretation. Several translations are more literal than the AV and have: “Now well along on the *sabbath*, as it began to dawn on the first of the *sabbaths*, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre” (JUB); “But late in *sabbaths*, at the dawning into first of *sabbaths*, Mary the Magdalene and the other Mary came to gaze upon the grave” (LITV); “And on the eve of the *sabbaths*, at the dawn, toward the first of the *sabbaths*, came Mary the Magdalene, and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre” (YLT). ¶ In Mark 16:1 we likewise have: “1. και διαγενομενου του σάββατου μαρια η μαγδαληνη και μαρια η του ιακωβου και σαλωμη ηγορασαν αρωματα ινα ελθουσιν αλειψωσιν αυτον. 2. και λιαν πρωι της μιας σάββατον ερχονται επι το μνημειον ανατειλαντος του ηλιου.” Note that Ιησού Χριστού appears to His disciples on the day of resurrection when they were gathered together: “Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you” (John 20:19). ¶ Let us return to the idea that for the Hebrews, days were counted including the present day, so that we have: “And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you” (John 20:26). This way of speaking exists even today among the Mexican people. When in California I used to frequently visit non-member Mexican families with the missionaries and who would often say, *no asisto a la iglesia cada ocho días* (I don’t attend church every eight days). They counted the present day as day one. (This way of speaking existed in Chile over a century ago but has been lost.) So then, just as we counted each day when we say that Χριστοῦ resurrected on the third day, so also we count each day

² We will pay special attention to the Sabbath of the Lord (שְׁבֻעַת יְיָ) or Sabbath Day in contrast to other Sabbath celebrations or times of rest, such as the Sabbath Year [שְׁבֻעַת שָׁנִים] or the Year of Jubilee [יְיָבֵל]. While we know from modern-day

keeping the Sabbath sacred is put here in one clause, and in its parallel clause, withholding the hand from every moral evil, as if the observance of the Sabbath were designed to comprehend all religious observances, the entire external worship of God. This prominence give to the Sabbath must certainly imply that God holds its observance in specially high esteem ...” This is especially evident also in *Rain in Due Season*, particularly in Leviticus 26:1–4, before all the promises are made to Israel if she would be faithful.

¶ Then Elder Joseph Fielding Smith admonished the Saints to keep the Sabbath day Holy: “My dear brethren and sisters: It is my privilege in standing before you to present a very old doctrine and one that has come down through the ages, but one that has not been very well observed and is not being observed today. To fortify my position I am going to present my authority. ‘Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the

when we use the expression ‘after eight days.’ I particularly prefer the names of the days in Hebrew, first day, day two, day three, day four, day five, day six, Shabbat, instead of our days as we have them in English and Spanish, named after the planets. But I digress again.

¶ The disciples partook of the Sacrament on the *Lord’s Day*, or the *first day of the week*, the *new Sabbath*: “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight” (Acts 20:7). ¶ Barnes explains: “To break bread – Evidently to celebrate the Lord’s Supper. Compare Acts 2:46. So the Syriac understands it, by translating it, ‘to break the eucharist’; that is, the eucharistic bread. It is probable that the apostles and early Christians celebrated the Lord’s Supper on every Lord’s day.”

¶ Cambridge Bible has: “And upon the first day of the week] Which had now, in memory of the Resurrection, begun to be observed as a holy day by Christians. In an Epistle written before this visit to Troas (1Co 16:2) the day is appointed by St Paul as the special time when the Christian alms should be laid aside.” ¶ Adam Clarke: “Upon the first day of the week – What was called κυριακή, the Lord’s day, the Christian Sabbath, in which they commemorated the resurrection of our Lord; and which, among all Christians, afterwards took the place of the Jewish Sabbath.” There are more scriptures of interest, but this will suffice. ¶ George W. Crockwell wrote (Improvement Era 1915, pp. 339–340): “Our Seventh Day Advent friends contend vigorously for the seventh day, boldly asserting that Constantine, Emperor of Rome, changed the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week, by an edict in the fourth century. This is most certainly an error as the following excerpts from the writings of theological historians will prove [Crockwell then includes quote after quote proving that the Lord’s day was kept by Christians well before Constantine. I only include one of these as interested readers have easy access to Elder Crockwell’s talk.] ‘Epistle to the Magnesians, 101 A. D., Chap. 9, Ignatius said: “Those who were brought up in the ancient order of things, have come to the possession of a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath (Jewish or seventh day), but living in the observance of the Lord’s day (first day) on which also our life was sprung by him and his death.’ ... From the foregoing excerpts, we learn that the first day of the week was observed as the Sabbath, Sunday, or the Lord’s day, long before the birth of Emperor Constantine, even from the day of the resurrection of Christ; and from New Testament scriptures, it is very clear that the first day was observed by the apostles, beginning with the day on which Jesus arose from the dead; and if a correct translation of the scriptures had been made, there would have been no occasion or opportunity for a dispute about the matter.”

sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.’ That is the law, a law that was pronounced by Moses, but it is much older, it was in existence from the beginning of the earth. Again, the Sabbath for the land was to be observed as well as for man, and also for the beasts. You will find that recorded in the 25th chapter of Leviticus. Again, failure to observe this law would bring suffering, the people would be scattered, and the land would then observe its Sabbath. You will find that in Leviticus 26th chapter [*Rain in Due Season*—GB]. The Lord says: ‘And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you; and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies’ land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest: because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it’ (Leviticus 26). [Elder Joseph Fielding Smith then reads ISAIAH 56:1–2; 58:13–14; Jeremiah, 17:21–27; and Ezekiel, 20:5–12]. I have a good many more passages of scripture here, but I am not going to take time to read more from the Bible, for this will suffice. On the 25th day of July, 1847, the day after the pioneers entered this valley, it being the Sabbath day a meeting was held, President Brigham Young spoke to the assembly as follows: He told the brethren that they must not work on Sunday; that they would lose five times as much as they would gain by it. None were to hunt on that day; and there should not any man dwell among us who would not observe these rules. They might go and dwell where they pleased, but should not dwell with us. The same day President Heber C. Kimball, first counselor in the Presidency said: ‘I advise you to keep the sabbath day holy, whether others do or not ... Again from President Brigham Young, this time at a conference of the Church, April 7, 1850: ‘We have tried it [breaking the Sabbath day] in traveling since we left Nauvoo, and not one time having traveled on that day have we gained by it, but we have lost a day or two the next week to pay for it. What is the harm? It proves that we treat lightly the rules of the God ...’ I have a quotation here from President Joseph F. Smith that I want to read to you, mainly because it has never been put in print ‘... The things of God are discovered by the Spirit of God, not by the spirit of man or of the world. Those who seek shall find, and to those who knock at the door it shall be opened, and those who ask shall receive, and not otherwise. He that has the spirit discerns by the spirit and loves the works of the spirit, for they give delight and joy ... We learn a principle by

coming in close contact with and studying it, and admitting it into our minds and hearts. There is no house that was not built, no tree that did not grow, no knowledge that was not or is not acquired. But truth is eternal—it was not created or made, it is as a precious gem. It lies hidden from us and we must find it, and apply it, and make it ours ... ‘Honor the sabbath day and keep it holy,’ and you will know more about it.’ This letter was written May 10, 1897 ... Now, I am going to be bold enough to say something ... We have got to repent and turn from this evil [of breaking the Sabbath day] lest the same troubles come upon us that came upon old Israel, as I have read them to you. Time will not permit me to say more. May the Lord bless the Latter-day Saints, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.”³

vv. 3–8. We learned in ISAIAH 55 that God’s thoughts are higher than our thoughts. Here the Lord continues to clarify these things. All who are faithful will be blessed; whether it be the stranger or the eunuch. Those who are faithful will have eternal increase, even those who have no children upon this earth. Once again, the Sabbath is given as a measure of such faithfulness—along with the partaking of the everlasting covenant in the temples of the Lord. In the last days, temple sacrifices will be restored for a period. The Lord will gather Israel, and further, all are invited to come unto Christ.

3 ¶ Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I [am] a dry tree.

The LXX (6) reads, “Let not the stranger who cleaveth to the Lord say, ‘The Lord will separate me from his people.’ Nor let the eunuch say ‘I am a dry tree.’”

Instead of *that hath joined himself to the LORD*, the Peshitta (5) has *who follows the LORD*. The Douay-Rheims (2) has, for the first half, “And let not the son of the stranger, that adhereth to the Lord, speak, saying: The Lord will divide and separate me from his people.”

¶ Wordsworth writes: “*the son of the stranger*] They, who were foreigners under the Law, but attached themselves to the Lord under the Gospel, are not to be separated from the Jews, in the Church of Christ.” Elder Bruce R. McConkie explains ISAIAH 56:3–8 in the context of the gathering of Israel, including the Gentile nations (emphasis added): “Prophecies about the gathering of Israel by the same prophet might seem to

be repetitive. In part they are, for repetition is sound pedagogy, but they also tell of gatherings that will occur by stages and in different locations. Israel was not scattered at one time; indeed, the main phases of the scattering went forward for a thousand years. And Israel will not be gathered all at one time ... ‘And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord: and they shall be *my people*, and I will be *their God*: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.’ (Jeremiah 24:7) ... The prophetic word speaks of Israel, of the remnants of that once-favored people who are now scattered in all the nations of the earth of the literal seed of the bodies of the prophets of old; it says that these—the descendants of the ancients—shall be gathered. Of this there is no question. But what of the Gentiles in the last days? ... In most pointed and precise language, Isaiah says, concerning the gathering of the Gentiles in the last days [and here quotes ISAIAH 56:3–8].”⁴ Indeed, the Gospel would go first to the Gentile Nations and then to Israel. ¶ **The eunuch, עֲבָדִים**. Shalom Paul

explains: “Hebrew עֲבָדִים is a loanword from the Akkadian expression *ša rēši* (‘of the head’), which is the title of high-level functionaries in the royal court, some of whom, but not all, were castrated.” In ISAIAH 39:7 we read: “And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.” This was not done by their choice. Skinner explains: “*the eunuch*] Such persons are excluded from the congregation by Deuteronomy 23:1. On that passage Prof. W. R. Smith remarks that ‘Presumably the original sense of this rule was directed not against the unfortunate victims of Oriental tyranny and the harem system, but against the religious mutilation of the Galli’ &c. (Driver’s *Deuteronomy*, p. 259).” ¶ Luther, in speaking about *eunuchs*—whether physically or metaphorically—correctly warns that celibacy is not a better state than holy matrimony. Rather, the point of this verse is that the eunuch who serves the Lord and is obedient to His covenants is better off than a person who does not. The faithful eunuch will not be denied any blessings in eternity, including those of eternal increase. Alexander has: “The whole class of personal disqualifications is represented by the case of the eunuch ... It is possible, however, that the eunuch may be mentioned, simply because it stands at the beginning of the list of prohibitions in the law. In either case, the expression is generic, or representative of more particulars than it expresses.” ¶ Govett quotes a scripture I have been meditating upon of late: “The consolation offered to the eunuch was most probably that which the Lord had in view when he said, ‘For

³ Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, October 1938 *General Conference*, pp. 36–40.

⁴ McConkie, Bruce R. *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1985, pp. 545–551.

there are some eunuchs which were so born from their mothers' womb; and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men; and there be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it' (Matthew 19:12). Revelation 14:1–5, and Matthew 19:29, confirm this opinion.” I have been pondering the possibility that the term **סְרִיס** is here also used as a metaphor for those faithful Latter-day Saints who have taken upon themselves—and been faithful to—temple covenants despite feelings of same-sex attraction (by the way, the word **סְרִיס** in Hebrew means *faithful*, see Gesenius). In *The Family: A Proclamation to the World* we read: “All human beings—male and female—are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny. Gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose ... The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave. Sacred ordinances and covenants available in holy temples make it possible for individuals to return to the presence of God and for families to be united eternally We further declare that God has commanded that the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife ... The family is ordained of God. Marriage between man and woman is essential to His eternal plan.”⁵ It is clear that in eternity no blessings of family, increase or exaltation shall be denied to the faithful. Elders Oaks and Wickman explained that: “Every blessing—including eternal marriage—is and will be [theirs if faithful] in due course ...”⁶ We also read: “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints acknowledges that same-sex attraction is a sensitive issue which requires kindness, compassion, and understanding ... The Church’s doctrinal position is clear: Sexual activity should only occur between a man and a woman who are married. However, that should never be used as justification for unkindness.”⁷ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland spoke in General Conference: “There is room for those who speak different languages, celebrate diverse cultures, and live in a host of

locations. There is room for the single, for the married, for large families, and for the childless. There is room for those who once had questions regarding their faith and room for those who still do. There is room for those with differing sexual attractions. In short, there is a place for everyone who loves God and honors His commandments as the inviolable measuring rod for personal behavior, for if love of God is the melody of our shared song, surely our common quest to obey Him is the indispensable harmony in it.”⁸ ISAIAH 56:3–5, then, is to be of comfort to both the foreigner and the faithful—regardless of their ability to have posterity in this world. None of the faithful will be *dry trees* in eternity. ¶ *Separate*, **בָּרַל**. Wade has: “A technical expression for the severance of Israel from the heathen (Ezra 6:21, 9:1, 10:11, Nehemiah 9:2, 10:28, 13:3, Leviticus 20:24).” ¶ Cowles has: “*Behold, I am a dry tree*” childless (this being the oriental sense of this proverbial expression), and therefore held in the lowest esteem.” Henderson has: “The phrase, ‘a dry tree,’ is still used in the East of a person of either sex who has no children.”

4 For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose [the things] that please me, and take hold of my covenant;

For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths. The Targum (**ܬ**) has, “*Sabbath days*,” **יְמֵי שַׁבָּת**. The LXX (**Ϝ**) reads, “For thus saith the Lord to the eunuchs, Whoever of them shall keep my sabbaths.” Alexander has: “According to Joseph Kimhi, the plural Sabbaths is intended to include the Sabbatical year, and that of jubilee.” As we have noted, the Lord give importance to His Sabbath. I love the Sabbath and find that in that day I can forget the world and dedicate myself fully to the work of the Lord. ¶ *And choose [the things] that please me, and take hold of my covenant.* The Targum (**ܬ**) has, for the first clause, “And delight in what I desire.” The LXX (**Ϝ**) reads, “And choose the things in which I delight and adhere to my covenant.” The Douay-Rheims (**Ϟ**) has, for the second clause, “And shall hold fast my covenant.” ¶ Henderson well says: “The covenant referred to here and ISAIAH 56:6, is doubtless the everlasting, or New Covenant, the establishment of which is promised, ISAIAH 55:3.” President Brigham Young taught that “All Latter-day Saints enter the new and everlasting covenant when they enter this Church.”⁹ President Joseph Fielding

⁵ *The Family: A Proclamation to the World*, “This proclamation was read by President Gordon B. Hinckley as part of his message at the General Relief Society Meeting held September 23, 1995, in Salt Lake City, Utah.” URL accessed 4 August 2016: <https://www.lds.org/topics/family-proclamation?lang=eng>

⁶ Interview with Elder Dallin H. Oaks and Elder Lance B. Wickman: “Same-Gender Attraction” URL accessed 4 August 2016. <http://www.mormonnewsroom.org/article/interview-oaks-wickman-same-gender-attraction>

⁷ *Same-sex attraction*. URL accessed 25 July 2016: <https://www.lds.org/topics/same-gender-attraction?lang=eng>

⁸ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, “Songs Sung and Unsung,” April 2007 General Conference.

⁹ *Discourses of Brigham Young*.

Smith explained: “The new and everlasting covenant is the fulness of the gospel (D&C 66:2). It is composed of ‘All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations’ that are sealed upon members of the Church by the Holy Spirit of promise, or the Holy Ghost, by the authority of the President of the Church who holds the keys (D&C 132:7).”¹⁰ Honoring the Sabbath, along with the rest of what it entails to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, is what is called for here.

5 Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.

Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: The Targum (ܬ) has, “Even unto them will I give in the house of my sanctuary, and in the land of the place of my Shekinah a place, and a name that is better than that of sons and daughters.” The LXX (6) reads, “I will give them, in my house and within my walls, an honourable place better than sons and daughters.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “I will give to them in my house, and within my walls, a place, and a name better than sons and daughters.” ¶ Cowles has: “If this representative class [eunuchs], outcasts from human sympathy, will only keep my Sabbaths, choose what pleases me, and take firm hold of my covenant, in all honesty and diligence obeying my precepts, I will give them in my house a better place and higher honor than that of mere sons and daughters.” ¶ *Hand and name, יד ושם*, LITERALLY, *hand* (but also a *place* or *memorial*) *and name*. Also, this is the name of the Holocaust Museum (*Yad Vashem, יד ושם*), which Linda & I had the opportunity to visit in Jerusalem. The Jewish people prefer the term *Shoah* rather than *holocaust*. Wordsworth has: “*A place* [Heb. יד, lit. a *hand*; or it may mean a *memorial*, a *monument* (see on 2 Samuel 18:18, ‘*Absalom’s place*’ [יֵד אֲבִשָׁלֹם]).” Although he himself does not believe this verse is about the temple, Cowles makes several comments that are of interest to us in this regard and the promises of eternal increase made in the Holy Temple: “*In mine house and within my walls*] cannot be restricted to the ancient temple though the language adapts itself to the old economy and refers to the exclusion of this class [eunuchs] from the temple [yet] they shall be at home in the Christian church and in the spiritual communion

with God. The Hebrew word for ‘place,’ joined with ‘name,’ means properly, ‘hand,’ [but used of Absalom’s place]. To have a hand there in God’s house and within his walls might naturally in our English idiom mean, a work to do there, a sphere for one’s free activities. ‘Hand,’ is a Hebrew emblem for power, but I am not aware that it is used in the sense of *work*, a sphere for exertion.—Gesenius thinks the word refers to the uplifted hand and arm which is found on many ancient sepulchral monuments.” Skinner has: “An illustration of what is meant is found in 2 Samuel 18:18, where we read that Absalom, in the prospect of dying childless, erected the pillar to his own memory which was known as ‘Absalom’s hand’ (cf. also 1 Samuel 15:12, R.V. margin||). The case of those here spoken of is precisely similar.” Whitehouse has: “The Revised Version here correctly renders the Hebrew original *yad* [יד] by ‘memorial.’” And that is what most exegetes say about the translation of this expression. But there are other possibilities. Alexander says: “The use of the word יד in this connection is obscure, although the essential meaning is determined by the context.” Similarly, Young, says: “The *hand* and *name* are difficult to interpret.” LITV translates: “I, even I will give to them in My house and in My walls a *hand* and a *name*” (see also MKJV). Rotherham translates as “A sign and a name.” Perhaps both of these terms have to be considered in the context of the temple. Regarding the *hand* יד, Alexander notes, in part: “Umbreit follows Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, in adhering to the usual sense *hand*, which he seems to think is mentioned as the natural instrument of seizure, and metaphorically applicable to the thing *seized* ...” And regarding *name* שם: These words [*name, everlasting name*] especially remind us of the *new name* of ISAIAH 62:2b: “and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name,” which very well may be what is here meant by a *name* [שם], especially when one thinks of an *everlasting name* [שֵׁם עוֹלָם]. Furthermore: “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is* new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him* my new name” (Revelation 3:12). And further: “Then the white stone mentioned in Revelation 2:17, will become a Urim and Thummim to each individual who receives one, whereby things pertaining to a higher order of kingdoms will be made known; And a white stone is given to each of those who come into the celestial kingdom, whereon is a *new name* written, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it. The new name is the key word” (D&C 130:10–11, emphasis

¹⁰ Smith, President Joseph Fielding. *Answers to Gospel Questions*.

added). Elder McConkie wrote: “Revelation 19:12; *A name written, that no man knew*] As with all glorified beings, our Lord has a new name in celestial exaltation, a name known to and comprehended by those only who know God in the sense that they have become as he is and have eternal life. See Revelation 2:12–17. Thus, Christ’s ‘new name’ shall be written upon all those who are joint-heirs with him (Revelation 3:12), and shall signify that they have become even as he is and he is even as the Father (3 Nephi 28:10).” All of these blessings are associated with eternal increase. ¶ *I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.* The LXX (6) reads, “I will give them an everlasting name which shall not fail.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, for the second clause, “Which shall never perish.” ¶ The word everlasting is associated with *everlasting life*, *eternal life*, or *exaltation*. President Joseph Fielding Smith, in relation to *eternal increase* taught: “Those who are married in the temple for all time and eternity obtain the blessing of eternal lives. I put stress on eternal lives. Eternal life is God’s life, that is, to be like him. Eternal lives means eternal increase—the continuation, as the revelation says, of the seeds forever.” For these blessings to take place, we must take hold of our covenants and have the Holy Spirit of Promise seal such a marriage. ¶ Shalom Paul has: “Note the chiasmic frame: The verse begins: ‘I will give them ... a name’ (נָתַתִּי לָהֶם שֵׁם), and concludes: ‘An everlasting name I will give them’ (שֵׁם עוֹלָם אֶתֵּן לָהֶם).” Shalom Paul also notes the play on words between those who have their testicles *cut off* [once again, see כָּרַיתָם—GB] (כָּרַיתָם, see Leviticus 22:24; Deuteronomy 23:2) and “an everlasting name, that shall *not* be *cut off*” (לֹא יִכָּרֵת).

6 Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant;

Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD. The Targum (T) has, for the first half, “And the sons of the Gentiles, that are joined unto the people of the Lord.” The LXX (6) reads, “And with regard to the strangers who cleave to the Lord to serve him, and love the name of the Lord.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And the children of the stranger that adhere to the Lord, to worship him, and to love his name.” ¶ McFadyen has: “In the temple, *the sacrifices* of these devout foreigners *shall be accepted*, and their prayers

heard (1 Kings 8:43). *For all peoples*, not without qualification, but on condition of obedience ...” Alexander suggests: “To love the name of Jehovah, is to love his attributes as manifested in his word and works.” As we serve the Lord, we become His disciples. ¶ *To be his servants.* The LXX (6) reads, “To be his man servants and maid servants.” To be a servant of the Lord is a title of honor. As we put ourselves in a position to be of service to the Lord, we borrow from His title, and also become *servants of the Lord*. ¶ *Every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it.* The LXX (6) reads, “Even all who are careful not to profane my sabbaths.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has *profaning* rather than *polluting*. ¶ We can truly rejoice in keeping the Sabbath day holy and thus rejoice in our Heavenly Father and in His Beloved Son. President Russell M. Nelson taught: “... the Sabbath was given as a perpetual covenant, a constant reminder that the Lord may sanctify His people ... I learned from the scriptures that my conduct and my attitude on the Sabbath constituted a *sign* between me and my Heavenly Father ... Faith in God engenders a love for the Sabbath; faith in the Sabbath engenders a love for God. A sacred Sabbath truly is a delight.”¹¹ The way we keep the Sabbath day is a reflection—not the only one, of course—of the love we have for the Father and the Son. ¶ *And taketh hold of my covenant.* The LXX (6) reads, “And who adhere to my covenant.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And that holdeth fast my covenant.” ¶ Taking hold of the new and everlasting covenant is what is meant, learning to love our Father in Heaven and His children, for this, we know, is the law and the prophets.

7 Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices [shall be] accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.

Even them will I bring to my holy mountain. The LXX (6) reads, “Them I will bring to my holy mountain.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “I will bring them into my holy mount.” ¶ Cowles, continuing with the temple theme, has: “‘Strangers,’ of Gentile birth, are here made welcome under the gospel reign to God’s house of prayer and to his temple and altar ... ‘The holy mountain,’ ‘my house of prayer,’ ‘burn offerings and sacrifices upon mine altar,’ all come from the Jewish age.” And we might add, from the Temple service. Cowles continues: “The broad scope of the passage

¹¹ Nelson, President Russell M. The Sabbath is a Delight, April 2015 General Conference.

promises divine welcome and audience to the truly obedient of every race and all conditions.” Wade has: “*my holy mountain*, i.e. the Temple hill (ISAIAH 27:13, cf. 65:11, 66:20, Joel 2:1, 3:17, Ezekiel 20:40, Zephaniah 3:11, Obadiah 1:16, Psalm 2:6, 3:4, 48:1).” The Holy Mountain stands for the Temple of the Lord. Here both gathered Israel and all others are seen as coming to the temple and partaking of the new and everlasting covenant. ¶ *And make them joyful in my house of prayer*: The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And make them joyful in my house of prayer.” ¶ Wade notes: “The passage was cited by our Lord on the occasion of His cleansing the Temple (Mark 11:17, Matthew. 21:13, Luke 19:46).” Skinner explains: “*make them joyful*” ‘cause them to rejoice.’ The phrase is formed from a common Deuteronomic expression for taking part in the Temple ritual: to ‘rejoice before Jehovah’ (Deuteronomy 12:7, 12, 18, &c.).” Driver, of the Deuteronomic command, says: “The Israelite, when he brings his offerings to the sanctuary, and partakes of the sacrificial meal which a bounteous year has enabled him to provide, is to thank Jehovah with a joyous heart for the success with which his labours have been blessed.”¹² And truly, we can find joy when serving in the temple. Elder Franklin D. Richards shared: “I have witnessed the joy and satisfaction that come to those who serve in the temple. I recall on one occasion a sister coming through the temple door, her face bright with anticipation and her step quickened. She was a temple worker who had been back home for a visit. She grasped my hand and said, ‘It’s so good to be back. I love my service in the temple, and know I cannot be happy, really happy, away from it. It brings me a joy and satisfaction that is found in no other place. I feel a sense of accomplishment in doing something of eternal value. It’s a little like the work of the Savior, who did for mankind what they could not do for themselves. This work brings peace to my soul—yes, the peace that passeth understanding.’”¹³ ¶ *Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices [shall be] accepted upon mine altar*. The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “Their burn offerings and their holy sacrifices shall be offered up with acceptance upon mine altar.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Their burnt offerings, and their sacrifices shall be acceptable on mine altar.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “Their holocausts, and their victims shall please me upon my altar.” ¶ Govett speaks about a doctrine that LDS believe in (and that was also taught by the Prophet Joseph Smith): “The seventh verse introduces a new, and to many, I doubt

not, a startling topic. ‘Their *burnt-offerings* and *sacrifices* shall be accepted on mine altar.’ The restoration of sacrifices is a truth which many will not receive. Yet, Ezekiel distinctly affirms it, and is corroborated by the Psalms. Not that they shall be regarded as possessing inherent efficacy to take away the guilt of sin—far from it. This the apostle, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, denies by the full bearing of his argument; but no passage of Scripture contradicts the supposition that they may be restored again with a *commemorative* intention, looking *back* to the past Great Sacrifice, as of old they looked *forward* to it, as yet to come.” So also Keith: “The passage, however, taken in its natural significance, appears to warrant the supposition of a restored temple and temple service in Jerusalem, adapted to the circumstances of Israel and the world ... That the application of the whole to the first coming of Christ is impracticable, is evident from such expressions as the temple being called a house of prayer for all people, and from what is said of the Lord gathering the outcasts of Israel—events which have not occurred yet—and from the whole scope of the context.” ¶ Brother Joseph taught: “Thus we behold the keys of this Priesthood consisted in obtaining the voice of Jehovah that He talked with him [Noah] in a familiar and friendly manner, that He continued to him the keys, the covenants, the power and the glory, with which he blessed Adam at the beginning; and the offering of sacrifice, which also shall be continued at the last time; for all the ordinances and duties that ever have been required by the Priesthood, under the directions and commandments of the Almighty in any of the dispensations, shall all be had in the last dispensation, therefore all things had under the authority of the Priesthood at any former period, shall be had again, bringing to pass the restoration spoken of by the mouth of all the Holy Prophets; then shall the sons of Levi offer an acceptable offering to the Lord. ‘And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord’ (see Malachi 3:3). It will be necessary here to make a few observations on the doctrine set forth in the above quotation, and it is generally supposed that sacrifice was entirely done away when the Great Sacrifice [*i.e.*, the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus] was offered up, and that there will be no necessity for the ordinance of sacrifice in future: but those who assert this are certainly not acquainted with the duties, privileges and authority of the priesthood, or with the Prophets. The offering of sacrifice has ever been connected and forms a part of the duties of the Priesthood. It began with the Priesthood, and will be continued until after the coming of Christ, from generation to generation. We frequently have mention made of the offering of sacrifice by the servants of the Most High in ancient days, prior to the law of Moses;

¹² Driver, Reverend S.R. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy* (3rd Edition, 1895, reprinted 1973). The International Critical Commentary (ICC). Printed in Great Britain by Morrison and Gibb, Limited. For T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh.

¹³ Richards, Elder Franklin D., Happiness and Joy in Temple Work. October 1986 General Conference.

which ordinances will be continued when the Priesthood is restored with all its authority, power and blessings. Elijah was the last Prophet that held the keys of the Priesthood, and who will, before the last dispensation, restore the authority and deliver the keys of the Priesthood, in order that all the ordinances may be attended to in righteousness ... These sacrifices, as well as every ordinance belonging to the Priesthood, will, when the Temple of the Lord shall be built, and the sons of Levi be purified, be fully restored and attended to in all their powers, ramifications, and blessings. This ever did and ever will exist when the powers of the Melchisedic Priesthood are sufficiently manifest; else how can the restitution of all things spoken of by the holy Prophets be brought to pass? It is not to be understood that the law of Moses will be established again with all its rites and variety of ceremonies; this has never been spoken of by the Prophets; but those things which existed prior to Moses' day, namely, sacrifice, will be continued."¹⁴ ¶ *For mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.* The Targum (Ⲯ) specifies for the first mention of *house*, "house of my sanctuary." The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, "For my house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations." Instead of *for all people*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *for all peoples*. So also the Masoretic text (ⲙ), *for all the peoples*, לְכָל-הָעַמִּים. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, "For my house shall be called the house of prayer, for all nations," although the Latin just as well means *for all people* (cunctis populis, Vulgate, Ⲳ). ¶ Truly, all people are invited to partake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the saving ordinances, including those which are carried out in the Temple of our Lord.

8 The Lord GOD which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather [others] to him, beside those that are gathered unto him. ✓

✓ to his gathered

The Lord GOD which gathereth the outcasts of Israel [גִּדְּחִי יִשְׂרָאֵל, root גִּדַּח] saith. The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, "The LORD who gathereth the dispersed of Israel said." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has *scattered* rather than *outcasts*. The Masoretic text (ⲙ) reads אֲדֹנִי יְהוָה, **Lord LORD**, or **Adonai Jehovah**, rather than Lord GOD. As I pointed out earlier, the AV follows the Jewish tradition of rendering the expression Adonai Elohim. ¶ Elder Orson Pratt explains that "the ten tribes" are the

outcasts.¹⁵ Whitehouse opines: "It would be better, in place of *outcasts*, to read *dispersed* (i.e., those driven forth into exile). The verb is used in the same sense in Jeremiah 40:12, and the expression seems to have been derived from ISAIAH 11:12." HCSB (and several others also prefer *dispersed*): "*This is* the declaration of the Lord GOD, who gathers the dispersed of Israel: 'I will gather to them still others besides those already gathered.'" Also, we see גִּדְּחִי in *Rain in Due Season*, "whither the LORD thy God hath *driven thee* [גִּדְּחִי, root גִּדַּח]" (Deuteronomy 30:1b). NVI uses "por donde el Señor tu Dios te haya *dispersado*" (emphasis added). Most translators prefer *driven* in that place, however. The Hebrew seems to have a very forceful tone to גִּדְּחִי, as that of *thrusting an axe* (see Gesenius). ¶ *Yet will I gather [others] to him, beside those that are gathered unto him.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "I will again gather their captivity, by collecting them together." The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, "Because I will gather a congregation for him." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, "I will still gather unto him his congregation." ¶ Skinner writes: "*Yet will I gather others &c.]* Literally. 'I will yet further gather to him, to his gathered ones.' 'His gathered ones' is the antithesis to the 'dispersed' above. The language certainly suggests (though it may not absolutely prove) that a partial gathering has taken place: the promise is that yet more shall be gathered, and, amongst these, men from 'all peoples.'" Wordsworth has (as similarly Cheyne, Wade, McFadyen, Jennings and others): "*Yet will I gather others to him]* As the good Shepherd says, 'Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold, and One Shepherd' (John 10:16)." The Savior taught the Twelve in the American continent: "Ye are my disciples; and ye are a light unto this people, who are a remnant of the house of Joseph. And behold, this is the land of your inheritance; and the Father hath given it unto you. And not at any time hath the Father given me commandment that I should tell it unto your brethren at Jerusalem. Neither at any time hath the Father given me commandment that I should tell unto them concerning the other tribes of the house of Israel, whom the Father hath led away out of the land. This much did the Father command me, that I should tell unto them: That other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. And now, because of stiffneckedness and unbelief they understood not my word; therefore I was commanded to say no more of the Father concerning this thing unto them. But, verily, I say unto you that the

¹⁴ *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4:210–212.

¹⁵ Orson Pratt, "Restoration of the Gospel, Etc." *Journal of Discourses*, 18:185a, 26 March 1876.

Father hath commanded me, and I tell it unto you, that ye were separated from among them because of their iniquity; therefore it is because of their iniquity that they know not of you. And verily, I say unto you again that the other tribes hath the Father separated from them; and it is because of their iniquity that they know not of them. And verily I say unto you, that ye are they of whom I said: Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. And they understood me not, for they supposed it had been the Gentiles; for they understood not that the Gentiles should be converted through their preaching. And they understood me not that I said they shall hear my voice; and they understood me not that the Gentiles should not at any time hear my voice—that I should not manifest myself unto them save it were by the Holy Ghost. But behold, ye have both heard my voice, and seen me; and ye are my sheep, and ye are numbered among those whom the Father hath given me” (3 Nephi 15:12–24). ¶ Wade has: “For similar predictions of the adhesion of strangers to the Lord’s people cf. Ezekiel 47:22, Zechariah 2:11, 8:22, Psalm 47:9). Certainly, all are invited to come unto Christ, both Jew and Gentile. I feel to shout יהוה לְנוּ when I think of the Lord’s tender mercies: “Now my brethren, we see that God is *mindful of every people*, whatsoever land they may be in; yea, he numbereth his people, and his bowels of mercy are over all the earth. Now this is my joy, and my great thanksgiving; yea, and I will give thanks unto my God forever. Amen” (Alma 26:37, emphasis added).

vv. 9–12. The shepherds and watchmen here referred to seem to be those who represent the *old bottles* that will reject the *new wine* of the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ (also see ISAIAH 5:2). Cowles notes that we can observe an “abrupt change of subject, from gospel promise made to outcasts, foreigners, and men deemed unclean, to the announcement of devouring ruin upon a class whose watchmen are blind and whose shepherds are ignorant, sensual and selfish.” False preachers are compared to lazy, indulgent dogs.

9 ¶ All ye beasts of the field, come to devour, [yea], all ye beasts in the forest.

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “All the kings of the nations, who are assembled together to oppress thee, O Jerusalem, shall be cast down in the midst of thee; they shall be for food to the beasts of the field, the beasts of the forest shall be satisfied with them.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “O, all ye beasts of the field come! all ye beasts of the forests.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, for the second clause, “All ye beasts of the forest.” ¶ It does not mean,

as some have misunderstood, that the beasts of the field will devour the beasts of the forest, but rather, that all the beasts of the field, and even the beasts of the forest are here predicted as taking advantage of the people under the figure of a defenseless flock of sheep (see, e.g., Skinner, Rabbis Slotki/Rosenberg). JUB has the correct sense: “All ye beasts of the field, all ye beasts of the forest; come to devour.” AMP has: “All you beasts of the field, come to devour, all you beasts (hostile nations) in the forest.” Henderson has: “*wild beasts*] a metaphor not unusual in the prophetic writings, when reference is made to persecuting powers.” In *Rain in Due Season* we read, among the punishments: “I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your high ways shall be desolate” (Leviticus 26:22). While once again we have a literal fulfillment, we also have a figurative one in terms of robbing the children from the true faith in the Lord. Much of this would take place through apostasy and the preaching of false prophets, watchmen or pastors. ¶ Samuel Smith, brother of the Prophet Joseph Smith, quoted ISAIAH 56:9–11 to preachers who made attempts to convince Lucy Mack Smith and Hyrum Smith to give up their testimonies of the Book of Mormon, for they “[feared] ... the Book of Mormon was ‘destined to break down everything before it, if not put a stop to,’ and that it was ‘likely to injure the prospects of their ministers.’”¹⁶

10 His watchmen [are] blind: they are all ignorant, they [are] all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, y lying down, loving to slumber.

✓ or, dreaming, or, talking in their sleep

His watchmen [are] blind: they are all ignorant. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Devour! you see that they are all blind. That they have not knowledge.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has something like, “All the blind see, but perceive not.” Wordsworth has: “This is their punishment for being ravenous wolves, who devour God’s flock instead of feeding it (see Jeremiah 12:10).” Whitehouse has: “The term ‘watchmen’ is so frequently employed in prophecy to designate the prophets (cf. Jeremiah 6:17; Ezekiel 3:17; 33:7, &c.).” Henderson explains: “Most commentators consider both civil and ecclesiastical rulers to be meant by the צִפִּים, *watchmen*; but I do not find the term ever applied figuratively to any but prophets, or religious teachers. Those here introduced were destitute of spiritual perception,—consequently,

¹⁶ *The History of Joseph Smith by His Mother*, Preston Nibley, Lucy Mack Smith, Chapter 31.

could not see the impending danger, and give warning of it.” In Ezekiel the Lord speaks against false shepherds: “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?” (Ezekiel 34:2). ¶ *They [are] all dumb dogs, they cannot bark.* The LXX (⚡) reads, “They are dumb dogs, they cannot bark.” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, “Dumb dogs not able to bark.” Lowth notes that the Vulgate (⚡) “seems to have read, *videntes vana*.” This is confirmed by one¹⁷ of my two Vulgate editions, and translated as *seeing vain things* by the Douay-Rheims (⚡). ¶ A dog barks to warn his master of impending danger. So it is that a dog who will not bark is useless—he can offer no protection or salvation. Alexander (and several others) explains: “The dogs particularly meant are shepherds’ dogs (Job 30:1), whose task it was to watch the flock, and by their barking give notice of approaching danger.” Cowles writes: “The description drops the figure of the dog after the first clause, and speak of the same religious leaders as themselves shepherds who are void of just understanding.” ¶ *Sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.* The LXX (⚡) reads, “They are asleep in bed, they love to slumber.” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, “Seeing vain things, sleeping and loving dreams.” Alexander paints a picture of a dog who growls in his dreams while he sleeps. Wordsworth [also see Wade] has: “*Sleeping*] Rather, dreaming||. Instead of watching: and giving notice of the approach of the enemy, they sleep and are dumb; and instead of being *chozim* (חֲזִיִּים, seers of visions from God, and preachers of His truth to the People), they are *hozim*, dreamers (חֲזִיִּים, see Gesenius 200), like men in a fever, who see strange visions, (*aegri somnia*), and rave wildly in their sleep; so the heretical teachers are called ‘dreamers’ by St. Jude (5:8) ... Since this solemn warning is uttered against the blind watchmen, dumb dogs, and ignorant shepherds of God’s people, and since their sins brought woe on Jerusalem, let the Christian Pastor beware lest he imitates them, and is the cause of ruin to those whom he is appointed to teach.” So also Luther: “... There are those who preach for the sake of their own belly ... who are dumb too, since they speak what is agreeable and look out for their own welfare ... they pile up wealth for themselves, they look out for nothing but their own interests and the strength of their body, and meanwhile they neglect the church. The dogs can never be satisfied; they are always hungry.”

¹⁷ Biblia Sacra, Vulgate Editions, Sixti V. Et Clementis VIII, Jussu Recognita Atque Editā, Editio Nova, Versiculis Distincta, Londini, 1857. A different translation is offered by my La Sacra Bibbia, the Giovanni Diodati translation, printed by Cambridge in London (no date).

11 Yea, [they are] greedy dogs [which] can never have enough, and they [are] shepherds [that] cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter

- ✓ strong of appetite
- ✓ ✓ know not to be satisfied

Yea, [they are] greedy dogs [which] can never have enough. The LXX (⚡) reads, “Yet these dogs are of untamed appetite; they can never have enough.” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has *impudent* instead of *greedy*. ¶ Elder Marvin J. Ashton taught, “There are some who would have us believe there is no right or wrong—that everything is relative. We must never allow ourselves to think proper conduct and decision making are found in a convenient path somewhere between right and wrong ... How do we become victims of dishonesty? There are many ways ... A potent statement from Isaiah sheds light on one reason: ‘Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter.’ Greed can make a person both dishonest and gullible ... A friend recently confided that he had lost heavily in a get-rich-quick scheme because he couldn’t turn off his greed valve. Wanting more and more—living beyond one’s income—makes many of us susceptible to the dishonest promoter. The plan that offers exorbitant rewards or gives you and only you a once-in-a-lifetime deal is to be avoided.”¹⁸ Elder McConkie said of these verses: “Perhaps the most scathing denunciation of greediness ever written is found in Isaiah’s excoriation of the wickedness of apostate ministers.”¹⁹ ¶ *And they [are] shepherds [that] cannot understand:* The Targum (⚡) has, “They are evildoers, they know not *how* to become wise.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “They are indeed mischievous, they have no consideration.” Instead of *shepherds*, the Peshitta (⚡) has *wicked* (Lamsa) / *vile* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, “The shepherds themselves knew no understanding.” ¶ *They all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter.* The Targum (⚡) has, “All of them go their own way (literally, ‘each and all of them’), to rob the treasures of Israel.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “They all followed their own courses, every one according to his own purpose.” The BPE (⚡) has, “They all have returned to their own ways, every one to his side and where he has chosen.” The Lamsa Peshitta (⚡) has, “They all have turned aside

¹⁸ Ashton, Elder Marvin J., “This Is No Harm,” *Ensign*, May 1982, p. 9.

¹⁹ Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed., p.241,341,658.

to their own way, every one for his own gain and his own advantage.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “All have turned aside into their own way, every one after his own gain, from the first even to the last.” ¶ Cowles has: “They *turn* themselves to their own way, which further explained as being ‘each one for his own gain,’ the word for ‘gain’ usually signifying wealth, profit.” Wade has: “*turned to their own way*] i.e., neglected their charge and pursued their own interest (cf. ISAIAH 58:13) ...*from every quarter*] Better, *one and all*, without exception (cf. Genesis 19:4).” Alexander explains: “Most of the modern writers have adopted the opinion of De Dieu, that מְקַיְּרֵהוּ means *ad unum omnes*, all without exception, i.e. all within a given space or number, from its very end or remotest limit.” Does this not remind us of the words of the Lord to the Prophet Joseph Smith? “My object in going to inquire of the Lord was to know which of all the sects was right, that I might know which to join. No sooner, therefore, did I get possession of myself, so as to be able to speak, than I asked the Personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right (for at this time it had never entered into my heart that all were wrong)—and which I should join. I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong; and the Personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; *that those professors were all corrupt*; that: ‘they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof.’ He again forbade me to join with any of them” (JS—History 1:18–20a, emphasis added). ¶ President John Taylor taught: “I think we [men holding the holy priesthood] ought to occupy a more elevated and honorable position; I think we ought to be governed by other influences, and be actuated by other motives. I think that our lives, our desires, our feelings and our acts ought to be to try to build up Zion and establish the kingdom of God upon the earth; that we should be united in our temporal as well as in our spiritual affairs, for God says: ‘If you are not one you are not mine.’ Do you believe it? You elders of Israel, do you believe that saying? And if we are not the Lord’s then whose are we? We have our own plans, our own notions and our own theories; and as one of old expressed it, *we are seeking for gain, everyone*

from his own quarter. And we are governed to a very great extent by selfishness, and too much by our own personal feelings, and allow these things to influence us instead of being governed by those high, noble, dignified and glorious principles that dwell in the bosom of God, which emanated from him, and which dwell also in the bosoms of those who in sincerity fear God and keep his commandments.”²⁰

12 Come ye, [say they], I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to morrow shall be as this day, [and] much more abundant.

Come ye, [say they], I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink. The Targum (T) has, “we” rather than *I*, and then, “we will be inebriated with old wine.” This verse has fallen off in the LXX (G). Instead of *I will*, the Peshitta (S) has *let us* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Come, let us take wine, and be filled with drunkenness.” ¶ Cowles explains: “The last verse describes them by giving their own words [i.e., the words of these false shepherds].” Luther suggests: “By their teaching they do nothing but fatten their own belly.” Calvin says: “In another passage the Prophet quoted the words of scorners, who, when the servants of God exhorted them to sackcloth and ashes, invited each other to feasting and drinking. ‘Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we shall die’ (ISAIAH 22:13). Westermann well notes that the word מָנַח for *come* used here, as in *come and carouse*, is the same that is used in ISAIAH 56:9, where “the day is coming when the wild beasts will be summoned to ‘come and devour.’” ¶ *And to morrow shall be as this day, [and] much more abundant*. The Targum (T) has, “And tomorrow our banquet shall be better than today, great, very great.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And it shall be as to day, so also to morrow, and much more.” Faussett explains: “Their self-indulgence was *habitual* and *intentional*: not merely they drink, but they mean to continue so.” They say, let us continue to live as we are living and leaning on false teachings—rather than the truth.

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²⁰ John Taylor, “Cooperation and the United Order, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses*, 21:57a, 21 September 1878, pp. 53–61.

Isaiah 57

While the righteous shall enter into peace, there is no rest for the disobedient.

vv. 1–2. These verses seem to address both the martyrs as well as others who are righteous yet die young.

1 ¶ THE righteous perisheth, and no man layeth [it] to heart: and merciful men[✓] [are] taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil [to come].^{✓✓}

✓ men of kindness, or, godliness

✓ ✓ or, that which is evil

THE righteous perisheth, and no man layeth [it] to heart: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The righteous die, and no man layeth my fear to heart.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “You see how a righteous one was destroyed, and no one layeth it to heart.” The BPE (Ⲥ) has, “The righteous perishes and none will give it importance.” ¶ Tertullian and Cyprian, in Alexander, suggest that *the righteous* refers to Christ; *men of mercy*, His apostles. Certainly this is so, but we will look at a number of additional applications. ¶ The word *perish*, אָבַד, was at times used of herd animals who wandered off or strayed and were left exposed to the elements or to predators. The term was also used of people who perished (Gesenius, DCH, TDOT). Some exegetes have suggested that the word implies a violent death. While the death *may* be violent—such as in the case of the martyrs—this should not be assumed in every case. So also Rawlinson who has: “*The righteous perisheth*” The word translated ‘perished’ does not imply any violence; but the context implies a premature death. The righteous disappear — are taken from the earth before their natural time.” ¶ Cheyne says, “*The righteous perish*” A concise and vigorous expression, fitted to stimulate thought. That the bad pastors [see ISAIAH 56] should live long and see good days, while the righteous (especially among the pastors or prophets) are prematurely cut off, is a contradiction peculiarly great¹ from the Old Testament point of view (comp. Ecclesiastes 7:15).” Nägelsbach notes, “The context seems to me to demand that the mournful fate of the true and righteous servants of

Jehovah be contrasted with the lazy, jovial doings of the dumb dogs.” ¶ King Josiah of Judah has been considered one of the great and pious ones. When he was a young man, Hilkiah the High Priest found the *Book of the Law* (i.e., the Torah, Pentateuch or five books of Moses) in the Temple. After the book was read to Josiah, it had such a forceful positive effect on his heart, that *he rent his clothes* (i.e., he tore them) in sign of repentant mourning. Josiah instituted massive religious reforms in Judah in order to better conform with the law of God (see 2 Kings 22–23; 2 Chronicles 34–35). The book of 2 Chronicles speaks about his death in less flattering words (2 Chronicles 35:20 ff.) wherein Josiah involved himself in a war that did not directly pertain to Israel. I generally tend to defend the pious when others speak of their apparent weaknesses. But in this case I had my doubt for years.² Then I read Rawlinson’s comments about 2 Kings 22:20, wherein: “Josiah is promised that he shall be gathered to his fathers (prematurely), in order that he may escape the sight of the evil that was coming on Jerusalem soon after his decease.” Indeed, the Scriptures say: “Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith the LORD. Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place” (2 Kings 22:19–20a). When the Lord says Josiah would be *gathered in peace*, He is speaking of that eternal peace that comes to the righteous—rather than the violent way in which Josiah would die—of which we will say more below. ¶ Whitehouse explains: “The ‘righteous’ here corresponds to the ‘men of devoted piety’ in the following parallel clause, who in the later days of the Maccabees (168 B.C. and after) meet us under the name of the *Hasidim* [חסידים], the forerunners of the Pharisees. The rendering ‘merciful’ is misleading, and the alteration supplied in R.V. margin ‘godly’ is certainly an improvement. The original properly means

¹ Cheyne is alluding to the fifth commandment, “Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.” (Exodus 20:12).

² I had also been guilty of misjudging Captain Moroni for the letter he wrote Pahoran (Alma 60), until I read Sister OraLyn Moran’s thoughtful article several months ago, “Moroni and Pahoran” at <https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/re-15-no-3-2014/moroni-and-pahoran-0>. URL accessed 20August 2016.

‘men of piety’ (*hesed*). *Hesed* [חֶסֶד] is frequently used in the O. T. in the sense of *loving-kindness*. When used in reference to God it expresses somewhat the same thing as the Latin *pietas*, viz. man’s attitude of loving devotion to his God.” So also Wade: “The HEB. word is the original of the term *Hasideans* in 1 Maccabees 2:421.” Although the term *Hasidic* can apply to a number of Jewish sects in history, one branch of Ultra-Orthodox Jews also derives their name from חסידים, the *merciful*, *pious*, or *Godly*. This movement is called *Hasidic* Judaism. In contrast, the *Sadducees* derive their name from the word *righteous*, *tzaddek*, צַדִּיק. The first word of this verse begins with the word *Ha-tzedek*, the *righteous*. One of my favorite explanations comes from a Kay, a man I have come to love through my studies: “*merciful men*] Or, *gracious men*: who having felt the lovingkindness of God, deal kindly with their fellow-men (cp. Micah 7:2, where ‘good,’ or, ‘godly’ man is substantially the same term).” ¶ There seem to be two categories of individuals spoken of in this verse. The first are those who die and comparatively few seem to care or take it to heart. Certainly our Savior could be included, as well as the *martyrs* such as Abel, Zechariah the son of Jehoiada,³ John the Baptist, Stephen, Abinadi, Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith and many others who lived for Christ and died for Christ. ¶ *And merciful men [are] taken away*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And the men who shew (literally, ‘recompense’) mercy are taken away.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And righteous men are taken away.” Instead of *merciful*, the Peshitta (Ⲥ) has *pious* (Lamsa, for BPE, see next clause). ¶ The second category includes the righteous in general, especially those who die at a young or tender age. We all know individuals who simply seem too good to be among the living. Those who move on among the righteous have accomplished what they had to do in this life. They have obtained their tabernacle and have faithfully kept their second estate. The faith of those who are left behind is sometimes tested. The Lord tenderly tells us to trust in Him (ISAIAH 55:8–9). Next, we see yet another reason to consider God’s mercy. ¶ The Prophet Joseph Smith’s death is one that can fit well in both descriptions given: “Knowing his mortal ministry would soon come to a close, the Prophet met frequently with members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles to instruct them and to give them the priesthood keys necessary to govern the Church. These preparations culminated in a meeting with the Apostles and a few other close associates in March 1844. In this extraordinary council, the Prophet charged the Twelve to govern the Church after his death, explaining that he had conferred upon them all the ordinances, authority,

³ Son or descendant of, possibly the grandson.

and keys necessary to do so. ‘I roll the burden and responsibility of leading this church off from my shoulders on to yours,’ he declared. ‘Now, round up your shoulders and stand under it like men; for the Lord is going to let me rest awhile.’”⁴ This *rest*, of course, has to do with a rest from earthly afflictions and persecutions. When the righteous cross the veil they are extremely busy: “Wilford Woodruff ... told of a vision he received in which he spoke with Joseph Smith [after his death]: ‘I saw him at the door of the temple in heaven. He came to me and spoke to me. He said he could not stop to talk with me because he was in a hurry. The next man I met was Father Smith [Joseph Smith Sr.]; he could not talk with me because he was in a hurry. I met half a dozen brethren who had held high positions on earth, and none of them could stop to talk with me because they were in a hurry. I was much astonished. By and by I saw the Prophet again and I got the privilege of asking him a question. “‘Now,’ said I, ‘I want to know why you are in a hurry. I have been in a hurry all my life; but I expected my hurry would be over when I got into the kingdom of heaven, if I ever did.’ Joseph said: ‘I will tell you, Brother Woodruff. Every dispensation that has had the priesthood on the earth and has gone into the celestial kingdom has had a certain amount of work to do to prepare to go to the earth with the Savior when he goes to reign on the earth. Each dispensation has had ample time to do this work. We have not. We are the last dispensation, and so much work has to be done, and we need to be in a hurry in order to accomplish it.’”⁵ ¶ *None considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil [to come]*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And they consider not that the righteous are taken away on account of the evil which shall come.” The BPE (Ⲥ) has, “The righteous men are piled together without consideration, because the just lay before the evil.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And no one observeth, that on account of iniquity the righteous one was taken away.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “For the just man is taken away from before the face of evil.”

¶ *ⲛⲁⲙⲁ* with the root *ⲛⲁⲙ*, is here translated as *taken away*. YLT, LITV, LEB, ERV and RV1865 *recogidos* [gathered in Spanish], use the word *gathered*, or *withdrawn* (Rotherham). The idea is that they are *gathered* back into the presence of God. Gesenius explains: “ⲛⲁⲙⲁ (Numbers 20:26), ‘to be *gathered* to one’s people, to one’s father;’ used of entering into

⁴ *Teachings: Joseph Smith*. Chapter 46: The Martyrdom: The Prophet Seals His Testimony with His Blood. Also see the declaration of the Twelve Apostles (undated draft), reporting Mar. 1844 meeting; in Brigham Young, Office Files 1832–78, Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.

⁵ *Teachings: Wilford Woodruff*. Chapter 3: The Dispensation of the Fulness of Times. Also see *The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, sel. G. Homer Durham (1946), 288–89.

Hades, where the Hebrews regarded their ancestors as being **gathered** together.” That is, **gathered** together into *Paradise* in the *Spirit World*. So also, נִאֲסָר is used of those who **die** (Gesenius). ¶ Birks has: “*From the evil to come*] **Before** the **face** of **the evil** [פְּנֵי הָרָעָה], that is, before its arrival, and that he may be spared its actual endurance.” An example of this is given by Rabbi David Kimhi, in Rosenberg, who cites 2 Kings 22:20a (but see 2 Kings 22:15–20), the words of **Huldah the prophetess** [חִלְדָּה הַנְּבִיאָה] regarding King Josiah: “Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil⁶ which I will bring upon this place.”

2 He shall enter[✓] into peace: they shall rest in their beds, [each one] walking [in] his uprightness.[✓]

✓ or, go in

✓ ✓ or, before him

He shall enter into peace: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “They shall enter into peace.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “His sepulture shall be in peace.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲥ) has, “And when peace comes.” The BPE (Ⲥ) has, “But peace will come.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “Let peace come.” Birks has: “... the righteous shall enter into peace, and his soul be kept safe in the hand of the Lord; and merciful men shall rest peacefully in the Paradise of the departed, awaiting a joyful resurrection. The last clause [i.e., the one which follow below—GB] is a weighty caution, restricting this blessed promise to the upright alone.” As LDS we like the employment of the word *Paradise*, used by Birks (see note 57:2a, TG *Paradise*, in the LDS edition). Lowth suggests, “*He shall go in peace* ||] יְבוֹא שְׁלוֹם: the expression is elliptical, such as the Prophet frequently uses. The same sense is expressed at large and in full terms, Genesis 15:15. וְאַתָּה תָּבוֹא אֶל אֲבוֹתֶיךָ בְּשָׁלוֹם, “And thou shalt **go to thy fathers in peace**.” ¶ *They shall rest in their beds, [each one] walking [in] his uprightness.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “They shall rest in the place of their beds, those that do His law.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “He is taken from among you.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲥ) has, “They shall relax, and make progress.” The BPE (Ⲥ) has, “They shall rest on their beds and continue forward.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “Let him rest in his bed that hath walked in his uprightness.” ¶ The bodies of the righteous rest in their graves while their spirits go forth into Paradise in the Spirit world. There

they await a glorious resurrection. Cowles well says: “The passage shows conclusively that the prophets of Isaiah’s age knew of an afterlife of blessedness for the righteous, but for the righteous only. It is marvelous that the Bible critic should dare to deny their possession of this knowledge.” Also, in Jenour we read: “Vitranga understands this to refer to the rest of the souls of the righteous in the place of departed spirits, until the resurrection.” ¶ We know the spirits of the departed righteous do rest from the sorrows of this world even though they are actively engaged in the Spirit World. They are partakers of true Peace. Jenour further notes: “Those who walk aright, or in the way of rectitude, are they who live according to the revealed will of God, and keep the path he has pointed out.” ¶ Barnes has: “The word נָכַח means **straight, right**, and is used of one who walks straight forward. It here means an upright man, who is often represented as walking in a straight path in opposition to [those] who are represented as walking in crooked ways.” Henderson says of the righteous: “Theirs was a straight forward, undeviating course.”

vv. 3–12. Apostasy and idolatry is compared to spiritual adultery. “Now the address changes,” says Jennings, “from the persecuted to the persecutors.”

3 ¶ But draw near hither, ye sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and the whore.

But draw near hither, ye sons of the sorceress. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “But ye, come nigh hither, O people of a generation whose works are evil, whose plant was of a holy plant.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “But as for you, draw near hither, ye lawless sons!” Instead of *sorceress*, the Peshitta (Ⲥ) has *afflicted one* (Lamsa) / *humiliated one* (BPE). ¶ Cowles explains: “The Hebrew reads literally; ‘**And you**—draw ye near hither; the word ‘you’ being made emphatic.” The *you* is plural, thus we have, **but ye**, אַתֶּם. The Targum (Ⲯ) also makes the same idea emphatic with its אַתֶּן. Leeser translates it: “**But ye** draw near hither, sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and the harlot.” Birks notes: “The pronoun here is emphatic. It marks a strong contrast between the righteous and merciful who have been taken from the evil, and the corrupt and sensual survivors who have to fear the stroke of coming judgment.” Whitehouse explains: “Magic went hand in hand with idolatrous ritual, and, since these practices of magic and necromancy were largely carried on by women (Hastings’ *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. ‘Magic,’ p. 208, left-hand column *ad fin*), the devotees of magical or, more properly, soothsaying practice are called in

⁶ See ISAIAH 30:2, רָעָה evil in the sense of misfortune.

accordance with Semitic idiom **sons** of the **sorceress** [בְּנֵי עֲנָנָה].” The word **עֲנָנָה** is feminine. Rashi (in Rosenberg) is probably correct in saying that **בְּנֵי עֲנָנָה** means that *they were sorcerers*, not just the children of sorcerers. Fausset says, “No insult is greater to an Oriental than any slur cast on his *mother*.” ¶ Keith points out: “The nation is charged first with sorcery, what is otherwise described as seeking unto them that have familiar spirits, a custom universal among eastern nations, which was often practiced by [the people of Israel], and which formed a crime as inexcusable as it was heinous ... for it was the substitution of false prophets for the one Prophet—of the enchantments of wretched men for the oracles of the living God,—a sin of parallel magnitude with that of substituting idols for the one King.” ¶ *The seed of the adulterer and the whore*. Targum (Ⲯ) has, “But they *are* adulterers, and fornicators.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Ye seed of adulterers and of fornication!” ¶ Ibn Ezra suggests: “זֶרַע מִנְּאִף, *The seed of the adulterer*, that is, of the adulterous father. **וְתִזְנֶה** *And the whore*, the adulterous mother.” Once again, Rashi points (in Rosenberg) that *the seed* [זֶרַע] is simply an expression, and that the people themselves are guilty of adultery and whoredom. The Savior in the New Testament uses a similar type of language: “And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your *sons* cast them out?” (emphasis added, Luke 11:19a). Birks points out the apostasy, “The sorceress, the mystic Jezebel, is the company of the idolaters, the apostate church or synagogue. Her children are the corrupt and sensual among the people of God’s covenant, whether of the Old or New Testament. They are called ‘an evil and adulterous generation.’” ¶ Birks feels it particularly applies to apostate Christianity. McFadyen has: “The verse simply means that the people themselves were adulterous, i.e. unfaithful to Jehovah and devoted to other gods, apostate and idolatrous, *sorcery* being one of the consequences or aspects of this apostasy (cf. ISAIAH 2:6). In the Old Testament idolatry is frequently described, as here, in terms of adultery.” ¶ There also seems to be a correlation between spiritual adultery and a physical one, especially of those who *ask for a sign*. Brother Joseph wrote: “When I was preaching in Philadelphia, a Quaker called out for a sign. I told him to be still. After the sermon, he again asked for a sign. I told the congregation the man was an adulterer; that a wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and that the Lord had said to me in a revelation, that any man who wanted a sign was an adulterous person. ‘It is true,’ cried one, ‘for I caught him in the very act,’

which the man afterwards confessed, when he was baptized.”⁷

4 Against whom do ye sport yourselves?
against whom make ye a wide mouth,
[and] draw out the tongue? [are] ye not
children of transgression, a seed of
falsehood,

Against whom do ye sport yourselves? The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Of whom do ye make your sport? The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “In what have you indulged yourselves?” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “Upon whom have you jested?” ¶ Skinner explains that *sport yourselves* [תִּשְׂתַּחֲוּ] root **שָׂחַ** means “Lit. ‘*take your delight*’ (ISAIAH 55:2; 58:14; 66:11; Psalm 37:4, 11, etc.); only here used of malevolent *satisfaction*.” ¶ Birks says, regarding ISAIAH 57:4–5, “Two sins are here described, contempt for the true servants of God, and zeal for idolatrous rites in groves and valleys, and especially for Moloch worship.” The first of these sins is described in ISAIAH 57:4; the second in ISAIAH 57:5. When two of the righteous martyrs in Jerusalem are removed in the last days, there will be a general mocking and rejoicing on the part of the wicked. We read that this will take place after their death: “And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth” (Revelation 11:10). Similar patterns of rejoicing also took place after the martyrdom of the prophet Joseph Smith, and while our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was on the cross (Matthew 27:42, Mark 15:29–30). ¶ *Against whom make ye a wide mouth* [תִּפְתָּחֶיבָהּ], [and] draw out the tongue? The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And before whom do ye open your mouth? do ye continue speaking (literally, ‘multiply to speak’) great things?” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And at whom have you opened your mouth, and at whom lolled your tongue?” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “Upon whom have you opened your mouth wide, and put out your tongue?” ¶ *Draw out the tongue*. Today we would say, stick out the tongue. Kimhi, in Rabbis Slotki/Rosenberg, says: “Scornful facial contortions.” Barnes has: “Contempt was sometimes shown also by protruding the lips (Psalm 22:7), ‘they shoot out the lip.’”⁸ ¶ There are those who mock the Church thinking they do God a favor, and misjudging the truth. Each one

⁷ Smith, Joseph & Roberts, B.H. *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, Volume 5.

⁸ “All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him” (Psalm 22:7–8).

of us has to be careful how we judge others. I came across this wonderful quote from Rabbi Menachem Mendel about not judging. When one of his students found fault with another, Rabbi Mendel taught: “By qualifying in sanctity [and furthermore, if we find wrong with others it is because] not everything is in order with us, too. Let us bring our thoughts, speech and deeds to a degree of holiness and then victory will come.”⁹ In other words, we are to remove the beam from our own eye first. The Savior teaches us that we will be judged according to how we judge others (Matthew 7:1–3). In D&C 1:10 we can understand that “... the Lord shall come to recompense unto every man according to his work [but also] *measure to every man according to the measure which he has measured to his fellow man*” (emphasis added). If this is the case in general, how much more true it is to those who judge with unrighteousness: “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!” (ISAIAH 5:20). ¶ *[Are] ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Are ye not rebellious children, a lying seed?” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Are you not children of destruction—a lawless race?” Instead of *transgression*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *iniquity*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “Are not you wicked children, a false seed.” ¶ McFadyen points out: “The contempt with which the pious Jews and their efforts were treated by their opponents is well illustrated by Nehemiah 4:1–3.” Is it not interesting how in every age the enemies of the Church spend so much effort in trying to destroy what the Saints build under God’s tutelage? Fausset has: “Not merely *children of transgressors*, and a *seed of false parents*, but of *transgression* and *falsehood* itself, utterly unfaithful to God.” Gill has: “*Are ye not children of transgression*] given up to all manner of sin and wickedness; or children of the wicked one, as the Targum, either of Satan, or of the man of sin; or, as the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, ‘children of perdition’; of the same character, complexion, and religion, as the son of perdition is: ‘a seed of falsehood’; or a lie, given to lying; to believe a lie, and to speak lies in hypocrisy; professing a false religion; embracing false doctrines; a spurious breed, and not the sons of the true church of Christ.” Barnes well says: “*Are ye not children of transgression?*” That is, in view of the fact that you make a sport of sacred things, and deride the laws and the prophets of God.” The Savior said: “But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: *for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in*” (Matthew 23:13, emphasis added).

⁹ Mayzlish, Saul and Charney, Leon. *Battle of the Two Talmuds: Judaism’s Struggle with Power, Glory, & Guilt*. Audible edition.

¶ Instead, we are invited to become the *children of Christ*. “And now, because of the covenant which ye have made ye shall be called the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters; for behold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you; for ye say that your hearts are changed through faith on his name; therefore, ye are born of him and have become his sons and his daughters.” (Mosiah 5:7).

5 Enflaming yourselves with idols under every green tree, y^slaying the children in the valleys under the cliffs of the rocks?

✓ or, among the oaks

Enflaming yourselves with idols under every green tree. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Who worship idols beneath every green tree.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Invoking idols under shady trees.” Instead of *enflaming*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *comforting*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “Who seek your comfort in idols under every green tree.” ¶ Cowles has: “The translation, ‘with idols,’ is not so well sustained as the English margin ||; ‘Among the oaks.’ The Hebrew word favors the latter sense. The thought is not directly of idol worship, but of one of its adjuncts—prostitution. ‘Inflaming yourselves,’ enkindling your libidinous passions among the oaks, and indeed, under every green tree.” Barnes has: “Burning, i.e., with lust. The whole language here is derived from adulterous intercourse.” Rashi, in Slotki/Rosenberg, has “With sexual lust, referring to the immorality which was part of idolatrous rites” (cf. Hosea 4:13). Regarding unfaithfulness, Monte Nyman has: “The message was condensed by the angel who announced the fall of Babylon; he declared that ‘all nations’ and the kings of the earth had committed fornication with Babylon (see Revelation 18:3). In other words, the nations honor the Lord with their mouths, but their hearts are far from him ...”¹⁰ Regarding temple prostitution, Parry, Parry and Peterson well say: “Israel seemed to go out of her way to offend the Lord by participating in religious practices that not only rejected him but also caused them to commit the very sins that were most abhorrent to him.”¹¹ This sexual theme is a common one in the book of Hosea, as Ephraim (i.e., the northern ten tribes) had fallen into this type of perversion. See especially *A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Hosea* by Hans Walter Wolff (Hermeneia, Fortress Press, 1974). ¶ *Slaying the children in the valleys under the cliffs of the rocks?* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Who sacrifice the children in the valleys under the cliffs of the rocks.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Slaying your children in the valleys

¹⁰ Monte S. Nyman, *Great are the Words of Isaiah*.

¹¹ Donald W. Parry, Jay A. Parry, and Tina M. Peterson, *Understanding Isaiah*, pp. 499, 502.

among the rocks?” The Peshitta (S) makes it clear that they are *sacrificing children*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Sacrificing children in the torrents, under the high rocks?” ¶ Cheyne also believes this should be translated as “Who slay the children under the torrent-valleys under the rents of the crags!” See also ABP {LXX (G)}, HCSB, ISV, LITV, NASB, Rotherham, TLV. For נַחֲלִים, in torrents, see singular נַחַל (Gesenius, DCH), which would render נַחֲלִים *torrents, wadis*, etc.

TDOT explains: “A נַחַל is the valley cut by a stream, often quite deep. The water, which runs down the mountains with great force during the rainy season (cf. Deuteronomy 9:21), carves a channel in the soil.” Cheyne points out that those who believe in the unity of Isaiah “have with much reason pointed out that the topographical references in this verse suggest the prophecy was written in [Israel] rather than in Babylonia. ‘I need scarcely say,’ observes Dr. Payne Smith [*Prophecy a Preparation for Christ*, p. 319], ‘that as there are no torrents, but only canals, in the flat alluvial soil of Babylonia, so there are no torrent-beds there, but that these form a common feature of the landscape in [Israel] and all mountainous countries.’” ¶ Cowles has: “Orgies of lust and of blood go together; so the next point in the outline is the murder of children, burning them to death in honor of Moloch and Saturn—a thing often done in the valley of Hinnom and in the clefts of the rocks. The Scriptures repeatedly charge commission of this horrible crime (see Ezekiel 16:21; 23:39).” Jenour adds: “We are expressly told that Manasseh caused his children to pass through the fire to Moloch in this valley (2 Chronicles 33:6).” Regarding Hinnom, Fausset explains: “Fire was put brazen statue, and the child was put in his heated arms; kettle drums (*Hebrew*, תוף) were beaten to drown the child’s cries; whence the valley was called Tophet.” TDOT, based on the A. Neubauer, *La géographie du Talmud* (1868, תפחת, ‘music-grove’) also gives that explanation as one possible theory: “Ancient Jewish tradition has it that there were many drummers and musicians who drowned out the screams of the young consigned to the flames, so that the parents of these wretched children would not perceive their terror.” ISBE has: *Topheth*, תפחת, etymology uncertain; the most probable is its connection with a root meaning ‘burning – the ‘place of burning’; the King James Version, Tophet, except in 2 Kings 23:10): The references are to such a place: ‘They have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire’ (Jeremiah 7:31). On account of this abomination Topheth and the Valley of Hinnom should be called ‘The valley of Slaughter: for they shall bury in Topheth, till there be no place to bury,’ the

Revised Version margin || ‘because there shall be no place else’ (Jeremiah 7:32).” Rawlinson writes: “Arguments have been brought forward to prove that the child was merely passed before a fire, or between two fires, and not burnt; but the evidence to the contrary is overwhelming (see the article on ‘Moloch’ in Dr. W. Smith’s *Dictionary of the Bible*, 11: 403, 401). The rite belonged especially to the worship of Chemosh and Moloch by the Moabites and Ammonites (2 Kings 3:27; Micah 6:7), from whom it was adopted by the Israelites (2 Kings 17:7) and Jews. The sacrifice was supposed to be expiatory (Micah 6:7).”

6 Among the smooth [stones] of the stream [is] thy portion; they, they [are] thy lot: even to them hast thou poured a drink offering, thou hast offered a meat offering. Should I receive comfort in these?

Among the smooth [stones] of the stream [is] thy portion; they, they [are] thy lot: The Targum (T) has, “valley” instead of *stream*. The LXX (G) reads, “This shall be thy portion—this thy lot.” The Peshitta (S) has, “Your portion and your heritage is in the parts of the valleys.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “In the parts of the torrent is thy portion, this is thy lot.” ¶ Note that the word *stones* [אֲבָנִים] is an *elliptical* expression that does *not* appear in the text. We will later consider the possibility that the meaning has nothing to do with stones. Cheyne says: “The large smooth stones referred to above were the fetishes¹² of the primitive Semitic races, and anointed with oil, according to a widely-spread custom. It was such a stone which Jacob took for a pillow, and afterwards consecrated by pouring oil upon it (Genesis 28:11, 18).” By the way, while in American English stones are smallish and rocks are large, the word אֲבָנִים seems to be more flexible. For instance, the boulders that form part of the Western Wall and the associated tunnels in Jerusalem are called *stones* in the book, *The Western Wall Tunnels: Touching the Stones of our Heritage* by Dan Bahat, or לַגֶּזֶת בְּאֵבְנֵי הַמִּוֶּרֶשֶׁת-מִנְהַרְוֹת הַכּוֹתֵל הַמַּעֲרָבִי. Birks has: “They chose out idols from among the smooth stones of the ‘brooks,’ the wadis, or dry watercourses, where they carried on their worship.” Cowles explains: “... commentators differ as to the precise sense of the word rendered ‘smooth stones.’ The point has only minor importance. I concur in the sense of the English version, ‘smooth stones;’ understanding

¹² Fetishes: “an object (as a small stone carving of an animal) believed to have magical power to protect or aid its owner *broadly*: a material object regarded with superstitious or extravagant trust or reverence” Webster’s 11th Edition.

by it, however, not the worn and round pebbles found in abundance in running water, but stones polished by art or made smooth with oil. The reader will remember the account twice recorded (Genesis 28:18; 35:14) of Jacob's setting up a stone for a pillar and pouring oil on the top of it." And then Cowles says something that must be truly underscored about imitations of holy things: "Idolaters were wont to copy the rites and usages of God's true worshipers, perverting them into idol worship." It seems that this has always been the case, such as the use of horoscopes as an imitation to patriarchal blessings; babbling instead of the true speaking in tongues; and soothsaying instead of revelation from God. McFadyen points out a paronomasia: "There is a play upon the words *smooth* and *portion* [בְּחֵלְקֵי-יִתְלָךְ] which it is impossible to reproduce in English ... but it is by no means certain that stones are meant at all; the allusion may be to smooth, *i.e.* flattering, deceptive, gods of the valley. Whatever they were, it was *they* (very emphatic) that were the people's lot and portion, whereas *Jehovah* should have been their portion (Psalm 16:5).¹³" The repetition of the word *they* [הֵם הֵם] is of special force. Especially when the word *I* is repeated, an elliptical *even* is added in some translations. I suspect the same might be found here, "*they, even they*." I found support for this point from the BBE and MKJV. Personally, I find it more striking the way it is in Hebrew, without the addition of the implied *even*. ¶ In 1913 the First Presidency, Joseph F. Smith, Anthon H. Lund and Charles W. Penrose warned: "From the days of Hiram Page ... at different periods there have been manifestations from delusive spirits to members of the Church. Sometimes these have come to men and women who because of transgression become easy prey to the Arch-Deceiver. At other times people who pride themselves on their strict observance of the rules and ordinances and ceremonies of the Church are led astray by false spirits, who exercise an influence so imitative of that which proceeds from a Divine source that even these persons, who think they are 'the very elect,' find it difficult to discern the essential difference. Satan himself has transformed himself to be apparently 'an angel of light.' When visions, dreams, tongues, prophecy, impressions or any extraordinary gift or inspiration, convey something out of harmony with the accepted revelations of the Church or contrary to the decisions of its constituted authorities, Latter-day Saints may know that it is not of God ... [As] directions for the guidance of the Church will come, by revelation, through the head. All faithful members are entitled to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit for themselves, their families, and for those over whom they are appointed

and ordained to preside. But anything at discord with that which comes from God through the head of the Church is not to be received as authoritative or reliable. In secular as well as spiritual affairs, Saints may receive Divine guidance and revelation affecting themselves, but this does not convey authority to direct others ... Be not led by any spirit or influence that ... leads away from the direct revelations of God for the government of the Church. The Holy Ghost does not contradict its own revealings. Truth is always harmonious with itself."¹⁴ ¶ *Even to them hast thou poured a drink offering, thou hast offered a meat offering.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "Yea, there they shall be thy lot, even to them thou hast poured out drink-offerings." The LXX (Ⲙ) reads, "As thou hast poured out libations to them and to them offered up sacrifices." The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, "And thou hast poured out libations to them, thou hast offered sacrifice." ¶ Wade explains: "*drink offering*] The materials might be oil (Genesis 35:14, Micah 6:7), blood (Psalm 16:4), or wine (Bel and the Dragon, v. 3)." Whitehouse suggests "Here the *drink-offering* of which the deity was supposed to partake consisted of the blood of the slaughtered victim." That is, of the children mentioned in ISAIAH 57:5b. Barnes explains, regarding the so-called 'meat offerings': "The מִנְחָה was in fact an offering of meal, fine flour, &c., mingled with oil (Leviticus 14:10; Numbers 7:13), and was distinguished expressly from the bloody sacrifice. The word 'meal-offering' would much more appropriately express the sense of the original than 'meat-offering.'" *Merriam-Webster* (11th edition) explains of its former use of the word *meat*: "FOOD especially: solid food as distinguished from drink." ¶ *Should I receive comfort [נִחָם] in these?* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "Thou hast offered sacrifices; ah! on account of these things my Word shall retribute." The LXX (Ⲙ) reads, "Shall I not for these things be incensed?" The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, "Shall I not be angry at these things?" ¶ This is similar to what we find in ISAIAH 1:11–16. Wade is probably correct in suggesting: "That the worship here described was not undiluted idolatry, but rather a syncretistic religion, in which the worship of idols was combined with that of the Lord (cf. 2 Kings 17:24–41, Ezra 4:2)." The Vulgate (ⲱ), says Barnes, has a clear rendering of what is meant, "On account of these things shall I not be enraged?" Birks has: "The last clause is an indignant irony. Could they hope that the anger of God for their social iniquities would be appeased by these idol offerings, which only doubled and heightened their sin?" Cowles explains: "The Lord says, Shall I *comfort* myself in these things? Or shall I not rather '*ease* myself' by

¹³ Rawlinson also mentions Psalm 119:57, in the same connection.

¹⁴ Joseph F. Smith, Anthon H. Lund, and Charles W. Penrose, "A Warning Voice," *Improvement Era*, September 1913, pp. 1148–49.

inflicting fearful vengeance on such idolaters? The word used admits this twofold sense, and was probably chosen purposely to convey it. Precisely the same expression occurs (ISAIAH 1:24), ‘Aha, I will **ease** [אַנַּחֵם] me of mine adversaries,’ etc.” Jenour notes: “So in Jeremiah 5:9, ‘Shall I not visit for these things? Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?’”

7 Upon a lofty and high mountain hast thou set thy bed: even thither wentest thou up to offer sacrifice.

Upon a lofty and high mountain hast thou set thy bed: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, for the second half, “hast thou set the place of the house of thy dwelling.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “On a high and lofty mountain thou hast made thy bed.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has *laid* instead of *set*. ¶ Many of the wicked practices are aberrations of true principles, as we said earlier. Throughout history, mountains often were used for holy worship when Temples were not available. But that was corrupted. Birks explains: “Mountain-tops and high-places were the favourite scenes of Jewish idolatry.” Whitehouse has: “Here of course the reference is either to the idolatrous or to the syncretic worship on the mountains, regarded by this writer, as by Hosea, in the light of unfaithfulness to Yahweh, or harlotry. In accordance with this conception we may interpret the ‘bed’ in the first long line of this verse.” Barnes says the idea of the *lofty and high mountain* is that all this was done so that: “It was public and shameless.” Note the contrast made by Kay: “Instead of trusting in ‘the High and Lofty One’ (ISAIAH 57:15), who condescended to sanctify and guard lowly Zion, Judah has placed her hopes on that mighty empire, which towered so high above the kingdoms of the earth.” ¶ *Even thither wentest thou up to offer sacrifice.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Even thither didst thou go up to sacrifice.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And caused thy sacrifice to ascend thither.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “And hast gone up thither to offer victims.” ¶ These words seem to introduce the warnings against necromancy as we see in ISAIAH 57:9. Else it just means that *rather* than worshipping in the Temple that was nearby, they were going far, even to the high places, to worship no-gods. In either case, people were very *diligent* in doing that which was wrong in the sight of the Lord.

8 Behind the doors also and the posts hast thou set up thy remembrance: for thou hast discovered [thyself to another] than me, and art gone up; thou hast enlarged thy bed, and made thee [a

covenant] with them; [✓] thou lovedst their bed where thou sawest [it]. [✓]

- ✓ or, hewed it for thyself larger than theirs
- ✓ ✓ or, thou providedst room

Behind the doors also and the posts hast thou set up thy remembrance: The Targum (Ⲯ) ends with, “remembrance of thy idols.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And behind the posts of thy doors thou hast set up thy memorial.” Instead of *set up*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *inscribed*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “And behind the door, and behind the post thou best set up thy remembrance.” ¶ One gets the sense that these words refer to the high places or vain places of idol worship. Cowles has: “The whole nation being in the marriage covenant with God, idolatry was precisely spiritual adultery—playing the harlot as to God, their Maker and their Husband. Hence the phrases, ‘Set up thy bed;’ ‘discovered’ [exposed] ‘thyself to another than me;’ ‘enlarged thy bed,’ to admit troops of other lovers (idols), in fragrant violation of their covenant with God.” ¶ Lowth suggests: “*Behind the door, and the door-posts, hast thou set thy memorial*] That is, the image of their tutelary gods, or something dedicated to them; in direct opposition to the law of God, which commanded them to write upon the doorposts of their house, and upon their gables, the words of God’s law; Deuteronomy 6:9; 11:20.¹⁵ If they chose for them such a situation as more private, it was in defiance of a particular curse denounced in the law against the man who should make a graven or a molten image, and put it in a secret place; Deuteronomy 27:15.” From numerous comments on the subject by the exegetes regarding the words of the Law, if they had given these words a secondary importance in where they had placed them (Cheyne, as “a sign of contempt”), or if they had joined to them idols, or if they had altogether replaced the words of the Law with the household idols—each of these shows the accompanying apostasy. Keith has: “The expression ‘behind the doors,’ appears to refer to the heathen practice of having household gods in addition to those of the public temples.” Alexander has: “Gesenius and Maurer explain זְכוֹרָתִי as meaning *memory*, by which the former understands posthumous fame or notoriety, the latter something cherished or

¹⁵ Cheyne explains that it is the *Shema* which was written, as “the formula ‘Jehovah is our God, Jehovah is one,’” or in the KJV, “**Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD**” (Deuteronomy 6:4) In Hebrew, שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד. See also the prayer in the Jewish *mezuzah*, מְזוּזָה, which is placed in the entrance of Jewish homes (e.g., see in Wikipedia). Also see Daniel H. Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Old Testament*, p.16, 415, “... the practice of placing words of the Scriptures in certain places is implied in Deuteronomy 6:9 and 11:20. See also ISAIAH 57:8.”

remembered with affection, meaning here the idol as a beloved object. The same sense is obtained in another way by those who make the word mean a **memorial**, or that which brings to mind an absent object.” ¶ *For thou hast discovered [thyself to another] than me.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Thou hast been like a woman who is beloved by her husband, but goeth astray after strangers.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Didst thou think, that, if thou departedst from me, thou shouldst have something more?” The Douay-Rheims (ⲡ) has, “For thou hast discovered thyself near me, and hast received an adulterer.” ¶ The allusion, then, is to an adulterous woman in her infidelity. Religiously speaking, Israel had prostituted herself by abandoning her first love, the Lord. As we have mentioned, this is a topic of repeated emphasis in Isaiah, Hosea, Jeremiah (e.g., 3:8) and Ezekiel (e.g., 23:4, as the two sisters, *Aholah*, אֲהוֹלָה, representing Israel; *Aholibah*, אֲהוֹלִיבָה, Judah).¹⁶ ¶ *And art gone up; thou hast enlarged thy bed, and made thee [a covenant] with them.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Thou hast enlarged thy bed: thou hast made a covenant with some of them.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Thou hast loved them who lay with thee and multiplied thy fornication with them.” The BPE (Ⲥ) has, “For before me thou undressed;¹⁷ went up and enlarged your bed.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲡ) has, “Thou hast enlarged thy bed, and made a covenant with them.” ¶ To enlarge the bed is an allusion to adultery, the inviting others to the bed who were not the husband. Delitzsch suggests: “After the church of Jehovah had turned away from its God to the world and its pleasures, it took more and more delight in the pleasures afforded it by idolatry, and indulged its tastes to the full.” Birks has: “Besides public, shameless idolatry in high-places and on mountains, there was private idol-worship in their houses. Where God had commanded His words to be written for a memorial, they set up the memorial of their own shame. Their zeal in false worship was like the course of an adulteress, who not only prepares her bed for lovers who visit her, but solicits their presence, exacts their visits as a favour, and looks out for occasions to multiply her hateful sin.” ¶ *Thou lovedst their bed where thou sawest [it].* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Thou lovedst the place, the place of their beds, the place thou hast chosen.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And hast done it with many who are far from thee.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲥ) has, “You have loved their bed where you saw their nakedness” (see also the BPE translation). The Douay-Rheims (ⲡ) has, “Thou hast loved their bed with open hand.” ¶ The original Hebrew

here is *hand*, יָד, which Whitehouse (and some others, including LHI—*nakedness* and *genitals* are used by numerous translators) leaning on Döderlein, suggest is here euphemistic, fitting the image of the adulteress. Horsley suggests: “[Israel is] taxed in this and the preceding verse with the double crime of resorting to places of idolatrous worship, and of receiving idols, or the implements of idol worship, into the precincts of God’s own temple. This double impiety is represented as the lewdness of an adulterous woman, who, not content to run after her paramours, brings them home, and admits them to her own bed at the very times that she is lying at her husband’s side.” Cowles suggests: “In the last clause, the English margin gives the probable sense of the original; ‘Thou providest room, i.e., for those who were implicated in thine adulteries.’ —In the first clause of ISAIAH 57:8 ‘thy remembrance’ means, *thy memorial*; things that well represent thy spirit and keep in remembrance thy deeds; probably the insignia of idol worship; perhaps household gods. In every corner of thy house are seen the witnesses of thy shameless idolatry.”

9 And thou wentest to[✓] the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far off, and didst debase [thyself even] unto hell.¹⁸

✓ or, thou respectedst

And thou wentest to the king with ointment. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “When thou didst keep (literally, ‘when thou didst the law for thyself’) the law, thou didst prosper in the kingdom.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And hast sent ambassadors beyond thy borders.” The BPE (Ⲥ) has, “And made yourself beautiful for the kings with ointment.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲡ) has, “And thou hast adorned thyself for the king with ointment.” ¶ Birks has: “But the resort to heathen alliances is so constantly joined with idolatry in other places, and its growth under Manasseh answers so plainly to the warning to Hezekiah (ISAIAH 39), as to establish this for the true meaning. The worship of idols, and slavish adulation of heathen despots, were two kindred forms of the same evil.” Wade opines: “The general context, the mention of ointment and perfumes, and the allusion to hell (Sheol) make it probable that the passage refers not to political embassies (as in Hosea 12:1) but to religious pilgrimages for the purpose of consulting or propitiating the deity of some foreign shrine (cf. 2 Kings 8:8, Ezekiel 23:16, 40).” Barnes notes: “Jerome renders this, ‘thou hast adorned thyself with royal ointment, and hast

¹⁶ See also ISBE.

¹⁷ The Lamsa and BPE translations give very different meanings to the term nakedness, with Lamsa attaching it to the end of the next clause, and BPE to this clause.

¹⁸ שְׁאוֹל, Sheol or Hades.

multiplied thy painting ;' and evidently understands it as a continuance of the sentiment in the previous verses as referring to the kind of decoration which harlots used." Cowles suggests: "Some apply this language to idol worship, taking the word rendered 'king' [מֶלֶךְ] to mean **Moloch** [מֹלֶךְ], from which it differs only in its vowels. Others ... suppose a reference to efforts to secure foreign alliances." So ISV renders it: "You went to **Molech** with olive oil and increased your perfumes; you sent your ambassadors far away, you sent them down even to **Sheol** itself!" ¶ *And didst increase thy perfumes.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "And when thou didst multiply for thyself good works, thy camp was enlarged." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, "And hast multiplied thy perfumes." ¶ Horsley has: "The Prophet pursues the image of a loose woman, studiously preparing her person for pleasure, according to the fashions of the times, softening the skin with ointments, and bedewing herself with rich perfumes." ¶ *And didst send thy messengers far off.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "And thou didst send thy messengers to a distant land." This was probably done to make covenants of protection from foreign lands rather than leaning on the Lord, who is the only who can provide true peace. Birks suggests: "The figure then passes into the reality. The messengers were sent 'even far away,' to Nineveh or Babylon, the royal residence of the idol-king." Barnes says: "That is, to distant nations, for the purpose of securing their alliance." But not only to distant lands, but the idea that follows: ¶ *And didst debase [thyself even] unto hell.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "And thou didst humble mighty nations unto hades." The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "And humbled thyself even to Hades." The BPE (Ⲥ) has, "And did debase thyself unto Sheol." ¶ Birks suggests: "Even to hell] They had submitted to the lowest degradation, as if courting eagerly their own shame. As true religion is most ennobling, so superstition and idolatry sink men below the level of the beasts of the field." Skinner has: "and didst debase thyself even unto hell] Rather, and hast sent deep to **Sheol** (lit. 'hast deepened [sc. thy sending] to **Sheol**'), i.e. they sought the favour of the deities of the underworld, by consulting their oracles etc." So also McFadyen: "Ambassadors are sent to the shrines of foreign gods, and even the gods of **Sheol** (so margin ||¹⁹), the oracles of the **nether world**, are consulted. There may here be an allusion to necromantic practices." Indeed, the Masoretic text (ⲙ) has עַד-שְׁאוֹל. AMP has: "debased yourself **even to Sheol** (Hades)." ASV has: "and didst debase thyself **even unto Sheol**." ESV renders it: "you sent your envoys far off, and sent down **even to Sheol**." LITV gives us: "And you sent your messengers far

away, and **lowered yourself to Sheol**." Leeser has: "and thou didst send out thy messengers even into the far-off distance, and didst debase thyself **even down** to the **nether world**." According to the ISBE,²⁰ שְׁאוֹל "means really the unseen world, the state or abode of the dead." Or, the *Spirit World*.

10 Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way; [yet] saidst thou not, There is no hope: thou hast found the life of thine hand; therefore thou wast not grieved.

✓ or, living

Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way. The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "With thy long journeys thou hast wearied thyself." The BPE (Ⲥ) has, "You were wearied from so much walking." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, for the second half, "Multitude of thy ways." ¶ Horsley suggests: "It seems to be a phrase for the various dissipations of riotous pleasure." Wade has: "*The length of thy way*] i.e. the long journey undertaken to the distant sanctuary: even the weariness attending this did not reduce the infatuated pilgrim to despair." Keith suggests: "The import of this verse is, that notwithstanding the disappointments which met them in that course of rebellion against the God of Israel on which they had entered, yet they would not abandon it; they found enough of sinful gratification in it to induce them to persevere. The same fact is represented when it is said that the judgments of God failed to recall them from their sin." ¶ President Spencer W. Kimball spoke of these words in a different context, when he taught: "If we hear discouraging reports and are sobered by events in the world, let us not become fainthearted—'Do not weary by the way.' The Lord's program will succeed even if some individuals in the Church fail. We will see the constant progress of the Lord's work, even in the midst of problems in the world. It will roll forth

²⁰ The ISBE has: "This word שְׁאוֹל is often translated in the King James Version 'grave' (e.g. Genesis 37:35; 1 Samuel 2:6; Job 7:9; 14:13; Psalm 6:5; 49:14; ISAIAH 14:11, etc.) or 'hell' (e.g. Deuteronomy 32:22; Psalm 9:17; 18:5; ISAIAH 14:9; Amos 9:2, etc.); in 3 places by 'pit' (Numbers 16:30, 33; Job 17:16). It means really the unseen world, the state or abode of the dead, and is the equivalent of the Greek *Hades*, by which word it is translated in Septuagint. The English Revisers [*i.e.*, Revised Version, RV] have acted somewhat inconsistently in leaving 'grave' or 'pit' in the historical books and putting 'Sheol' in the margin, while substituting 'Sheol' in the poetical writings, and putting 'grave' in the margin ('hell' is retained in ISAIAH 14). Compare their 'Preface.' The American Revisers [*i.e.*, American Standard Version, ASV] more properly use 'Sheol' throughout. Into Sheol, when life is ended, the dead are gathered in their tribes and families. Hence, the expression frequently occurring in the Pentateuch, 'to be gathered to one's people,' 'to go to one's fathers.'" The important point here is that שְׁאוֹל is better translated as the *Spirit World*.

¹⁹ McFadyen means the margin || of the Revised Version.

until it fills the whole earth. He has given us his assurances so many, many times. He has told us that if we will keep his commandments he is bound to keep his promises to us. He does! He will!”²¹ ¶ [Yet] saidst thou not, *There is no hope*: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Yet thou didst not think (literally, ‘thou hast not said in thine heart’) to return the many treasures thou hast multiplied.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And hast not said, I will take some rest.” The BPE (Ⲥ) has, “Yet you did not say, I will rest.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “Yet thou saidst not: I will rest.” ¶ נֹאֵשׁ from the root נָאֵשׁ, can mean *without hope, in vain*, and especially to give oneself to *despair* (Gesenius, DCH, HAL, BDB, Holladay). I particularly like Rashi’s comments here (in Rosenberg): “You did not say, ‘I will despair of these and I will no longer care to engage in them, but I will pay my attention to Torah and precepts.” ¶ It is a refusal to give up our favorite sin and engage in service, Scripture study, prayer, and so on. Elder D. Todd Christofferson challenged us: “The Savior was critical of some of the early Saints for their ‘lustful ... desires’ (D&C 101:6; see also D&C 88:121). These were people who lived in a non-television, non-film, non-Internet, non-iPod world. In a world now awash in sexualized images and music, are we free from lustful desires and their attendant evils? Far from pushing the limits of modest dress or indulging in the vicarious immorality of pornography, we are to hunger and thirst after righteousness. To come to Zion, it is not enough for you or me to be somewhat less wicked than others. We are to become not only good but holy men and women. Recalling Elder Neal A. Maxwell’s phrase, let us once and for all establish our residence in Zion and give up the summer cottage in Babylon (see Neal A. Maxwell, *A Wonderful Flood of Light* [1990], 47).”²² ¶ *Thou hast found the life of thine hand; therefore thou wast not grieved*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Wherefore thou thoughtest not to repent.” The BPE (Ⲥ) has, “You acknowledged of the crime of your hands, so you would not make supplication.” The Peshitta (Ⲑ) brings to mind the subtleties of Satan, who teaches man to feel the type of guilt that draws him away from God and to refuse to pray, instead of the guilt that brings us to our knees. The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Because in thy full strength thou hast done this; therefore thou shouldst not supplicate me.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, for the second clause, “Therefore thou hast not asked.” ¶ Birks has: “*The life of thy hand*] is either the life of the moment, when men live from hand to mouth; or else, alluding to ISAIAH 57:8, the life of the place sought out for sensual vice,

her pleasure in the momentary success of her disgraceful assignations with her lovers.” Cowles suggests: “They had not yet felt their intrinsic weakness so as to be driven back to their God for help.”

¶ Wordsworth offers what has become my favorite exposition of this obscure clause by suggesting an elliptical phrase, i.e., that “‘Thou hast found the life of thine hand’ [rather means] ‘Thou didst not trust in My hand’—the hand of the Lord.” In other words, thy trustest in thine own hand, not in the hand of the Lord.

11 And of whom hast thou been afraid or feared, that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me, nor laid [it] to thy heart? have not I held my peace even of old, and thou fearest me not?

And of whom hast thou been afraid or feared, that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me, nor laid [it] to thy heart? The Targum (Ⲯ) has, beginning with the second clause, “And on account of whom hast thou feared? Thou hast surely multiplied speaking lies, and thou hast not remembered my service, and hast not had (literally, ‘put’) my fear in thine heart.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Of whom hast thou been so anxiously afraid that thou hast dealt falsely with me, and has not remembered nor taken me into thy thoughts, nor into thy heart?” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “For whom hast thou been solicitous and afraid, that thou hast lied, and hast not been mindful of me, nor thought on me in thy heart?” ¶ Stier, quoted by Birks, restates it, “Before whom art thou afraid and terrified, that thou so liest? Before me? No! for thou thinkest not of me, nor layest it to heart, go then entirely away from me. My long-suffering has occasioned thy ungodliness. Am not I he that keep silence, and that for long time, and thou fearest me not?” Of ISAIAH 57:11–12, Keith has: “These verses describe the futility of every refuge which is apart from God.” Kay has: “The root of their apostasy was their forgetting God and fearing man.” Alexander suggests that this: “... may be applied to all hypocritical professors of the truth. They have no real fear of God; why then should they affect to serve him? His forbearance only served to harden and embolden them.” ¶ *Have not I held my peace even of old, and thou fearest me not?* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “I would have given you the ends of the world, if you had returned to my law; but thou hast not returned to me.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “When I saw and neglected thee thou didst not fear me.” For the first clause, the Peshitta (Ⲑ) has “I am the Holy One of old” (Lamsa) / “I am holy from eternity” (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “For I am silent, and as one that seeth not, and thou hast forgotten me.” ¶ Alexander renders it: “‘Have I not long kept silence?

²¹ Kimball, President Spencer W. “Do Not Weary by the Way,” 1980 October General Conference.

²² Christofferson, Elder D. Todd, “Come to Zion.” October 2008 General Conference.

It cannot be that you fear me.’ There is no need, therefore, of making the last clause interrogative.” Birks paraphrases: “And who, then, are these rivals, of whom thou hast been afraid, forsaking the fear of thy true King? Men that shall die, sons of men that are as grass, and idols still more worthless, wind and confusion. Through fear of these thou hast lied, and been wholly false to my covenant, hast forgotten God, and ceased to care for Him. Am I then so little to be feared? My great long-suffering, hadst thou a heart to feel, would only deepen thy reverence. But I have long held my peace, and refrained myself, and still thou fearest me not. The goodness, which should have brought thee to repentance, has been abused to embolden thee in sin.” Whitehouse has: “The questions are intended to reveal the utter worthlessness of these objects of idolatrous worship which had seduced the Israelites from allegiance to their true object of reverence, Yahweh.

12 I will declare thy righteousness, and thy works; for they shall not profit thee.

The Targum (T) has, “I have shewn thee those good works, which would have been thy righteousness; but thou hast multiplied evil works which did not profit thee.” The LXX (G) reads, “Now I will declare my righteousness and thine evil deeds which shall not avail thee.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “I will declare thy justice, and thy works shall not profit thee.” ¶ Birks has: “The folly of these vain and wearying superstitions should soon be exposed. ‘Thy righteousness’ is a direct contrast to ‘the righteousness of God.’” Or rather, righteousness here means **no-righteousness**, or lack of righteousness [לֹא צְדִיקוּתָא], either through irony or an elliptical expression. Cowles has: “The language seems ironical, in as much as her righteousness was only outrageous iniquity.” Rawlinson suggests: “The Syriac Version has ‘my righteousness,’ which gives a much better sense, and is adopted by Bishop Lowth, Dr. Weir, and Mr. Cheyne.” Indeed, LBP (S) has “I will declare my righteousness, and your works shall not profit you.” We have (S) אֲנִי אֶחְשֶׂה וְיִצְחָקוּ, or in Bauscher (S),²³ אֲנִי אֶחְשֶׂה וְיִצְחָקוּ. Also see the LXX (G) above. Alexander suggests: “I will declare thy righteousness, i.e. I will shew clearly whether thou art righteous, and in order to do this I must declare thy works; and if this is done, they cannot profit thee, because, instead of justifying, they will condemn thee.” Here we have the law of the harvest: “The one raised to happiness according to his desires of happiness, or good according to his desires of good; and the other to evil

according to his desires of evil; for as he has desired to do evil all the day long even so shall he have his reward of evil when the night cometh ... For that which ye do send out shall return unto you again, and be restored” (Alma 41:5, 15a).

vv. 13–16. Skinner points out: “In striking contrast to the menacing tone of ISAIAH 57: 3 ff. is the impressive and elevated language in which the prophet now sets forth the gracious thoughts of Jehovah towards His erring but repentant people.” Whitehouse says: “The speaker is evidently Yahweh, as the immediately following expression ‘my people’ clearly indicates.” Those who do wickedly will have no one to deliver them.

13 ¶ When thou criest, let thy companies deliver thee; but the wind shall carry them all away; vanity shall take [them]: but he that putteth his trust in me shall possess the land, and shall inherit my holy mountain;

When thou criest, let thy companies deliver thee; but the wind shall carry them all away; vanity shall take [them]: The Targum (T) has, “Proclaim aloud, whether thy deceitful works will save thee, in which thou hast been occupied from thy youth? The wind shall carry away all of them, they shall be as nothing.” The LXX (G) reads, “When thou criest; let them deliver thee in thine affliction. A wind indeed shall overtake them all; and a whirlwind shall sweep them away.” Instead of *thy companies*, the Peshitta (S) has *those who gather around you* (Lamsa) / *gather with thee* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (V) has *all off* rather than *all away*. A breeze shall take them away. Instead of *vanity*, the Peshitta (S) has *whirlwind*; and furthermore, the Peshitta (S) has *inherit* for *possess* and vice versa.

¶ The word *vanity* [תִּבְלָה] is often used of idols. Furthermore, there seems to be an elliptical expression here, “let thy companies [i.e., of idols you have gathered around yourself] deliver thee.” So also Leiser, who has: “When thou criest, let thy masses of idols deliver thee; but all of them will the wind carry away.” ¶ When the people find themselves in peril with none to deliver, they are sarcastically invited to call upon the arm of flesh or upon idols and see how much deliverance these will give—since they did not call upon the Lord. Cowles explains that *thy companies* mean “things accumulated—here either idols or dependence on foreign powers, for “All will be in vain, for the wind shall bear them all away, yea a breath [vanity] shall take them. They fly like chaff before the whirlwind.” ASV renders it: “When thou criest, let

²³ Bauscher, Rev. David, *The Aramaic English Interlinear Peshitta Old Testament* (The Major Prophets), 2015, p. 101.

them that thou hast *gathered* deliver thee” (emphasis added). DCH explains קְבִיצָה from קָבַץ to mean a “collection (of images), pantheon” and קָבַץ as gather. So Wade has: “*them which thou hast gathered*] The original is a noun which only occurs here, and apparently refers to the collection of various deities (Cheyne, ‘thy medley of gods’) to which devotion was paid.” ¶ *The wind*, רוּחַ. Rawlinson suggests: “*The wind*—or rather, a *breath*—shall carry them all away; vanity shall take them.” רוּחַ also means *spirit*. Gesenius, however, explains that wind could be a correct option: “*breath of air, air in motion, i.e. breeze.*” The idea, then, is just as perfectly well understood as either *wind* or *breath*. Even so, as Alexander points out, “even a wind is not required for the purpose; a mere *breath* would be sufficient.” ¶ Shalom Paul suggests that the word we read as *vanity* [הֶבֶל] may also be translated as *vapor*. See Gesenius also, who includes “vapour, mist, darkness” as one of its acceptations. ¶ *But he that putteth his trust in me shall possess the land* [יִנְחַל-אֶרֶץ], and shall inherit my holy mountain [הַר-קְדֹשִׁי]. The Targum (ܬ) has, “But he that putteth his trust in my Word shall possess the earth, and shall inherit my holy mountain.” The LXX (6) reads, “But they who adhere to me shall possess the land, and inherit my holy mountain.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “But he that putteth his trust in me, shall inherit the land, and shall possess my holy mount.” In contrast to those who do wickedly, those who put their trust in the Lord shall be greatly blessed and inherit in His Holy Temple, that is, receive the blessings of exaltation and eternal increase associated with the Temple (see ISAIAH 56). Yet another contrast is that between the false *high places* and the true *house of the Lord*. Fausset observes: “*possess ... land ... inherit*—that is, the literal land of Judea and Mount Zion; the believing remnant of Israel shall return and inherit the land. Secondly, the heavenly inheritance, and the spiritual Zion.” Barnes is more specific: “That is, they shall be admitted to elevated spiritual privileges and joys—as great as if they had possession of a portion of the mount on which the temple was built and were permitted to dwell there.” The Holy Mountains is certainly a reference to the *House of the Lord: Holiness to the Lord*. The gathering of Israel shall encompass all of the lands to which they have an inheritance, beside Israel. For instance, we read the words of Christ in 3 Nephi 15:13: “And behold, *this is the land of your inheritance*; and the Father hath given it unto you.” No doubt the same is true for those descendants of the Book of Mormon peoples who inhabit the isles of the sea. ¶ The Book of Mormon peoples were repeatedly told that they would be blessed in the land if they kept

the commandments. “And if it so be that they shall serve him according to the commandments which he hath given, it shall be a land of liberty unto them; wherefore, they shall never be brought down into captivity; if so, it shall be because of iniquity; for if iniquity shall abound cursed shall be the land for their sakes, but unto the righteous it shall be blessed forever ... Wherefore, I, Lehi, have obtained a promise, that inasmuch as those whom the Lord God shall bring out of the land of Jerusalem shall keep his commandments, they shall prosper upon the face of this land; and they shall be kept from all other nations, that they may possess this land [יִנְחַל-אֶרֶץ] unto themselves. And if it so be that they shall keep his commandments they shall be blessed upon the face of this land, and there shall be none to molest them, nor to take away the land of their inheritance; and they shall dwell safely forever” (2 Nephi 1:7, 9). This blessing for those who keep the commandments, and thus be able to possess the land [יִנְחַל-אֶרֶץ], would also translate into an even greater blessing: to inherit in my holy mountain [הַר-קְדֹשִׁי] that is, the blessings of the *House of the Lord*, even an eternal increase. There is also a יִנְחַל-אֶרֶץ in terms of this globe that will become celestialized. ¶ From Elder Parley P. Pratt we have: “Then cometh Jerusalem down from God, out of heaven, having been renewed as well as the heavens and the earth. ‘For,’ says He, ‘behold, I make all things new.’ / This new city, placed upon the new earth, with the Lord God and the Lamb in the midst, seems to be man’s eternal abode, insomuch that, after all our longings for a place beyond the bounds of time and space, as saith the poet, we are at last brought to our proper senses, and given to understand that man is destined forever to inherit this selfsame planet, upon which he was first created, which shall be redeemed, sanctified, renewed, purified, and prepared as an eternal inheritance for immortality and eternal life; with the holy city for its capital, the throne of God in the midst, for its seat of government; and watered with a stream, clear as crystal, called the Waters of Life, issuing from the throne of Jehovah; while either side is adorned with trees of never fading beauty.”²⁴ Indeed, the earth will be celestialized for the possession of the righteous as we have been taught by the Savior in the meridian of times (Matthew 5:5) as well as in Latter-day revelation (e.g., D&C 88:19–20).

14 And shall say, Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the

²⁴ Pratt, Elder Parley P. (1874, 9th Edition). *A Voice of Warning and Instruction to All People: Or, an Introduction to the Faith and Doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*, pp. 50–51.

stumblingblock out of the way of my people.

And shall say, Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And he shall say, Teach and admonish, turn the heart of this people to the right way.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And they will say. Clear the ways before him.” Instead of *cast ye up, cast ye up*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *clear up, clear up* (Lamsa) / *make flat, make flat* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “And I will say: Make a way: give free passage.” ¶ Henderson suggests that אָמַר should be translated: “And it shall be said.” Alexander notes: “Gesenius and Ewald make אָמַר impersonal²⁵, they say, one says, or it is said.

Vitranga in like manner long before had paraphrased it thus, *exit vox*; and Aben Ezra earlier still had proposed substantially the same thing.” Kay and Cheyne, similarly, “And one said.” AMP translates it: “And the word of One shall go forth,” ISV “And one has said,” LEB “And one shall say,” NASB, “And it will be said,” TLV “Then it will be said,” and YLT, “And he hath said.” In Hebrew it is the *context* which defines whether it is past or future, thus explaining this part of the difference between the various versions that use such an approach. This verse reminds us of ISAIAH 40:3–8, but here spoken of the Gospel of Christ. Gill says, in part, “A causeway, a highway, for the people of the Jews to return to their own land: this is either said by the Lord, as some supply it; or by the prophet, as Jarchi; or by him that putteth his trust in the Lord, as Kimhi.” This verse seems to be about removing the blindness of the apostasy through the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Cowles has: “The sentiment is, There shall be a call to clear the way for the true people of God to come out from among the wicked before divine judgments shall crush and exterminate them.” Fausset has: “*Cast ... up*—a high road before the returning Jews.” Rashi (emphasis added), in Rosenberg, alternatively teaches: “so will the prophet say in My name to My people, ‘Pave, pave a paved highway, clear away the *evil inclination* from your ways.’” This being an invitation to each one of us to turn to the Lord and be gathered to Zion—leaving Babylon fully behind. ¶ *Take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Remove the stumbling-block of the wicked out of the way of the congregation of my people.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Remove obstructions out

of the road of my people.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “Turn out of the path, take away the stumblingblocks out of the way of my people.” This is done in preparation for the restoration of the Gospel of Christ and the construction of Holy Temples. I love it when the Holy One of Israel speaks of “my people” (see *Rain in Due Season*). Christ invites all to come unto Him that they may become *His people*. ¶ Rashi (emphasis added), in Rosenberg, picks up where he left off: “Remove the stones upon which your feet stumble; they are *wicked thoughts* (based on Sukkah 52a²⁶).” Young well says of the stumbling block, “... here is figuratively employed to denote any obstacle standing in the way of God’s people that might cause them to stumble and fall and so fail in their journey ... In the great eschatological

26 “And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart. Is it not, they said, an a fortiori argument? If in the future when they will be engaged in mourning and the *Evil Inclination* will have no power over them, the Torah nevertheless says, men separately and women separately, how much more so now when they are engaged in rejoicing and the *Evil Inclination* has sway over them ... R. ‘Awira or, as some say, R. Joshua b. Levi, made the following exposition: The *Evil Inclination* has seven names. The Holy One, blessed be He, called it Evil, as it is said, For the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth. Moses called it the Uncircumcised, as it is said, Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart. David called it Unclean, as it is said, Create me a clean heart, O Lord, which implies that there is an unclean one. Solomon called it the Enemy, as it is said, If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat and if he be thirsty give him water to drink. For thou wilt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord will reward thee; read not, ‘will reward thee’ but ‘will cause it to be at peace with thee.’ Isaiah called it the Stumbling-Block, as it is said, Cast ye up, Cast ye up, clear the way, take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people. Ezekiel called it Stone, as it is said, And I will take away the *heart of stone* out of your flesh and I will give you a *heart of flesh*. Joel called it the Hidden One, as it is said, But I will remove far off from you the hidden one” (from Sukkah 52a, *The Babylonian Talmud*, Soncino, emphasis added). We also have: “On going to bed one says from ‘Hear, oh Israel’ to ‘And it shall come to pass if ye hearken diligently’. Then he says: ‘Blessed is He who causes the bands of sleep to fall upon my eyes and slumber on my eyelids, and gives light to the apple of the eye. May it be Thy will, O Lord, my God, to make me lie down in peace, and set my portion in Thy law and accustom me to the performance of religious duties, but do not accustom me to transgression; and bring me not into sin, or into iniquity, or into temptation, or into contempt. And may the *good inclination* have sway over me and let not the *evil inclination* have sway over me. And deliver me from evil hap and sore diseases, and let not evil dreams and evil thoughts disturb me, and may my couch be flawless before Thee, and enlighten mine eyes lest I sleep the sleep of death. Blessed art Thou, oh Lord, who givest light to the whole world in Thy glory” (from Berachoth 60b, *The Babylonian Talmud*, Soncino, emphasis added). Furthermore, we have: “Woe is me because of my *evil inclination*” (from Berachoth 61a, *The Babylonian Talmud*, Soncino, emphasis added). Does not each one of us have at least one *evil inclination* to contend with? Moroni was *comforted* (Ether 12:29) by the following, and so can we: “And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them” (Ether 12:27).

25 For those interested in the *impersonal* grammatical construction, see *A Hebrew Grammar* by Moses Stuart (1823), p. 351; and *Syntax of the Hebrew Language* (1891) by Heinrich Ewald, pp. 124, 148. It seems that it is used particularly when it is not clear who is speaking, as in our case here in Isaiah, אָמַר. It seems of particular use with the words *say* [אָמַר] and *speak* [דַּבֵּר] (see Driver 1881, *A Treatise on the use of the Tenses in Hebrew*, p. 201, for the latter).

return, when God will gather together all His people who are dispersed ...”

15 For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name [is] Holy; I dwell in the high and holy [place], with him also [that is] of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name [is] Holy. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “heavens” for *eternity*. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Him saith the Most High, who on earth inhabiteth eternity, who is Holy among holies: whose name is THE MOST HIGH.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “For thus saith the High and the Eminent that inhabiteth eternity: and his name is Holy.” Here we once again have words of comfort given to the disciple of Christ. ¶ *And Holy His name* (also see YLT, Rotherham), **וְקָדוֹשׁ שְׁמוֹ**. So He is called the **Holy** One of Israel. And so the Seraphim sing praises to Him, **קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ** (ISAIAH 6:3).

¶ *Inhabiteth eternity.* Ironside points out: “This is the only place in our Authorized Version where we get the word ‘eternity.’ The Hebrew word here so rendered is found in many other places, but here alone our English translators have used the word.” Ibn Ezra provides an elliptical comment: “עַד = עוֹלָמִי עַד ‘Innumerable worlds;’ signifies that which cannot be counted; eternity.” From the root **עָלַם**, *eternity*. And according to Gesenius, **עַד** means “m. (from the foot **עָדָה** to pass over, to go on)—(A) subst.—(1) pr. passing, progress, (in space), then duration (of time). Hence perpetuity of time, eternity.” If we look at Elder Orson Pratt’s words and compare it to the definition given by Ibn Ezra, *innumerable worlds*, we find his comments even more interesting. How can we not love him and appreciate that he was moved by great inspiration. ¶ Elder Orson Pratt taught: “[Jesus] has informed the world that there are many mansions in his Father’s house ... Where is [the Father’s house], and what kind of a house may we conclude it to be? Are we to understand by the term house, used in this passage, small buildings such as are erected for our residence, here on earth, and if not, what are we to understand? I understand that God is a Being who, as the Scriptures declare, inhabits eternity. Eternity is His dwelling place, and in this eternity are vast numbers of worlds—creations formed by His mighty hands ... He is not the God of one little world like ours; He is not a Being who presides over a few isolated worlds in one part of eternity, and all the rest

left to go at random; He is not confined to the worlds that are made, comparatively speaking, today; but all worlds, past, present, and future, from eternity to eternity, may be considered His dominions ... But if eternity is His house, habitation, or residence, what are the mansions referred to by our Savior, mentioned in the text? I understand them to be places that the Creator has constructed like this present world of ours; for this world, in its future history and progress, will no doubt become one of the mansions of the Father, wherein His glory will be made manifest as it is in many other redeemed worlds. I consider that this idea of mansions has reference more especially to celestial mansions, or worlds that have been redeemed and made celestial.”²⁷ ¶ *I dwell in the high and holy [place], with him also [that is] of a contrite and humble spirit.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Who inhabits the height—yea, His holy Shekinah hath promised to save the contrite in heart.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Who at rest in the holies giveth patience to the humble.” Instead of *I dwell* (first person), the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *whose abode* (third person). The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “Who dwelleth in the high and holy place, and with a contrite and humble spirit.” ¶ Numerous exegetes draw attention to the word *place* which is put as an ellipsis and suggest that a better rendering is that the Lord dwells on high as Holy (as in ISAIAH 6:1b “I saw also the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up,” and ISAIAH 6:2–4). The idea is that He is Holy. Of the English translations based on the Masoretic text (Ⓜ), I only find that the ISV leaves out the elliptical, “He lives in the height and in holiness.” On the other hand, most Spanish translations leave the elliptical out: “tengo por morada la altura y la santidad” (SSE); “habito en la altura y la santidad” (SRV); “habito en la altura y la santidad” (RVG); “habito en la altura y la santidad” (RV95); “habito en la altura y la santidad” (RV60); “tengo por morada la altura y la santidad” (RV1865); “habito en un lugar santo y sublime” (NVI); “habito *en* lo alto y santo” (NBLH); as does the LDS edition “habito en la altura y la santidad” (RV2009 SUD). ¶ Cheyne suggests, “Jehovah cannot [or better, does not wish to—GB] direct the affairs of his people from without; he desires to be enthroned in their hearts. When they turn away from him, he punishes them; but by gentle, spiritual means he moves them to return to him as penitent sinners.” ¶ Several exegetes note the juxtaposition between *high* and *low*: despite the Lord’s Holiness, He is near to those who are contrite and humble. Shalom Paul points us to a like Scripture: “Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all

²⁷ Elder Orson Pratt, “The Redemption of the Earth, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses* 14:233–234. August 1871.

those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word” (ISAIAH 66:1–2). Shalom Paul quotes several other Scriptures, including Psalm 103:20–21; 113:5–7; and 138:6. In this last example we see a contrast between how the Lord sees a person who is prideful and haughty, versus one who is humble and contrite: “Though the LORD be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.” AMP offers: “For though the Lord is high, yet has He respect to the lowly [*bringing them into fellowship with Him*]; but the proud and haughty He knows and recognizes [*only*] at a distance.” HCSB offers: “Though the LORD is exalted, He takes note of the humble; but He knows the haughty from a distance.” ¶ Elder Orson Pratt taught: “[Daniel] saw a little one planted in the mountains. He saw a kingdom organized, an ecclesiastical government called the Kingdom of the God of Heaven. He saw it organized—not in the lower countries of the earth, but he saw it organized in a high and lofty region ... he saw an ensign lifted up upon the mountains.”²⁸ ¶ *To revive* [לְהַחְיֶה] *the spirit of the humble, and to revive* [וְלְהַחְיֶה] *the heart of the contrite ones.* The Targum (ܬ) has, “And the humble of spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to support the heart of the contrite.” The LXX (Ϟ) reads, “And life to them who are of a contrite heart.” Instead of *the contrite ones*, the Peshitta (ܫ) has *those who are in pain* (Lamsa) / *those who suffer* (BPE). ¶ Here we have another instance of the *Hosea principle*. Rawlinson notes: “The prophet, in this portion of his discourse, whereof ‘comfort’ is the key-note, can never continue threatening long without relapsing into a tone of tenderness and pity.” ¶ Barnes explains: “The word ‘contrite’ (דָּכָא) means properly that which is broken, crushed, beaten small, trodden down.” Gill suggests that the contrite “have the worst thoughts of themselves, and the best of others; they are humble under a sense of sin and unworthiness, and submit to the righteousness of Christ.” ¶ Elder Bruce D. Porter taught: “The Savior’s perfect submission to the Eternal Father is the very essence of a broken heart and a contrite spirit. Christ’s example teaches us that a broken heart is an eternal attribute of godliness. When our hearts are broken, we are completely open to the Spirit of God and recognize our dependence on Him for all that we have and all that we are. The sacrifice so entailed is a sacrifice of pride in all its forms. Like malleable clay in the hands of a skilled potter, the brokenhearted can be molded and shaped in the hands of the Master ... When we sin and desire forgiveness, a broken heart and a contrite spirit mean to experience ‘godly sorrow [that] worketh

repentance’ (2 Corinthians 7:10). This comes when our desire to be cleansed from sin is so consuming that our hearts ache with sorrow and we yearn to feel at peace with our Father in Heaven. Those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit are willing to do anything and everything that God asks of them, without resistance or resentment. We cease doing things our way and learn to do them God’s way instead. In such a condition of submissiveness, the Atonement can take effect and true repentance can occur. The penitent will then experience the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost, which will fill them with peace of conscience and the joy of reconciliation with God. In a wondrous union of divine attributes, the same God who teaches us to walk with a broken heart invites us to rejoice and to be of good cheer ... When we have received a forgiveness of sins, a broken heart serves as a divine shield against temptation. Nephi prayed, ‘May the gates of hell be shut continually before me, because that my heart is broken and my spirit is contrite!’ (2 Nephi 4:32). King Benjamin taught his people that if they would walk in the depths of humility, they might ever rejoice, ‘be filled with the love of God, and always retain a remission of ... sins’ (Mosiah 4:12). When we yield our hearts to the Lord, the attractions of the world simply lose their luster. There is yet another dimension of a broken heart—namely, our deep gratitude for Christ’s suffering on our behalf.”²⁹

16 For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls [which] I have made.

For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: The Targum (ܬ) has, “For I will not take vengeance of judgment for ever, neither shall my wrath be eternal.” The LXX (Ϟ) reads, “I will not contend with you forever, nor will I be continually angry with you.” The Douay-Rheims (ϣ) has, “For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be angry unto the end.” ¶ We shall separate the two clauses. First, *I will not contend for ever.* This clause reminds us of 2 Nephi 26:11a: “For the Spirit of the Lord will not always strive with man. And when the Spirit ceaseth to strive with man then cometh speedy destruction ...” President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “Now the Lord has withdrawn His Spirit from the world. Do not let this thought become confused in your minds. The spirit he has withdrawn from the world is not the Holy Ghost (for they never had that!) but it is the light of truth, spoken of in our Scriptures as the Spirit of Christ [light

²⁸ Pratt, Apostle Orson, discourse delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 26 October 1879. JD 24:31a.

²⁹ Porter, Elder Bruce D. “A Broken Heart and a Contrite Spirit,” October 2007 General Conference.

of Christ], which is given to every man that cometh into the world (D&C 84:46). Now because of the wickedness of the world, that Spirit has been withdrawn, and when the Spirit of the Lord is not striving with men, the spirit of Satan is. Therefore, we may be sure that the time has come spoken of in Section 1 of the Doctrine and Covenants. . . . Peace has been taken from the earth. The devil has power over his own dominion. The Spirit of the Lord has been withdrawn. Not because the Lord desires to withdraw that Spirit, but because of the wickedness of mankind, it becomes necessary that this Spirit of the Lord be withdrawn.”³⁰ ¶ The second clause, *neither will I be always wroth*. While the first clause seems to refer to the withdrawing of the spirit from the world before the Second Coming; the words, *neither will I be always wroth* appears to speak of the millennium—with the resurrection of the just, but before the mounting tensions associated with the end of the thousand years. Rabbi David Kimhi (in Rosenberg) writes of the day when the Lord will replace our *stony heart* with a *heart of flesh*, and further, even remove our *evil inclinations*. ¶ *For the spirit should fail before me, and the souls [which] I have made*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “For I will revive (literally, ‘I am ready to revive’) the spirits of the dead, and the souls I have created.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For from me spirit is to proceed and I have made every breathing soul.” Instead of *fail before me*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *proceeds from before me*; instead of *souls*, *breath*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “Because the spirit shall go forth from my face, and breathings I will make.” ¶ Barnes has: “The Hebrew word which is rendered here ‘should fail’ (עָטַף), means properly to cover, as with a garment; or to envelope with anything, as darkness. Then it is used in the sense of having the mind covered or muffled up with sorrow; and means to languish, to be faint or feeble, to fail ... According to this, it furnishes ground of encouragement and comfort to all the children of God who are afflicted. No sorrow will be sent which they will not be able to endure, no calamity which will not be finally for their own good.” Delitzsch suggests: “כִּי [for] introduces the reason for the self-limitation of the divine wrath, just as in Psalm 78:38–39 (cf., Psalm 103:14): if God should put no restraint upon His wrath, the consequence would be the entire destruction of human life, which was His creative work at first. The verb עָטַף, from its primary meaning to bend round, has sometimes the transitive meaning to cover, and sometimes the meaning to wrap one's self round, i.e., to become faint or weak (compare עָטַף, fainted away, Lamentations 2:19; and הִתְעָטַף in Psalm

142:4, which is applied to the spirit). מְלִפְנֵי is equivalent to ‘in consequence of the wrath proceeding from me.’ נְשָׁמוֹת (a plural only met with here) signifies, according to the fixed usage of the Old Testament (ISAIAH 2:22; 42:5), the souls of men, the origin of which is described as a creation in the attributive clause (with an emphatic אֲנִי [I]), just as in Jeremiah 38:16 (cf., Zechariah 12:1)... . The prophet, who refers to the flood in other passages also (e.g., ISAIAH 54:9), had probably in his mind the promise given after the flood, according to which God would not make the existing and inherited moral depravity an occasion for utterly destroying the human race.” Clarke has: “And the souls – נְשָׁמוֹת the immortal spirits.” Gill offers: “The spirit of the afflicted, which not being able to bear up any longer under the affliction, would sink and faint, or be ‘overwhelmed,’ as the word (עָטַף) signifies: and the souls which I have made ... The Lord knowing the weakness of the human frame, therefore restrains his hand, or moderates or removes the affliction; see a like reason in Psalm 78:38, the last days of trouble to God’s people, which will be the time of the slaying of the witnesses, will be such that if they are not shortened, no flesh can be saved, but for the elect’s sake they will be shortened (Matthew 24:22).” The Geneva notes summarize this point: “I will not use my power against frail man, whose life is but a blast.” Of ISAIAH 57:15–16, Henderson says: “These verses contain the most sublime description of the Divine majesty and condescension to be found in the Scriptures. The words require no comment; but they have a depth of meaning which no finite mind can fully comprehend.”

vv. 17–21. The disobedient receive the Lord’s punishment, but God has pity on the repentant. They receive peace and salvation.

17 ¶ For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart.

✓ turning away

For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “For my wrath is upon them on account of their robbed riches, and I smote them.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Because of sin I grieved him a little while and smote him.” Instead of *covetousness*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *treachery*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “For the iniquity of his covetousness I was angry, and I struck him.” ¶ Kay has: “his covetousness] Out of that sin, which is, in essence,

³⁰ Joseph Fielding Smith, *The Predicted Judgments*. BYU speeches of the year. Provo, 21 Mar. 1967, pp. 5–6.

idolatry (Colossians 3:5³¹), every form of *iniquity* might germinate (1 Timothy 6:10³²).” Elder Jeffrey R. Holland taught: “Brothers and sisters, there are going to be times in our lives when someone else gets an unexpected blessing or receives some special recognition. May I plead with us not to be hurt—and certainly not to feel envious—when good fortune comes to another person? We are not diminished when someone else is added upon. We are not in a race against each other to see who is the wealthiest or the most talented or the most beautiful or even the most blessed. The race we are *really* in is the race against sin, and surely envy is one of the most universal of those. Furthermore, envy is a mistake that just keeps on giving. Obviously we suffer a little when some *misfortune* befalls *us*, but envy requires us to suffer all good *fortune* that befalls *everyone* we know! What a bright prospect that is—downing another quart of pickle juice every time anyone around you has a happy moment! To say nothing of the chagrin in the end, when we find that God really is both just and merciful, giving to all who stand with Him ‘all that he hath,’ as the scripture says. So lesson number one from the Lord’s vineyard: coveting, pouting, or tearing others down does *not* elevate *your* standing, nor does demeaning someone else improve your self-image. So be kind, and be grateful that God is kind. It is a happy way to live.”³³ ¶ *I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “I removed my Shekinah from them, and cast them out; I scattered their captives, because they went astray after the imagination of their hearts.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And turned away my face from him; and he was grieved and went his ways sorrowing.” The BPE (Ⲥ) has, “I turned and was wroth, but his sigh followed the way of his heart.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲥ) has, “But she backslid and was wroth, and went away groaning in her heart.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “I hid my face from thee, and was angry: and he went away wandering in his own heart.” ¶ Barnes has: “*I hid me*] I withdrew the evidences of my presence and the tokens of my favour, and left them to themselves.” This is what happens when we fail to turn to the Lord. Fausset and Bullinger’s *Companion Bible Notes* (CBN) send us to ISAIAH 8:17; 45:15; 59:2; and 64:7. Gill makes an interesting comment on apostasy and modern Christianity: “*I hid me, and was wroth*] showed his

displeasure by departing from them; and how much God has withdrawn his presence, and caused his spirit to depart from the churches of the Reformation, is too notorious.” ¶ Whitehouse has: “The word rendered ‘froward’³⁴ ... [שׁוֹכֵב] is a favourite one in Jeremiah, and means ‘unfaithful,’ ‘rebellious’ (Jeremiah 3:14, 22; cf. 31:22, 49:4).” Other translations into English also include *turning away* (NASB, AMP and margin ||), *turning back* (HCSB, ISV, YLT), *turning aside* (Rotherham), *backsliding* / *backslidingly* (ASV, ESV, WEB, TLV, Darby), *turneth* (Bishops), *returning* (CEV), and *walked apostate* (LEB).

18 I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners.

I have seen his ways, and will heal him: The Targum (ⲧ) has, “The way of their repentance is revealed before me, and I will forgive them.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “I have seen his ways and healed him.” Alexander says, “The Targum puts a favourable sense on *ways*, as meaning his repentance and conversion. So Jarchi, I have seen his humiliation; and Ewald, I have seen his patient endurance of trial.” Whitehouse has: “The words of comfort in these verses are evidently addressed to the faithful and repentant portion of the Zion community, who are sharply distinguished from the wicked and unfaithful.” Words of comfort are given indeed, *yet I will heal him and*³⁵ *I will lead him* [וְאֶרְפְּאֵהוּ וְאֶנְהִי]. Despite our best efforts we are still afflicted with our imperfections and weaknesses, our *evil inclinations*—which the Lord has seen. He says, *I have seen his ways*—yet even so the Lord will be merciful unto those who look unto Him for help. The Lord will help us turn those weaknesses into strength (Ether 12:29). There must be repentance or a turning unto the Lord for this healing grace to take place. The Spirit of the Lord will help us in making these changes—some of which will take a lifetime of work. Shalom Paul has: “*Then I noted his ways and I healed him*”—Some commentators interpret דרכיו as referring to the people’s upright *ways*, i.e., I saw that the people returned to a more virtuous *path*, and so I healed them (note once again the correct vocalization should be in the past tense: וְאֶרְפְּאֵהוּ).” The past tense shows the *prophetic perfect* wherein the Lord is not

³¹ “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry” (Colossians 3:5).

³² For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows” (1 Timothy 6:10).

³³ Holland, Elder Jeffrey R., “The Laborers in the Vineyard.” April 2012 General Conference.

³⁴ Also see definition of שׁוֹכֵב given in the margin ||, *turning away*, which also has the sense of apostasy.

³⁵ Instead of *and*, Fausset (leaning on Horsley who uses *but*) has, “I have seen his ways (in sin), *yet* will I heal him.” ESV and HCSB (also see LEB, NASB, TLV and LITV) have “I have seen his ways, but I will heal him; I will lead him ...”

only looking at His people after the restoration of the Gospel, but even into the Millennium. Elder George Q. Cannon declared: “If Satan, therefore, has power with man, it is because man yields to his influence ... Satan will be bound by the power of God; but he will be bound also by the determination of the people of God not to listen to him, not to be governed by him. The Lord will not bind him and take his power from the earth while there are men and women willing to be governed by him. That is contrary to the plan of salvation. To deprive men of their agency is contrary to the purposes of our God” (*Gospel Truth*, 1:86–87).³⁶ ¶ The Prophet Alma helps us not to *misunderstand* the meaning of ISAIAH 57:18: “And it is requisite with the justice of God that men should be judged according to their works; and if their works were good in this life, and the desires of their hearts were good, that they should also, at the last day, be restored unto that which is good. And if their works are evil they shall be restored unto them for evil. Therefore, all things shall be restored to their proper order, every thing to its natural frame—mortality raised to immortality, corruption to incorruption—raised to endless happiness to inherit the kingdom of God, or to endless misery to inherit the kingdom of the devil, the one on one hand, the other on the other—The one raised to happiness according to his desires of happiness, or good according to his desires of good; and the other to evil according to his desires of evil; for as he has desired to do evil all the day long even so shall he have his reward of evil when the night cometh. And so it is on the other hand. If he hath repented of his sins, and desired righteousness until the end of his days, even so he shall be rewarded unto righteousness. These are they that are redeemed of the Lord; yea, these are they that are taken out, that are delivered from that endless night of darkness; and thus they stand or fall; for behold, they are their own judges, whether to do good or do evil. Now, the decrees of God are unalterable; therefore, the way is prepared that whosoever will may walk therein and be saved ... Do not suppose, because it has been spoken concerning restoration, that ye shall be restored from sin to happiness. Behold, I say unto you, wickedness never was happiness” (Alma 41:3–8, 10). It is no coincidence that Isaiah clarifies this point a few verses below: “[There is] no peace, saith my God, to the wicked” (ISAIAH 57:21). ¶ *I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And I will have compassion upon them, and requite consolations to them and to those that mourn with them (or, ‘in behalf of them’).” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And comforted him.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has something like, “And I have comforted her, and

consoled her and those that with her are in mourning.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “And brought him back, and restored comforts to him, and to them that mourn for him.” ¶ *I will lead him also*, seems to mean that the Holy Ghost will hold Christ’s disciples by the hand and lead them back into righteousness, where they will be filled with *comfort* through repentance. Barnes says: “*And will heal him*] That is, I will pardon and restore him. Sin, in the Scriptures, is often represented as a disease, and pardon and salvation as a healing of the disease.” Gill says, in part, “of such who trust in the Lord, the ways of the humble and contrite, who are brought by repentance and reformation, by the dealings of God with them; these he sees, knows, and approves of, and heals their former backslidings ...”

19 I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to [him that is] far off, and to [him that is] near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him.

I create the fruit of the lips. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The prophet said: He that creates the speech in the lips of every man.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And given him true consolation.” Instead of *fruit*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *speech*. ¶ See also Hosea 14:2, mentioned by several exegetes: “Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips.” That is, offer praises to the Lord. Cowles explains: “The appropriate fruit of the lips is praise. God ‘creates’ it by giving both the occasion and the heart for it. As to the figure of the ‘fruit’ applied to the lips, see Hebrews 13:15: ‘By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.’ The connection of thought in our passage is that his wayward people when brought to repentance by his corrective discipline so as to be truly broken and humbled in spirit, will have their mouths filled with praise and will be blessed with double peace [which] ... comprehends all spiritual blessings.” Wade points us to Daniel 9:7. The complete chapter is particularly beautiful and must be reread, as Daniel recognizes that the people have been guilty as set out in *Rain in Due Season* but prays for the blessings to come upon Israel: “O LORD, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee. O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have

³⁶ “Chapter 37: The Millennium and the Glorification of the Earth.” *Doctrines of the Gospel Student Manual*, (2000), 104–6.

rebelled against him; Neither have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him” (Daniel 9:7–11). The angel Gabriel appears to him and gives him the consolation of the coming Messiah. Although Deuteronomy 30 would not be fulfilled with the First Coming, but rather in the gathering of Israel, the Savior would bring Peace upon all those who turn to Him thanks to the expiatory sacrifice. ¶ *Peace, peace to [him that is] far off, and to [him that is] near, saith the LORD.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Peace shall be wrought for the righteous, who have kept my law of old, and peace shall be wrought out for the penitent, who return to my law.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Peace upon peace to them near and to them far off.” Instead of *him*, the Peshitta (Ⲯ) uses the plural. ¶ Keith has: “The repetition ‘*peace, peace*,’ [שָׁלוֹם שָׁלוֹם] indicates, according to the Hebrew idiom, the superlative, or highest degree.” One of the suggestions offered by Rawlinson is: “to both the scattered members of the Jewish body [means Israel, Ephraim—including the lost ten tribes as well as the Lamanites—as well as Judah—GB].” This is also the Jewish interpretation, according to Kay. Alexander says: “Jarchi and Knobel explain it to mean all the Jews [meaning Israel—GB] wherever scattered ... [And Kimhi] understands the words as abolishing all difference between the earlier and later converts, an idea similar to that embodied in our Saviour’s parable³⁷ of the labourers in the vineyard.” Nägelsbach points us to the writings of Paul that apply to the meridian of times, Ephesians 2:17, which we will look in the larger context: “Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by

the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached *peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.* For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto *an holy temple in the Lord:* In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:11–22, emphasis added). It is certainly clear that Paul had ISAIAH 57 in mind when he penned these words. Nägelsbach well suggests: “... the LORD knows no salvation without healing. There is indeed no salvation for those not healed ...” ¶ Elder Harold B. Lee said: “Brothers and sisters, my prayer is for all of us, that we may so live, that when our time comes, we may not be afraid to die, and that when we die, we may look confidently forward to a life, an eternal life, in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ in the celestial kingdom ...”³⁸ ¶ *And I will heal him.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “It is at hand that I will pardon them, saith the Lord.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “So the Lord said, I will heal them.” Instead of *him*, the Peshitta (Ⲯ) has *them*. Alexander points out: “Hitzig directs attention to the way in which the writer here comes back [וְרָפְאֵתִי] to the beginning of ISAIAH 57:18 [וְאֶרְפָּאתִי], as an observable rhetorical beauty.” Christ is the only one who can heal us—through His atoning sacrifice. With Jeremiah we can plead: “O LORD, thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul; thou hast redeemed my life” (Lamentations 3:58). If we walk uprightly, through Christ’s expiatory sacrifice, we can someday return to the presence of the Father. ¶ President Gordon B. Hinckley testified: “I invoke the healing power of Christ, giving my witness of its efficacy and wonder. I testify of Him who is the great source of healing. He is the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world, ‘The Sun of Righteousness,’ who came ‘with healing in his wings.’ Of this I humbly testify in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.”³⁹

20 But the wicked [are] like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “But the wicked shall be tossed like waves and shall not be able to rest.” Instead of *mire*

³⁷ Matthew 20:1–16. The meaning of this parable is that individuals are called at different times in their lives to become the Lord’s disciples. What matters is not when they are called but if they will heed that invitation. All who accept will receive the same glorious reward to obtain *all that the Father hath* (see D&C 84:38).

³⁸ Lee, Elder Harold B. Spiritual Re-birth and Death. October 1947 General Conference.

³⁹ Hinckley, President Gordon B., “The Healing Power of Christ.” October 1988 General Conference.

and dirt, the Peshitta (S) has *creeping things* (Lamsa) / *reptiles* (BPE) and *mire*. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “But the wicked are like the raging sea, which cannot rest, and the waves thereof cast up dirt and mire.”

¶ Alexander has: “Lowth’s version of this last clause is more than usually plain and vigorous: *its waters work up mire and filth*. The verb means strictly to expel or drive out, and is therefore happily descriptive of the natural process here referred to.” Alexander then points us to Jude 1:13: “Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.” Delitzsch has: “As [the sea] cannot rest, and as its waters cast out slime and mud, so has their [the wicked] natural state become one of perpetual disturbance, leading to the uninterrupted production of unclean and ungodly thoughts, words, and works.” Nägelsbach explains: “The likings and cravings, the passions are the storms that stir up the human heart and let it have no rest. The wicked works are the foam and slime that then come to the surface and make manifest the uncleanness, the depravity, therefore the malady within.” So also Elder Bruce R. McConkie who has: “... the sea—a raging, restless sea—is a symbol of a sinful and wicked world.”⁴⁰ ¶ President Harold B. Lee taught: “To those who fail to heed the warnings of those who are striving to teach these principles and choose to go in the opposite course, they will eventually find themselves in the pitiable state which you are witnessing so often among us. The prophet Isaiah described the tragic result most dramatically when he repeated the words of God which came to him as he sought to fortify his people against the wickedness of the world, and I quote his words: [then quoted ISAIAH 57:19–21].”⁴¹ Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin testified: “Earth life is a period of probation to provide an opportunity for choices. Two mighty forces are pulling in opposite directions. On the one hand is the power of Christ and his righteousness. On the other hand is Satan and the spirits who follow him. President Marion G. Romney noted: ‘Mankind ... must determine to travel in company with the one or the other. The reward for following the one is the fruit of the Spirit—peace. The reward for following the other is the works of the flesh—the antithesis of peace.’ Further, he said: ‘The price of peace is victory over Satan’ (*Ensign*, October 1983, pp. 4–5). We can know which one to follow because God has given everyone the Spirit of Christ to know good from evil and to protect themselves from sin. We sometimes refer to the Spirit of Christ as our conscience. If we follow its promptings, we can be free of sin and filled with peace. If we do not, but

instead let our carnal appetites control us, we never will know true peace. We will be tossed ‘like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest ... there is no peace, saith ... God, to the wicked.’ If we damage or violate our conscience by ignoring it, we can lose that gift because we no longer are sensitive to it. We will be beyond feeling, beyond the influence of that Spirit.”⁴² Elder Neal A. Maxwell taught: “What we mortals encounter as the unforeseen, God has already seen, such as how the oil deposits of this earth would shape the latter-day conflicts among nations. God’s ‘is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations.’ He likewise foresaw all the awful famines, some resulting from the unwise, unnecessary erosions of precious topsoil. He surely foresaw the terrible persecutions of the Jews. Having created the earth, He has anticipated the impact of continental drifts on the frequency and intensity of latter-day earthquakes. He who analogized that ‘the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest’ also knows where and when, in latter days, the seas’ tidal waves will heave themselves savagely ‘beyond their bounds.’”⁴³ Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: that “... when Christ calms the seas of life, peace enters the hearts of men.”⁴⁴

21 [There is] no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

The LXX (G) reads, “There is no peace, said God, to the wicked.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “There is no peace to the wicked, saith the Lord God.” In ISAIAH 48:22 we have: “There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.” Several exegetes have noted that the only difference is that the words “*declares my God*” [אֱמַר אֱלֹהִי] are used here instead of “*declares Jehovah*” [אֱמַר יְהוָה]. Why the difference? While I do believe that the Lord sometimes reveals specific⁴⁵ words, often the *revelation* or *intelligence* given

⁴⁰ McConkie, Elder Bruce R. *The Mortal Messiah*, in the Messiah Series.

⁴¹ Lee, President Harold B. “Understanding Who We Are Brings Self-Respect.” October 1973 General Conference.

⁴² Wirthlin, Elder Joseph B., Peace Within. April 1991 General Conference.

⁴³ Maxwell, Elder Neal A., “Yet Thou Art There.” October 1987 General Conference.

⁴⁴ McConkie, Elder Bruce R., *The Mortal Messiah*: From Bethlehem to Calvary, 2:278.

⁴⁵ Oliver Cowdery spoke of his impression of John the Baptist’s language. Joseph and Oliver had been praying regarding baptism when the veil parted and Angel John the Baptist appeared: “I shall not attempt to paint to you the feelings of this heart, nor the majestic beauty and glory which surrounded us on this occasion; but you will believe me when I say, that earth, nor men, with the eloquence of time, cannot begin to clothe language in as interesting and sublime a manner as this holy personage. No; nor has this earth power to give the joy, to bestow the peace, or comprehend the wisdom which was contained in each sentence as they were delivered by the power of the Holy Spirit!” (JS—History Note:7b).

through the Holy Ghost comes through bursts of *light and truth* (see D&C 93:36). We receive revelation from the Lord in these bursts of light and truth and then translate them into human language. ¶ President Howard W. Hunter taught: “No peace comes to those who reject God. There is no promise of peace to those who reject God, to those who will not keep his commandments, or to those who violate his laws. The Prophet Isaiah spoke of the decadence and corruption of leaders, and then continued in his admonitions by saying: ‘But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked’ (ISAIAH 57:20–21) ... Peace comes by an unconditional surrender. Indifference to the Savior or failure to keep the commandments of God brings about insecurity, inner turmoil, and contention. These are the opposite of peace ... Fundamental truths will bring peace. It seems that two eternal truths must be accepted by all if we are to find peace in this world and eternal life in the world to come. (1) That Jesus is the Christ, the very eternal

son of our Heavenly Father, who came to earth for the express purpose of redeeming mankind from sin and the grave, and that he lives to bring us back to the presence of the Father. (2) That Joseph Smith was his prophet, raised up in this latter-day to restore the truth which had been lost to mankind because of transgression ... We need to be kinder with one another, more gentle and forgiving. We need to be slower to anger and more prompt to help.”⁴⁶ Elder Marvin J. Ashton taught: “True Christians have no time for contention. Lasting peace cannot be built while we are reviling or hating others ... Feelings of enmity and malice can never be compatible with feelings of peace. [He then quotes ISAIAH 57:20–21.].”⁴⁷

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⁴⁶ Hunter, Howard W. *The Teachings of Howard W. Hunter*. Edited by Clyde J. Williams. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1997, pp. 171–174.

⁴⁷ Ashton, Elder Marvin J., Peace—A Triumph of Principles. October 1985 General Conference.

Isaiah 58

Observance of the true spirit of fasting and Sabbath day observance is enjoined. There seem to be two very opposite extremes in terms of fasting and prayer. Formalism devoid of the proper attitude on the one hand; on the other, a neglect for fasting and Sabbath day observance in modern times. There is a need for both humanity *and* the observance of these laws in the Lord's way. ¶ Today, there seems to be all but a total abandonment of Sabbath day worship. It is interesting how some conversations seem to stick with us forever. As an adolescent, growing up in Chile in the 1960s, before I knew about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I remember hearing that the father of a friend had taught that not observing the Sabbath day was not in keeping with God's will. I was shocked by the comment. I did not know anybody who kept the Sabbath day holy. ¶ It was truly a pleasure for me to be taught about this practice as I learned about the Church. Not too many years later I watched the movie *Chariots of Fire*. It chronicled the lives of several UK athletes in the 1920s. At that time, it seems that Sabbath day observance was honored by devout Christians. One of the athletes, Eric Liddell refused to run on the Sabbath day. In one moving scene, Liddell tells a young man who was playing ball on Sunday, "Do you know what day it is?" And then Eric kindly admonishes the young man, "The Sabbath is not a day for playing ball, is it?" I love this movie for many reasons, and it did not hurt that ISAIAH 40 was quoted in it. ¶ As I write almost a hundred years after the 1920s, it seems that Sabbath day observance has all but vanished. Instead, the Sabbath has turned into a day of shopping and recreation. The clear and joyous teachings of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints stand out as a breath of fresh air. Countless Latter-day Saints have refused "to play ball" on Sunday and their examples shine forth to the world.

vv. 1–2. One of the callings of a prophet is to set things right in the Church. The Lord, through Isaiah, has spoken about the needed repentance regarding fasting and Sabbath-day observance. Similarly today, one the Prophets, Seers and Revelators, President Russell M. Nelson, has recently admonished us as a Church to be more faithful in our Sabbath-day observances. False religion is rejected.

1 ¶ CRY aloud, ~ spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

✓ with the throat

CRY aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet. The Targum (ⲧ) has, "Cry aloud (literally, 'cry with the throat'), O prophet, spare not, lift up thy voice like the voice of a trumpet." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "Cry aloud and spare not; raise thy voice like a trumpet." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has *cease* rather than *spare*. ¶ Cowles has: "The Lord addresses his prophet, giving his message and instructions. 'Cry from the throat' [Hebrew] in distinction from whispering out of the lips; speak with loud and earnest tones ..." Rabbi Rosenberg clarifies, "raise the voice *like* a shofar" [שׁוֹפָר]. Rabbis Slotki/Rosenberg have the idea of not sparing the throat to cry out. Alexander has: "The loudness of the call is intended to suggest the importance of the

subject, and perhaps the insensibility of those to be convinced." ¶ *And shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, for the first clause, "And shew unto my people their rebellion." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "Proclaim to my people their sins, and to the house of Jacob their iniquities." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has *wicked doings* instead of *transgression*. ¶ By the words *my people* it becomes clear that the Lord is speaking to Israel.

2 Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.

Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways. The Targum (ⲧ) has, "And they seek daily instruction from me, as if to know the ways which are right before me." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "Day after day they seek me, and desire to know my ways." Instead of *delight*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *wish* (Lamsa) / *pretending* (BPE). Wade suggests: "The verb *seek* is used of consulting God through either priest or prophet (cf. ISAIAH 31:1, Ezekiel 20:3)." Cheyne also, "'Consult' is the usual word for applying to an oracle or a prophet, and no doubt consultations of the prophet are included (see Ezekiel 20:1), but direct prayer to God is also meant (see ISAIAH 58:4 and comp. 55:6)." ¶ Cowles has: "This

verse describes them as professing to seek God and even as pretending to inquire after justice and righteousness—the very principles which they most of all outraged and trampled under foot in their oppressive ways of life.” Redak, in Rabbi Rosenberg suggests that those who ask for instruction with no intention of obeying are in particular trouble. This reminds us of the men who asked Jeremiah if they should go to Egypt or stay, but their hearts were not sincere (see Jeremiah 42–43). ¶ Regarding *my ways* [מִדְּבָרַי], Wade points us to ISAIAH 2:3, 42:24, cf. 48:17. In Moses 6:41b we read, “And my father taught me in all the ways of God.” In Hosea we also read, “For the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them” (Hosea 14:9b). The Scriptures often speak of either *perverting* the ways of the Lord or *walking* therein. ¶ President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “We may after baptism and confirmation become companions of the Holy Ghost who will teach us the ways of the Lord, quicken our minds and help us to understand the truth ... But the ways of the Lord are not man’s ways ... [The Latter-day Saints] are being gathered from all parts of the earth and are coming to the house of the Lord in these valleys of the mountains. Here they are being taught in the ways of the Lord through the restoration of the gospel and by receiving blessings in the temples now erected.”¹ *To know my ways* generally means to study the commandments with a desire both to know and to do the will of God. There are times, however, and this seems one of them, when people are only *hearers* rather than *doers* of the word (see James 1:22). ¶ *As a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God*: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Finding delight in my presence as a people that doeth righteousness, and have not forsaken the judgment of their God.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Like a people who have practised righteousness, and who have not forsaken the ordinance of God.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “As a nation that hath done justice, and hath not forsaken the judgment of their God.” ¶ The word for *ordinance* in Hebrew, as Cheyne points out, is מִשְׁפָּט. It is often translated as *statute* (Bishops, Geneva) or *judgment* (ESV, LEB, LITV) or *justice* (HCSB, Rotherham). The Lord seems to be saying, “You seek for my advice as someone who is ready to *obey* it, but in reality you have turned from me and have apostatized.” ¶ Birks has: “The main feature is a pretended eagerness to learn the commands and will of God, as shewn in ceremonial details, and still a neglect of the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith.—The verbs which express the actions of these hypocrites are in the future tense. The verse may be paraphrased thus; And they will seek me day by day, and will delight to know the ways that please me in

manner and appearance like a nation which has wrought righteousness habitually (as they have not) ... They will ask me the ordinances of justice [without the least thought of doing them] ...” In other words, *they draw near God only with their lips*.² So also Wordsworth, who quotes Ezekiel: “They come unto thee, and sit before thee as My People, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness” (Ezekiel 33:31). ¶ *They ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “They ask of me judgment and truth, as if they delighted to draw near to the fear of the Lord.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “They now ask of me a just decision and desire to draw near to God.” Instead of *delight in approaching*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *delight in drawing near* (Lamsa) / *pretending to draw near* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “They ask of me the judgments of justice: they are willing to approach to God.” ¶ Rawlinson has, in part: “*They take delight in approaching to God*” So the LXX (Ⲅ), the Vulgate (ⲱ), Calvin, Vitringa, and Kay.” Gill says: “... the approaching here is only in an external manner, by the performance of outward duties; and the delight is not in God, and communion with him.”

vv. 3–7. In 1963, Presiding Bishop John H. Vandenberg noted: “It is here that I would like to state that the Lord has caused a day of fasting and prayer to be set up in this day so that collectively the Church might join together to fulfil the purposes of fasting. In the general letter from the Council of the Twelve to the Church under date of May 17, 1845, which Orson Pratt read to the Saints, these words appear: ‘Let this be an ensample to all saints, and there will never be any lack for bread: When the poor are starving, let those who have, fast one day and give what they otherwise would have eaten to the bishops for the poor, and everyone will abound for a long time; and this is one great and important principle of fasts, approved of the Lord. And so long as the saints will all live to this principle, with glad hearts and cheerful countenances they will always have an abundance.’ (DHC 7:413.) ... I feel to add that those who are not physically able to abstain from food and

¹ President Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*.

² The Prophet Joseph Smith shared these thoughts: “My object in going to inquire of the Lord was to know which of all the sects was right, that I might know which to join. No sooner, therefore, did I get possession of myself, so as to be able to speak, than I asked the Personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right (for at this time it had never entered into my heart that all were wrong)—and which I should join. I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong; and the Personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those professors were all corrupt; that: ‘they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof’” (Joseph Smith—History 1:18–19).

drink should participate on fast day to the extent of prayers, offerings, and testimony. If we abide by the word of the Lord for the above purposes, we will surely be blessed as God has promised through his prophets. I suppose there is no physical blessing desired so much as being well in mind and in body ... Today with the Church having reached the age of 133 years, we marvel at its growth; and with the strength of its leadership, we are moving forward. Yet as we examine ourselves, we see there is much need for improvement. I think of the Prophet Isaiah's words when he said: 'Cry aloud, spare not lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.' I observe a great need for the teaching and adherence to the principle of fasting. I would like to say something relative to it. As a Church, we have not reached the full benefits of this principle. There are some who faithfully observe the fast and who receive the full blessings. But there are many who must yet be taught the true principle of fasting and be converted to it and practice it in order to receive the great blessings associated with it. The Prophet Isaiah clearly sets forth an understanding of the fast. As he observed the people, he was, no doubt, considerably upset and concerned with the way they had abused the purpose and principle of fasting."³ Elder L. Tom Perry taught, "The law of the fast has three great purposes. First, it provides assistance to the needy through the contribution of fast offerings, consisting of the value of meals from which we abstain. Second, a fast is beneficial to us physically. Third, it is to increase humility and spirituality on the part of each individual."⁴ President Joseph F. Smith taught: "Now, while the law requires the Saints in all the world to fast from 'even to even' and to abstain both from food and drink, it can easily be seen from the Scriptures, and especially from the words of Jesus, that it is more important to obtain the true spirit of love for God and man, 'purity of heart and simplicity of intention,' than it is to carry out the cold letter of the law. The Lord has instituted the fast on a reasonable and intelligent basis, and none of his works are vain or unwise. His law is perfect in this as in other things. Hence, those who can are required to comply thereto; it is a duty from which they cannot escape; but let it be remembered that the observance of the fast day by abstaining twenty-four hours from food and drink is not an absolute rule, it is no iron-clad law to us, but it is left with the people as a matter of conscience, to exercise wisdom and discretion. Many are subject to weakness, others are delicate in health, and others have nursing babies; of such it should not be required to fast. Neither should

parents compel their little children to fast. I have known children to cry for something to eat on fast day. In such cases, going without food will do them no good. Instead, they dread the day to come, and in place of hailing it, dislike it; while the compulsion engenders a spirit of rebellion in them, rather than a love for the Lord and their fellows. Better to teach them the principle, and let them observe it when they are old enough to choose intelligently, than to so compel them. But those should fast who can, and all classes among us should be taught to save the meals which they would eat, or their equivalent, for the poor."⁵

3 ¶ Wherefore have we fasted, [say they], and thou seest not? [wherefore] have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours. ✓

✓ or, things wherewith ye grieve others, HEB. griefs

Wherefore have we fasted, [say they], and thou seest not? The Targum (¶) has, "They say, wherefore do we fast, as it is revealed before Thee?" The LXX (¶) reads, "Saying, 'Why have we fasted and thou hast not seen?'" The Douay-Rheims (¶) has, "Why have we fasted, and thou hast not regarded?" ¶ Birks suggests: "The complaint is that they had made God largely their debtor, and that the debt was unpaid. Religious pride breeds discontent, and discontent open blasphemy." Cheyne notes: "*Wherefore have we fasted*] The reproofs in this part of the prophecy remind us of Zechariah 7:5, Joel 2:12, 13." Alexander suggests: "The combination of the preterite (hast not seen) and the future (wilt not know) includes all time. The clause describes Jehovah as indifferent and inattentive to their laboured austerities. The reason given is analogous to that for the rejection of their sacrifices in ISAIAH 1:11–13, viz. the combination of their formal service with unhallowed practice." ¶ President Marion G. Romney taught: "The apostle James said, 'If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well' (James 2:8). We must have this law in mind in all that we do in our welfare work. We must love our neighbors as ourselves. The Savior put this law second only to the love of God ... In the payment of our fast offerings, we must do so with the royal law in mind."⁶ President Romney further testified: "One of the important things the Lord has told us to do is to be liberal in our payment of fast offerings. I would like you

³ Bishop John H. Vandenberg, Presiding Bishop of the Church, A Glorious Principle, *Conference Report*, April 1963.

⁴ Elder L. Tom Perry, "The Law of the Fast." April 1986 General Conference.

⁵ President Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, p. 306–307.

⁶ President Marion G. Romney, The Royal Law of Love, April 1978 General Conference.

to know that there are great rewards for so doing—both spiritual and temporal rewards. The Lord says that the efficacy of our prayers depends upon our liberality to the poor. Way back in the days of Isaiah, he made this clear. When at that time the people complained, ‘Wherefore have we fasted ... and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge?’”⁷ ¶ [Wherefore] have we *afflicted our soul* [עֲנִינוּ נַפְשֵׁנוּ], and thou takest no knowledge? The Targum (T) has, “Wherefore have we afflicted ourselves, as known unto Thee?” The LXX (G) reads, “We have humbled our souls and thou hast not known.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Have we humbled our souls, and thou hast not taken notice?” ¶ Rawlinson has: “And thou takest no knowledge] rather, *no notice*.” ¶ Kay explains: “They observe the Day of Atonement, the only fast-day enjoined by the law; on which every Israelite was required to ‘afflict his soul’ (Leviticus 16:29⁸, 31⁹). But their day of soul-afflicting has not produced its proper fruits, contrition and charity. They censure God; they oppress men.” And furthermore, Kay explains: “The sabbatical and jubilee years (when servants and debtors obtained release) began on the evening of the *Day of Atonement* (Leviticus 25:9).” The Old Testament is quite clear on the importance of forgiving debts during the jubilee and even warns against those who would not lend when it was close to the year of jubilee. ¶ *Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours*. The Targum (T) has, “The prophet said unto them: Behold, in the day of your fast ye seek your extortions (or, ‘gain’), and ye bring near all your stumbling-blocks.” The LXX (G) reads, “In the very days of your fasts you enjoy your own pleasures and goad all them who are under your control.” ¶ I particularly like NASB here: “Behold, on the day of your fast you find *your* desire, And drive hard all your workers.” The Peshitta (S) has “Behold, in the day of your fast you do what you wish, and you present offerings to all of your idols.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Behold in the day of your fast your own will is found, and you exact of all your debtors.” ¶ Horsley, also, leaning on the LXX (G), prefers: “And exact the whole upon your debtors.” In other words, they are *unforgiving* to their debtors. ¶ Wade has, “The Lord’s answer to their appeal is that their acts of self-denial are purely external, and that their fast-days do not interfere with their interests, or bring relief to their workmen.” Cheyne has: “Unlike the Sabbath, the fast-days (except the great Day of Atonement) appear not to have involved the cessation

of business. Hence the prophet continues, *All your tasks ye exact*] Ye are specially anxious at such times that the service of God should not interfere with that of mammon. Ye ‘exact’ the full tale¹⁰ of works, like slave-drivers (the participle of the verb has this meaning, see Exodus 5:6, Job 3:18).” ¶ Rawlinson’s has: “In the day of your fast ye find pleasure. Delitzsch and Mr. Cheyne render, ‘ye carry on business,’ which accords better with the clause which follows. The great Day of Atonement was, like the sabbath, a day on which no work was to be done (Leviticus 16:29). The Jews, while priding themselves on their observance of the day, did not really observe it in this particular. **And exact all your labours**; *i.e.* ‘require of your servants and subordinates all the services that they have to render on other days.’ Days of religious observance, even under the Law, were always intended to be days of kindly forbearance towards the poor, of the remission of burdens, or even of the actual giving of relief.”

4 Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as [ye do this] day, to make your voice to be heard on high.

✓ or, ye fast not as this day

Behold, ye fast for strife and debate. The Targum (T) has, “Behold, ye fast for provocation and strife.” Instead of *debate*, the Peshitta (S) has *quarreling* (Lamsa) / *conflict* (BPE). ¶ Presiding Bishop John H. Vandenberg explained, “... they are rewarded with strife, debate, and wickedness.”¹¹ Alexander has: “Vitringa applies this clause to the doctrinal divisions among Protestants, and more particularly to the controversies in the Church of Holland on the subject of grace and predestination.” ¶ The *actual topic* of contention is not as vital as to the fact that contention takes place in the name of God. Nothing could be more distasteful to God than when people contend in His name. A modern expression for the same phenomena is “Bible bashing.” ¶ *And to smite with the fist of wickedness*: The LXX (G) reads, “And smite the poor with your fists.” The Lamsa Peshitta (S) has, “And to strike violently” and the BPE (S) has “And to inflict the violence of iniquity.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And strike with the fist wickedly.” Redak, in Rabbi Rosenberg, suggests that those who fasted would not forgive debts and even used their fists [בְּאַגְרָה], if

⁷ President Marion G. Romney, Fundamental Welfare Services, April 1979 General Conference.

⁸ תַּעֲנִינוּ אֶת-נַפְשֵׁיכֶם, *afflict your souls*.

⁹ וְעֲנִיתֶם אֶת-נַפְשֵׁיכֶם, *and ye shall afflict your souls*.

¹⁰ Tale, from the Hebrew תָּכַן is defined, in *Easton Bible Dictionary*: “(1.) HEB. ‘a task,’ as weighed and measured out = tally, i.e., the number told off; the full number (Exodus 5:18; see 1 Samuel 18:27; 1 Chronicles 9:28). In Ezekiel 45:11 rendered ‘measure.’”

¹¹ Bishop John H. Vandenberg, Presiding Bishop of the Church, A Glorious Principle, *Conference Report*, April 1963.

necessary, in order to collect. The ASV has, “Behold, ye fast for strife and contention, and to smite with the fist of wickedness.” ¶ *Ye shall not fast as [ye do this] day, to make your voice to be heard on high.* The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “Why fast ye for me as to-day that by a cry your voice may be heard?” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “Do not fast as you have done until this day, to make your cry to be heard on high.” ¶ Wade suggests, “*ye fast not this day*, etc. Better (as in the mg. ⲥ), *ye shall not fast as ye do this day so as to make*, etc.” Cheyne notes: “This glaring inconsistency prevents your prayers for a Divine interposition (ISAIAH 58:2) from rising to the pure ‘height,’ where Jehovah dwelleth (ISAIAH 57:15 Hebr.). Comp. Lamentations 3:44, ‘Thou hast covered thyself with clouds, so that prayer may not pass through.’”

5 Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? ♣ [is it] to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes [under him]? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?

♣ or, to afflict his soul for a day?

Is it such a fast that I have chosen? The Targum (ⲡ) has, “Is this the fast which I delight in?” The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “This is not such a fast as I have chosen.” This is a rhetorical construction meaning that, *no*; these things were *opposite* to the purposes of the fast. ¶ *A day for a man to afflict his soul?* The Targum (ⲡ) has, “A day to afflict oneself?” The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “That a man should afflict his soul for a day.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “For a man to afflict his soul for a day?” ¶ Barnes explains: “... the idea is, that the pain and inconvenience experienced by the abstinence from food was not the end in view in fasting. This seems to have been the mistake which they made, that they supposed there was something meritorious in the very pain incurred by such abstinence.” Faussett explains: “The *pain* felt by abstinence is not the *end* to be sought, as if it were meritorious; it is of value only in so far as it leads us to amend our ways.” And to take notice of those around us who are afflicted. ¶ *[Is it] to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes [under him]?* The Targum (ⲡ) has, for the second half, “And passing the night in sackcloth and ashes?” The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “No: though thou shouldst bend thy neck like a hook and lay sackcloth and ashes under thee.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “Is this it, to wind his head about like a circle, and to spread sackcloth and ashes?” ¶ Ibn Ezra explains: “*Bulrush*] A tender plant, that bends its top.” Barnes has: “A bulrush is the large reed that grows in marshy places. It is, says Johnson,

without knots or joints. In the midst of water it grows luxuriantly, yet the stalk is not solid or compact like wood, and, being unsupported by joints, it easily bends over under its own weight. it thus becomes the emblem of a man bowed down with grief. Here it refers to the sanctimoniousness of a hypocrite when fasting—a man without real feeling who puts on an air of affected solemnity, and ‘appears to others to fast.’” Rashi and Kara, in Rabbi Rosenberg, suggest individuals bent over like a *fishing hook* rather than a bulrush. Faussett has: “*bow ... head ... sackcloth*”—to affect the outward tokens, so as to ‘appear to men to fast.’” Kent P. Jackson summarizes: “Fasting is not a passive act, for in order to be efficacious it must be accompanied by righteous living and charity demonstrated not only through fast offerings but through daily living and interaction with our fellowmen.”¹² Christ did not abolish fasting, but pointed His disciples in the right direction: “But thou, *when thou fastest*, anoint thine head, and wash thy face” (Matthew 6:17). ¶ Barnes explains of sackcloth: “It was commonly worn around the loins in times of fasting and of any public or private calamity. It was also customary to sit on sackcloth, or to spread it under one either to lie on, or to kneel on in times of prayer, as an expression of humiliation.” ¶ When Jonah preached to the children of Nineveh they repented: “So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water: But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent,¹³ and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not” (Jonah 3:5–10). Another great example is that of such ‘*repentance*,’ came from King Ahab, who had truly done wickedly: “And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly. And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Seest thou how

¹² Kent P. Jackson, ed., *Studies in Scripture*, 4:158.

¹³ The word translated as *repent* [ⲙⲛⲓ] in the KJV, means to *take pity* (Gesenius) or be *filled with mercy*. Also see the two JST readings in this passage, making it clear that this is the meaning of the word ⲙⲛⲓ.

Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house" (1 Kings 21:27–29). There was nothing inherently wrong with fasting in sackcloth and ashes in olden times. It all boils down to a question of sincerity. ¶ *Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "Will ye call this a fast before the presence of the Lord, and a day in which I delight?" The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, "Even in that case you are not to call it an acceptable fast." ¶ Once again, a rhetorical construction meaning *no*; such a fast was far removed from what the Lord had in mind. The word *acceptable*, **רָצוֹן**, is related to the concept of *justification*. We read also of **רָצוֹן**: "And the LORD had *respect* unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not *respect*" (Genesis 4:4b–5a). For any *performance* to find favor in the sight of God, to be acceptable in His sight, or be justified, the Holy Spirit of Promise must put a sealing stamp of approval upon it: "All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, *performances*, connections, associations, or expectations, that are not made and entered into and sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise ... are of no efficacy, virtue, or force in and after the resurrection from the dead ..." (D&C 132:7).

6 [Is] not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

- ✓ the bundles of the yoke
- ✓ ✓ broken

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, beginning with the second clause, "To scatter the assembly of wickedness, to loose the fetters of a decree of perverted judgment, to set at liberty the sons of the freeborn, who have suffered violence, and to remove all perverted judgment?" The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, "It is not such a fast as this that I have chosen, saith the Lord. But loose every bond of iniquity; dissolve the obligations of onerous contracts; set at liberty them who are oppressed, and tear in pieces every unjust stipulation in writing." Instead of *undo the heavy burdens*, the Peshitta (Ⲯ) has *cut off the bands of treachery* (Lamsa) / *break the burdens of deceit* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, for the second half, "Undo the bundles that oppress, let them that are broken go free, and break asunder every burden." ¶ Faussett suggests: "*Undo heavy burdens*" "Hebrew, 'loose the bands of the yoke.'" Wade explains, "The true fast has for its sphere the field of social duty and consists in

abstinence from oppressing the weak and in the provision of relief for the destitute: cf. ISAIAH 32:6, Ezekiel 18:7–9, Zechariah 8:16, 17, Job 31:13, 14 ... *the bands of the yoke*] In strictness, the thongs which fastened the yoke (or *yoke bar*) to the neck (cf. Jeremiah 2:20, 27:2), but here used of any oppressive imposition... *naked*], i.e. half-clad." Ibn Ezra has: "מוֹטֵה *Yoke*. Comp. מוֹטֵה עֲלֵיכֶם 'the bands of *your yoke*' (Leviticus 26:13¹⁴ [*Rain in Due Season* —GB]). *To loose the bands*, etc. To make the slaves free." Cheyne explains: "*To untie the thongs of the yoke*] Metaphorically, of course. The elaborate and merciful legislation for the protection of Hebrew slaves (Exodus 21:2 &c., Deuteronomy 15:12 &c., Leviticus 25:39 &c.) appears to have been long a dead letter (see Jeremiah 34:8–22) ... *To set them that are crushed*] In the spirit of him who cherishes the 'crushed reed' (ISAIAH 42:3, same word)." Skinner has: "*to undo the bands* (or knots) of the *yoke*] The yoke was fixed on the neck of the ox by two wooden pins, one on either side, which were tied below with a thong (Post, *Pal. Expl. Fund St.*¹⁵, 1891, p. 112)." Alexander points out that some tied some of these verses to the release of bondsmen as required in Sabbatical years: "It is evident, however, that the terms were so selected as to be descriptive of oppression universally [i.e., not just release of bondmen]; to make which still more evident, the Prophet adds a general command or exhortation, Ye shall break every yoke." ¶ Elder Carl B. Pratt noted: "If we fast and pray with the purpose of repenting of sins and overcoming personal weaknesses, surely we are seeking to 'loose the bands of wickedness' in our lives. If the purpose of our fast is to be more effective in teaching the gospel and serving others in our Church callings, we are surely striving to 'undo the heavy burdens' of others. If we are fasting and praying for the Lord's help in our missionary efforts, aren't we desiring to 'let the oppressed go free'? If the purpose of our fast is to increase our love for our fellow man and overcome our selfishness, our pride, and having our hearts set upon the things of this world, surely we are seeking to 'break every yoke.'" ¹⁶

7 [Is it] not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the

¹⁴ And broken the bands of your yoke, **וְאַשְׁבֵּר מִטַּת עֲלֵיכֶם**.

¹⁵ *Palestine Exploration Fund* Quarterly Statement for 1891, URL accessed 11 September 2016, see beautiful drawings of agricultural implements including the yoke as part of a plow system (pp. 112–113), at <https://archive.org/details/quarterlystateme23pale>

¹⁶ Elder Carl B. Pratt, "The Blessings of a Proper Fast," October 2004 General Conference.

naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

✓ or, afflicted

[Is it] not to *deal* thy bread to the hungry. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Shouldst not thou sustain the hungry with thy bread.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Deal out thy bread to the hungry.” Instead of *deal*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *share*. LITV (also see LEB, Rotherham, MKJV) has: “*Is it* not to break your bread to the hungry.” ¶ Cheyne explains regarding ⲟⲩⲁⲓ, “To *break* thy bread] Alluding to the oval cakes which formed the Jewish bread.” Kay has: “Delitzsch notices that in the primitive Church¹⁷ fasting was always accompanied by almsgiving.” ¶ President Dieter F. Uchtdorf powerfully testified: “Whether we are rich or poor, regardless of where we live on this globe, we all need each other, for it is in sacrificing our time, talents, and resources that our spirits mature and become refined. This work of providing in the Lord’s way is not simply another item in the catalog of programs of the Church. It cannot be neglected or set aside. It is central to our doctrine; it is the essence of our religion. Brethren, it is our great and special privilege as priesthood holders to put the priesthood to work. We must not turn aside our hearts or our heads from becoming more self-reliant, caring better for the needy, and rendering compassionate service. The temporal is intertwined with the spiritual. God has given us this mortal experience and the temporal challenges that attend it as a laboratory where we can grow into the beings Heavenly Father wants us to become.”¹⁸ ¶ *And that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house?* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And bring the poor that are cast out, into the midst of thy house?” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And take into thy house the poor who have no shelter.” Instead of *poor*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *stranger*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, “And bring the needy and the harbourless¹⁹ into thy house.” ¶ Kay explains: “The cast out” are the *homeless*. Barnes, leaning on the margin ¶ gives a more encompassing definition: “Margin ¶, ‘Afflicted’ Hospitality to all, and especially to the friendless and the stranger, was one of the cardinal virtues in the Oriental code of morals.” The expression reminds us of that question put to the Savior, “And who is my neighbour?” ¶ *When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him.* The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “If thou seest one naked, clothe him.” Gill has: “... one that is thinly clothed, whose clothes are scarce anything but

rags, not sufficient to keep him warm, or preserve him from the inclemencies of the weather; put a better garment upon him, to cover him with.” ¶ *And that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And shouldst not hide thine eyes from the kindred who is thy flesh?” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And look not scornfully on dependants of thy race.” Instead of *hide not*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *refuse not* (Lamsa) / *not be negligent* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, “And despise not thy own flesh.” ¶ Presiding Bishop John H. Vandenberg noted, “He meant that in addition to taking care of the poor, that we should watch over our own kin and be responsible for our father, mother, brother, and sister when they are in need.”²⁰ Elder Dallin H. Oaks spoke extensively on the topic of caring for aging parents, permitting them to “preserve their independence as long as possible,” and of regrettable abuses. Speaking of the abuses, Elder Oaks said: “I believe this was the kind of circumstance the Lord’s spokesman, the prophet Isaiah, thundered against when he commanded, ‘Hide not thyself from thine own flesh.’”²¹

vv. 8–12. These verses refer to the promises made to those who keep the proper fast, but like so many other blessings, can be generalized to the keeping of the commandments of God. Elder Spencer W. Kimball spoke at General Conference and said, “If we can walk now by faith, if we can believe in the rich promises of God, if we can obey and patiently wait, the Lord will fulfil all his rich promises to us: ‘... Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him’ (1 Corinthians 2:9). The blessings following righteousness are enjoyed both in mortality and in eternity. Hear the words of the Savior: ‘And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold and shall inherit everlasting life’ (Matthew 19:29) ... Extravagant rewards are offered. Blessings beyond one’s understanding will come. The land will yield bounteously and peace shall abound. The unfaithful, proud, and wealthy can never enjoy the sweet savor of the rewards for fasting and dispensing to the poor: ‘Then [if you live these commandments the promises in ISAIAH 58:8–11 will be yours].’”²² After quoting ISAIAH 58, President Henry B. Eyring said: “So the Lord has given us a simple commandment with a marvelous promise. In the Church today we are offered the

¹⁷ The Church as it existed at the time of Christ and right after, before the apostasy. In other words, The Church of Jesus Christ as described in the New Testament.

¹⁸ President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Providing in the Lord’s Way.” October 2011 General Conference.

¹⁹ Those without a harbor or homeless.

²⁰ Bishop John H. Vandenberg, Presiding Bishop of the Church, A Glorious Principle, *Conference Report*, April 1963.

²¹ Elder Dallin H. Oaks, “Honour Thy Father and Thy Mother.” April 1991 General Conference.

²² Elder Spencer W. Kimball, April 1952 General Conference, p. 23.

opportunity to fast once a month and give a generous fast offering through our bishop or branch president for the benefit of the poor and the needy. Some of what you give will be used to help those around you, perhaps someone in your own family. The Lord's servants will pray and fast for the revelation to know whom to help and what help to give. That which is not needed to help people in your local Church unit will become available to bless other Church members across the world who are in need."²³ Elder Spencer W. Kimball taught: "What more could one ask? The companionship of the Lord, light and knowledge, health and vigor, constant guidance by the Lord as an eternal never-failing spring. What more could one desire?"²⁴

8 ¶ Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy rereward. ✓

✓ gather thee up

Then shall thy light break forth as the morning. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, "Then shall thy light be revealed like the early dawn." The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, "Then shall thy light break forth like the morning." ¶ Skinner explains, "By a vivid metaphor the dawn was conceived as 'splitting' the heavens and flooding the world with light. The same word occurs on the Moabite Stone (line 15) in the phrase 'from the splitting of the dawn.'" So also the NASB, "Then your light will break out like the dawn." Light represents knowledge as revealed by the Holy Ghost. This is particularly notable after a night of darkness, when the dawn comes forth. ¶ *And thine health shall spring forth speedily:* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, "And the healing of thy wound shall appear quickly." The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, "And thy remedies shall spring up speedily." Instead of *health*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *righteousness*. The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, "And thy health shall speedily arise." ¶ ASV renders it: "and thy *healing* shall spring forth speedily" (emphasis added). The word healing, or the concept of healing, is used by most translators. The healing of our sins and the healing of our bodies are closely associated with each other: "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, *they shall be forgiven him*" (James

5:14–15, emphasis added). Gill speaks of the restoration of the Gospel after the day of apostasy: "... as the herbs and grass out of the earth, by clear shining after rain; by which is meant the healthful and sound state of the church in the latter day, when all divisions shall be healed; contentions and animosities cease; sound doctrine preached; the ordinances administered according to their original institution; true discipline restored; and all the parts of worship performed, according to the rule of the divine word; and so the souls of men, under all these means, be in thriving and flourishing circumstances." Gill, then, uses אֲרִיכָה not of the *healing* of a wound, but of the healing of Israel's relationship with God. Similarly, Barnes has: "The Hebrew word used here, (אֲרִיכָה), means properly 'a long bandage' (from אָרַךְ, 'to make long'), such as is applied by surgeons to heal a wound. It is then used to denote the healing which is secured by the application of the bandage; and figuratively here means their restoration from all the calamities which had been inflicted on the nation. The word rendered 'spring forth' (from צִמָּח) properly relates to the manner in which plants *germinate*. Here the sense is, that if they would return to God, they would be delivered from the calamities which [apostasy] had brought on them, and that peace and prosperity would again visit the nation." ¶ "Thy light break forth" has reference to an inheritance in the Celestial Kingdom of God, a Urim and Thummim or "Lights and Perfections."²⁵ ¶ *And thy righteousness shall go before thee.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, "Thy great righteousness shall go before thee." The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, "And thy righteousness shall go before thee." The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, "And thy justice shall go before thy face." Gill has: "Christ [is] their righteousness, the sun of righteousness, that arises upon them with healing in his wings, and from whom they have the health before mentioned." ¶ *The glory of the LORD shall be thy rereward.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, "And thou shalt be gathered to the glory, which is in the presence of the Lord." The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, "And the glory of the Lord will surround thee." The BPE (Ⓢ) has, "The Glory of the Lord shall go next to thee." The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, "And the glory of the Lord shall gather thee up." Rereward or rear guard. As Ibn Ezra points out, "Thus, there will be protection from all sides." Birks explains: "The figure is borrowed from the history of the Exodus and the journey through the wilderness." So we have: "And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of

²³ President Henry B. Eyring, "Is Not This the Fast That I Have Chosen?" April 2015 General Conference.

²⁴ Elder Spencer W. Kimball, "'Tis Not Vain to Serve the Lord." April 1952 General Conference.

²⁵ LDS.org, LDS Bible Dictionary.

Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night” (Exodus 14:19–20). Barnes says: “Margin||, ‘Shall gather thee up.’ That is, shall bring up the rear.” As we pointed out earlier, the rear is where the very young, the old, and the infirm are found. ¶ Gill, continuing with the theme of the restoration of the Gospel, has: “The phrase denotes a glorious state of the church in the latter day, when the glory of the Lord will be risen on his church, and abide upon it, and upon all that glory there shall be a defence.”

9 Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I [am]. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;

Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I [am]. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Then thou shalt pray, and the Lord shall hear thy prayer; thou shalt supplicate before Him, and He shall grant thy supplication.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Then thou shalt cry and God will answer thee; and whilst thou art speaking he will say, Lo I am here.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has *hear* instead of *answer*. The Talmud tradition (Seder Nashim, Yevamoth 62b–63a, see also Seder Nezikin, Sanhedrin 26a) suggests this wonderful blessing is subject to righteous behavior, such as: “Concerning a man who loves his wife as himself, who honours her more than himself, who guides his sons and daughters in the right path ... Scripture says, And thou shalt know that thy tent is in peace. Concerning him who loves his neighbours, who befriends his relatives ... and lends a sela’ [i.e., coin] to a poor man in the hour of his need, Scripture says, Then shalt thou call, and the Lord will answer; thou shalt cry and He will say: ‘Here I am’” (Talmud, Soncino). ¶ Jennings says of יהוה, “For Jehovah here puts Himself as listening for the very first appeal or cry, and at once answering, ‘Here am I.’ Think of that, my fellow-believers, think of the ‘high and exalted One who inhabits eternity’ waiting on such poor creatures as we, and instantly responding to our cry with ‘Here am I.’” Or, more literally, “Here I,” or “Behold me” (Gesenius, Rotherham, YLT). Indeed, can there be anything better than to be able to commune with God in this manner and know that He will hear our prayers? ¶ President Harold B. Lee testified: “What a wonderful feeling of security can come in a crisis to one who has learned to pray and has cultivated listening ears so that he can ‘call, and the Lord shall answer’; when he can

cry and the Lord shall say, ‘Here I am.’”²⁶ When the Lord answers our prayers in this manner, we feel as if we live in His presence. President Harold B. Lee also taught: “If you analyze ... the 58th chapter of the book of Isaiah you will find unraveled why the Lord wants us to pay fast offerings, why he wants us to fast. It’s because by qualifying thus we can call and the Lord can answer. We can cry and the Lord will say, ‘Here I am.’”²⁷ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland testified: “I bear witness of the miracles, both spiritual and temporal, that come to those who live the law of the fast. I bear witness of the miracles that have come to me. Truly, as Isaiah recorded, I have cried out in the fast more than once, and truly God has responded, ‘Here I am.’ Cherish that sacred privilege at least monthly, and be as generous as circumstances permit in your fast offering and other humanitarian, educational, and missionary contributions. I promise that God will be generous to you, and those who find relief at your hand will call your name blessed forever.”²⁸ Elder James B. Martino shows a direct relationship between fasting, prayer and revelation: “Prayer and fasting will allow us to be susceptible to spiritual promptings. Communicating with Heavenly Father while purposefully abstaining from food and drink allows us to ‘loose the bands of wickedness [and] to undo the heavy burdens.’ Prayer, combined with fasting, will provide so that when we ‘call, ... the Lord shall answer; ... [and when we] cry, ... he shall say, Here I am.’”²⁹ President John Taylor powerfully testified, “It is for us to live holy, justly, purely and righteously before God, that we may have a legitimate claim upon Him. If we will do this, then I tell you, in the name of Israel’s God, that you shall call upon the Lord and He will hear and answer you; that you shall draw nigh unto Him and He will draw nigh unto you ...”³⁰ ¶ President Spencer W. Kimball promised that missionaries who were full of zeal and ready to share their testimonies of the Gospel would also be blessed with the promises made in ISAIAH 58:8–

²⁶ President Harold B. Lee, A Time of Decision, Ensign (CR), July 1972, p.29. Also see Elder Harold B. Lee, Conference Report, October 1968, Second Day-Morning Meeting, p.62.

²⁷ President Harold B. Lee in, “The Law of the Fast: A Personal Responsibility to Care for the Poor and Needy,” by Bishop Dean M. Davies, Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric. October 2014 General Conference. Also see Lee, Harold B. *The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*. Edited by Clyde J. Williams. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1996, pp. 125–130.

²⁸ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, “Are We Not All Beggars?” October 2014 General Conference.

²⁹ Elder James B. Martino, “Turn to Him and Answers Will Come,” October 2015 General Conference.

³⁰ JD 24:235a. God is on the Side of Israel. Discourses by President John Taylor on a Recent Trip to Bear Lake, delivered in the Various Settlements Around Bear Lake.

9.³¹ ¶ *If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “If thou put away from the midst of thee perverted judgment.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “If thou remove from thee the bond.” Instead of *yoke*, the Peshitta (Ⲥ) has *deceit*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “If thou wilt take away the chain out of the midst of thee.” Ibn Ezra suggests: “*From thy midst*] From thy heart, or from the midst of Israel.” ¶ This probably is related to any sort of abuse of power extended towards our families, employees, and so on. Jenour speaks this and the next cause of oppression. Gill suggests that the yoke of false religion is meant. See also above, in ISAIAH 58:6. ¶ *The putting forth of the finger.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The pointing of the finger.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And the vote .” The Peshitta (Ⲥ) has *and release the prisoners* (BPE) / *release the oppressed* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “And cease to stretch out the finger.” Birks has: “*The putting forth of the finger*] A gesture of contempt ... A mocking, cynical spirit is one of the special dangers of the last times.” ¶ Ibn Ezra suggests: “*The putting forth of thy finger*] that is, the stretching out of the hand to smite the neighbour or to take away his property.” More likely, as Rawlinson points out: “The pointing of the finger at anyone in scorn.” ¶ *And speaking vanity.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And the speaking of violent words.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And decree which occasion murmuring.” Instead of *vanity*, the Peshitta (Ⲥ) has *falsehood*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “And to speak that which profiteth not.” ¶ Any talk or speech that is not uplifting can fall into the category of speaking vanity. Gesenius defines 𐤓𐤓𐤕 as *emptiness* or *vanity*. This is a word also associated with the vanity of idols (see Gesenius, HAL).

10 And [if] thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness [be] as the noonday:

And [if] thou draw out thy soul to the hungry. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And if thou breathest (the sense is, ‘if thou givest to the hungry what would sustain thy own life’) out thy soul before the hungry.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And from thy soul give bread to the hungry.” Instead of *draw out thy soul*, the Peshitta (Ⲥ) has *give your bread* (Lamsa) / *share your bread* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “When thou shalt pour out thy soul to the hungry.” ¶ Horsley suggests: “*And if thou draw out thy soul*] Rather, “And if thou impart of thine own substance, or sustenance.” Lowth, pointing to some

of the other ancient manuscripts has: “But instead of 𐤏𐤓𐤕, thy soul, eight MSS (three ancient) read 𐤏𐤕𐤍, thy bread; and so the Syriac renders it. The LXX express both words, τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τῆς ψυχῆς σου, *thy bread from thy soul*.” ¶ Rawlinson suggests: “If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry; *i.e.* not merely giving him bread, but giving him sympathy and compassion with it.” Rawlinson’s comments make us think of Peter and John, as they made eye contact with the disabled beggar, as it is so easy not to make eye contact with those in need: “And Peter, *fastening his eyes upon him* with John, said, Look on us” (Acts 3:4, but see 3:1 ff., emphasis added). *Draw out thy soul* seems to mean, then, to be moved with compassion. ¶ *And satisfy the afflicted soul.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And satisfiest the afflicted soul.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And satisfy an afflicted soul.” ¶ In James we read: “If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone” (James 2:15–17). There are many afflictions that we may be called to help assuage: physical, emotional and spiritual. If we are not doing any of these things, indeed our faith is dead. But what a glorious promise is made to those who are concerned with satisfying the afflicted souls, as follows. ¶ *Then shall thy light rise in obscurity.* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Then shall thy light spring up in darkness.” Instead of *rise*, the Peshitta (Ⲥ) has *shine*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has *darkness* instead of *obscurity*. ¶ Shalom Paul has in part, “Then the darkness shall be pierced by luminescence.” This is one of the great gifts that a disciple of Christ may obtain: “That which is of God is light; and he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day” (D&C 50:24). ¶ *And thy darkness [be] as the noonday:* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And thy darkness shall be as the noon day.” This means that even the darkest moment for the disciple, will be as noonday. The disciple of Christ is to chase darkness away with light and truth, “And again, verily I say unto you, and I say it that you may know the truth, that you may chase darkness from among you” (D&C 50:25). Elder Jeffrey R. Holland explained: “Through His grace God has dealt bread to the hungry and clothing to the poor. At various times in our lives that will include all of us, either temporally or spiritually speaking. For every one of us the gospel has broken forth as the light of the morning, driving back the darkness of ignorance and sorrow, fear and despair.”³²

³¹ Kimball, Spencer W. *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*. Edited by Edward L. Kimball. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1982, pp. 569–570, 574–579.

³² Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, “Like a Watered Garden.” October 2001 General Conference.

11 And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, ✓ and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail ✓ not.

✓ droughts

✓ ✓ lie, or, deceive

And the LORD shall guide thee continually. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “And the Lord will give thee rest continually.” The LXX (G) reads, “And thy God will be with thee continually.” ¶ In the arguments against seating Senator Reed Smoot, and early Apostle in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we have the words of Robert W. Taylor, “Several hundred thousand sincere men and women have believed and now believe as they believe in their own existence, that Joseph Smith Jr. received revelation direct from God. And if anyone ever believed that, we must assume that Senator Smoot believes it. Now a senator for the United States might believe anything else in the world but that and not be ineligible to a seat in the body to which he belongs. He might believe in polygamy, he might believe that murder was commendable. He might deny the propriety as a rule of life of all the Ten Commandments. He might believe in the sacrifice of human life, he might believe in no God, or in a thousand gods. He might be Jew or Gentile, Mohammedan or Buddhist. Atheist or Pantheist. He might believe that the world began last year, and would end next year. But to believe with a kind of conviction that Reed Smoot possesses that God speaks to him or may speak to him is to admit by the inevitable logic of his conviction that there is a superior authority with whom here and now he may converse, and whose command he can no more refuse to obey, than he can will himself not to think.”³³ Similarly, the Prophet Joseph Smith was surprised by a Methodist preacher’s response to the First Vision: “I took occasion to give him an account of the vision which I had had. I was greatly surprised at his behavior; he treated my communication not only lightly, but with great contempt, saying it was all of the devil, that there were no such things as visions or revelations in these days; that all such things had ceased with the apostles, and that there would never be any more of them” (Joseph Smith—History 1:21b). ¶ The matter I most value, above all other things, is the knowledge that we have a

living God who not only *hears our prayers* but also *answers them*; who moreover guides us continually if we only permit Him to do so. Indeed, we have a living God and a living Prophet who guide the Church. And that is not all; it is as if each member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has a Urim and Thummim in the way of the Holy Ghost. So it is that Amulek, in the Book of Mormon, ties the importance of this *continual seeking for guidance* from our Heavenly Father with *satisfying the afflicted soul*: “Yea, humble yourselves, and continue in prayer unto him. Cry unto him when ye are in your fields, yea, over all your flocks. Cry unto him in your houses, yea, over all your household, both morning, mid-day, and evening. Yea, cry unto him against the power of your enemies. Yea, cry unto him against the devil, who is an enemy to all righteousness. Cry unto him over the crops of your fields, that ye may prosper in them. Cry over the flocks of your fields, that they may increase. But this is not all; ye must pour out your souls in your closets, and your secret places, and in your wilderness. Yea, and when you do not cry unto the Lord, let your hearts be full, drawn out in prayer unto him continually for your welfare, and also for the welfare of those who are around you. And now behold, my beloved brethren, I say unto you, do not suppose that this is all; for after ye have done all these things, if ye turn away the needy, and the naked, and visit not the sick and afflicted, and impart of your substance, if ye have, to those who stand in need—I say unto you, if ye do not any of these things, behold, your prayer is vain, and availeth you nothing, and ye are as hypocrites who do deny the faith” (Alma 34:19–28). ¶ Elder Dallin H. Oaks taught, “As we keep the Lord’s commandments, we see his light ever brighter on our path and we realize the fulfillment of Isaiah’s promise, ‘And the Lord shall guide thee continually.’”³⁴ ¶ *And satisfy thy soul in drought.* The Targum (T) has, “And satisfy thy soul in the years of drought.” The LXX (G) reads, “And thou shalt be satisfied as thy soul desireth.” Instead of *in drought*, the Peshitta (S) has *with rich foods* (Lamsa) / *delicacies* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “And will fill thy soul with brightness.” ¶ Faussett, leaning on Maurer, has: “Literally, ‘drought,’ that is, parched places.” Even when there is drought all around you, the Lord will bless you. ¶ *And make fat thy bones:* The Targum (T) has, “And He shall quicken thy body with eternal life.” The LXX (G) reads, “And thy bones shall be made fat.” Instead of *make fat*, the Peshitta (S) has *strengthen*. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “And deliver thy bones.” ¶ Cowles explains it: “*Make fat thy bones* [is strictly to renew their vigor, to reanimate thy physical frame with new vitality.” The idea is precisely the same as that of

³³ Joseph Smith Papers, Episode 23, The Revelations of Joseph Smith. KJZZ-TV, with Glenn Rawson, in conjunction with the historical department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

³⁴ Elder Dallin H. Oaks, “The Light and Life of the World.” October 1987 General Conference.

marrow in the bones, such as we find in the *Word of Wisdom* and elsewhere: “And all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones” (D&C 89:18, see also Job 21:24; Psalm 63:5; Proverbs 3:8; and ISAIAH 25:6).

¶ *And thou shalt be like a watered garden.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And thy soul shall be full with delicacies like a watered garden, well irrigated.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And be like a watered garden.” ¶ Water is often associated with blessings (see *Rain in Due Season*). Faussett has: “An Oriental picture of happiness.” Rawlinson points us to Jeremiah 31:12. ¶ Margalioth considers the *thesis and antithesis* of this verse, using the words *to be like* or *to be as* כִּי־הוּא (although the form of the verb *to be* varies) / and *as* or and *like* כִּי־כִּי /

that or *which* or *whose* אֲשֶׁר, thus we have in ISAIAH 1:30, “For ye SHALL BE LIKE an oak whose leaf fadeth, AND LIKE a garden WHICH hath no water,” and contrasts this to this verse in the second half of Isaiah. Whereas in ISAIAH 1:30 the comparison is towards misery, its companion scripture in ISAIAH 58 turns it into a thing of good: “And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou SHALT BE LIKE a watered garden, AND LIKE a spring of water, WHICH waters fail not” (ISAIAH 58:11). Similar Hebrew words have here been rendered by the same English word. ¶ A watered garden seems to have an ever available supply of water. To me, this is the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost, which is further described in the next clause: ¶ *And like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.* The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And like a spring whose water never failed.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲧ) has *fountain* instead of *spring*. The Spirit of the Holy Ghost is to the soul what water is to the land. Similarly, we read: “... then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven. The Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion, and thy scepter an unchanging scepter of righteousness and truth; and thy dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, and without compulsory means it shall flow unto thee forever and ever” (D&C 121:45b–46).

12 And [they that shall be] of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

And [they that shall be] of thee shall build the old waste places: The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Thy offspring (literally, ‘they that shall be of thee’) shall build the old waste places.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And thine old waste places shall be rebuilt.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲧ) has, “And the places that have been desolate for ages shall be built in thee.” ¶ Faussett suggests: “*old waste places*] —the old ruins of Jerusalem (ISAIAH 61:4; Ezekiel 36:33–36).” Rawlinson has: “Thy descendants shall restore all that has fallen into decay in Israel, whether it be cities or customs. They shall restore ‘breaches’ of every kind, and bring back the old paths for thee to walk in. The restoration of the ruined cities of Judah may be glanced at, but is far from exhausting the writer’s meaning (comp. ISAIAH 61:4).” Horsley has: “I am mistaken if in this verse it is not intimated that the Church of the Gentiles perfectly reformed shall be the instrument of the final conversion of the Jews.” Not the Church of the Gentiles, but the Restored Church, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which will be instrumental in repairing the breach between Israel and the Lord, specifically, repairing the breach of the Abrahamic covenant through the testimony of the Book of Mormon. ¶ *Thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations.* The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And thy foundations shall last for generations of generations.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲧ) has, “Thou shalt raise up the foundations of generation and generation.” ¶ Faussett suggests: “*foundations of many generations*] —that is, the buildings which had lain in ruins, even to their *foundations, for many ages*; called in the parallel passage (ISAIAH 61:4), ‘the former desolations’; and in the preceding clause here, ‘the old waste places.’ The literal and spiritual restoration of Israel is meant ...” ¶ *And thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And they shall call thee, The restorer of the right way; The converter of the wicked to the law.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And thou shalt be called the repairer of breaches, and shalt enjoy rest in the midst of thy paths.” Instead of *breach* (פֶּצַע), the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has the plural, *breaches*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲧ) has, “And thou shalt be called the repairer of the fences, turning the paths into rest.” ¶ Faussett explains: “*breach*] —the calamity wherewith God visited Israel for their sin (ISAIAH 30:26; 1 Chronicles 15:13; Hosea 1:9–10). *The paths to dwell in* represent the straight and narrow way of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Skinner points us to Job 24:13, where we read: “They are of those that rebel against the light; they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof.” This verse is a perfect description of apostasy and the turning away from the light to walk in darkness. Elder Orson Pratt taught: “In the apostles’ days, when the art of printing was unknown, and the great majority of mankind could not read the word, the

principal means of obtaining faith was by the process of preaching and hearing, but in these days, in many instances, faith comes, by reading as well as by preaching: for a man called and inspired of God can both preach and write by the power of the Holy Ghost; and when the honest humble soul either hears or reads that which is given by the Spirit, the light that is in him witnesseth that it is of God; for light cleaves to light, and truth to truth; the Spirit gives light to every man that comes into the world, and if he loves the light that is in himself, he will love all other light that is presented to his mind, and embrace it. Light cannot be presented to the mind of a candid, honest person, without being perceived to be light; but if he receive it not, he extinguishes in a degree the light that is in him, and darkness still greater ensues, and he is left to commit evils of a greater magnitude, until the light that was in him has entirely fled, and darkness reigns triumphantly: this darkness brings misery and wretchedness in this world and eternal torment in the world to come. This is the state of man who rejects light and truth, and will not exercise faith in that which the light that is in him teaches him is true”³⁵ So, *The restorer of paths to dwell in*, then, by contrast, are those who bring the light back into the lives of people: they share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with those in mortality and do temple work for their departed ancestors. All of these clauses build one on the other to repeat the same sentiment. One of the great blessings of sincere fasting and prayer will be the gift of speaking the Gospel truth so others can know of its veracity.

vv. 13–14. Isaiah teaches how we can fully embrace the Sabbath way. Elder H. Aldridge Gillespie taught: “Today is the Sabbath. It does not end when we leave this session; it does not end if someone calls on the phone or knocks at our door inviting us to come out and play, go for a ride, to a ball game, or shopping; it does not end because we are on vacation or someone is visiting us, whether member or nonmember. The Lord commanded: ‘Go ye out from among the wicked. Save yourselves. Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord.’ A critical element in observing this commandment is to ‘remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.’ The Sabbath lasts all day! In a revelation ‘especially applicable to the saints in Zion,’ the Lord states that the Sabbath was given that we might keep ourselves ‘unspotted from the world.’ It is a day to partake of the sacrament, a day ‘to pay [our] devotions unto the Most High, a day of ‘fasting and prayer,’ a day to offer our time, talent, and means in service to our God and our fellowmen, D&C 59:12 reads, ‘Thou shalt offer up thine oblations,’ meaning to offer one’s time,

talents, or means, a day to ‘[confess our] sins [to our] brethren, and before the Lord.’ It is also a good day to pay our tithes and fast offerings, a day to be marked by sincere sacrifice of the pursuits and pleasures of the world. It is a day to keep the Sabbath covenant, a day of ‘rejoicing and prayer,’ a day of ‘cheerful hearts and countenances.’ Isaiah promised, [quotes ISAIAH 58:13–14]. Obviously, our attention is on doing the Lord’s will and not continuing to work nor indulge our carnal appetites for recreation and loafing. The prophet Spencer W. Kimball counseled: ‘The Sabbath is a holy day in which to do worthy and holy things. Abstinence from work and recreation is important but insufficient. The Sabbath calls for constructive thoughts and acts, and if one merely lounges about doing nothing on the Sabbath, he is breaking it. To observe it, one will be on his knees in prayer, preparing lessons, studying the gospel, meditating, visiting the ill and distressed, sleeping, reading wholesome material, and attending all the meetings of that day to which he is expected. [Failure] to do these proper things is a transgression on the omission side’ ([*The Miracle of Forgiveness* (1969), 96–97].”³⁶

13 ¶ If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, [from] doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking [thine own] words:

If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, [from] doing thy pleasure on my holy day. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “employment” instead of *pleasure*. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “If on account of the sabbaths thou restrain thy foot from doing thy pleasure on that holy day.” Brenton Ⓜ renders it: “If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, so as not to do thy pleasure on the holy days.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has *own will* instead of *pleasure*. ¶ Birks has: “*The holy day of the Lord*] God’s own title of the Sabbath.” Cowles well explains: “‘Turning away the foot from the Sabbath,’ is by no means turning the foot away from the house and the scenes of public worship, but turning it away from scenes of Sabbath desecration.” ¶ Elder Francisco J. Viñas said: “The key words are ‘turn away ... from doing thy pleasure,’ or in other words, doing God’s will. Oftentimes, our will—shaped by the desires, appetites, and passions of the natural man—conflicts with the will of God. The prophet Brigham Young

³⁵ Elder Orson Pratt, *The Seer*, pp. 210–211.

³⁶ Elder H. Aldridge Gillespie, “The Blessing of Keeping the Sabbath Day Holy.” October 2000 General Conference.

taught that ‘when the will, passions, and feelings of a person are perfectly submissive to God and his requirements, that person is sanctified. —It is, for my will to be swallowed up in the will of God, that will lead me into all good, and crown me ultimately with immortality and eternal lives’ (*Deseret News*, 7 September 1854, 1).³⁷ If we are not doing our pleasure, we are doing the Lord’s pleasure. ¶ *And call the sabbath a delight*. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And dost meet the Sabbath with great delight.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And call the sabbaths delightful.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “And call the sabbath delightful.” ¶ Faussett writes: “This is the very way in which the Sabbath is mostly broken; it is made a day of carnal pleasure instead of spiritual ‘delight.’” Kay points us to an example of the opposite: “Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit?” (Amos 8:4–5). ¶ Elder Russell M. Nelson gave a powerful Conference address on the Sabbath: “I am intrigued by the words of Isaiah, who called the Sabbath ‘a delight’ ... In Hebrew, the word Sabbath means ‘rest.’ The purpose of the Sabbath dates back to the Creation of the world, when after six days of labor the Lord rested from the work of creation ... the Sabbath was given as a perpetual covenant, a constant reminder that the Lord may sanctify His people ... In addition, we now partake of the sacrament on the Sabbath day in remembrance of the Atonement of Jesus Christ ... I learned from the scriptures that my conduct and my attitude on the Sabbath constituted a sign between me and my Heavenly Father (Exodus 31:13³⁸; Ezekiel 20:12,³⁹ 20⁴⁰) ... What sign will you give to the Lord to show your love for Him? When Isaiah described the Sabbath as ‘a delight,’ he also taught us how to make it delightful. He said: ‘If thou turn away ... from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, ... and shalt honour [the Lord], not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking

thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord.’ Not pursuing your ‘own pleasure’ on the Sabbath requires self-discipline ... Think of this: In paying tithing, we return one-tenth of our increase to the Lord. In keeping the Sabbath holy, we reserve one day in seven as His. So it is our privilege to consecrate both money and time to Him who lends us life each day. Faith in God engenders a love for the Sabbath; faith in the Sabbath engenders a love for God. A sacred Sabbath truly is a delight.”⁴¹ Note that in all three of the Scriptures mentioned by President Nelson, the Lord makes a promise to those who keep the Sabbath day, that: “Ye may know that I am the LORD.” And furthermore, that it is He who sanctifies us. ¶ *The holy of the LORD, honourable*. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “To sanctify the Lord.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Dedicated to God (Brenton, ‘holy to God’).” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “And the holy of the Lord glorious.” ¶ *And shalt honour him*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “And glorify him.” ¶ Then Elder Russell M. Nelson made these profound comments (emphasis added): “No matter where we live or in what position we serve, all of us need to determine which way we face. *God’s commandments serve as a standard against which priorities can be measured*. Our respect for the first commandment fashions our feelings for all the others. Consider the commandment to keep the Sabbath day holy, for example. We live in a time when many people throughout the world have transferred their allegiance on the Sabbath from places of worship to places of amusement. Again I ask, ‘Which way do you face?’”⁴² ¶ *Not doing thine own ways*. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And wilt not lift up thy foot for any work.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “While thou dost not thy own ways.” If we are not doing our own ways, we are doing the ways of the Lord; if we are not finding our own pleasure, we are finding the pleasure of the Lord; if we are not speaking our own words, it is the words of the Lord that we are speaking. We are then in the Lord’s errand, walking in His ways, doing what pleases Him and speaking only those words with which we are moved by the Spirit of the Holy Ghost. ¶ *Nor finding thine own pleasure*. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Nor making thy wants ample.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “And thy own will is not found.” ¶ We will want to make God’s work our pleasure and our business. ¶ *Nor speaking [thine own] words*: The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Nor speaking violent words.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Nor utter a word in anger from thy mouth.” Instead of the ellipsis, *thine own*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *idle words* (Lamsa) / *speaking just to speak* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “To speak a

³⁷ Elder Francisco J. Viñas, “The Pleasing Word of God.” October 2015 General Conference.

³⁸ “Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you” (Exodus 31:13).

³⁹ “Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them” (Ezekiel 20:12).

⁴⁰ “Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them” (Ezekiel 20:12).

“And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the LORD your God” (Ezekiel 20:20).

⁴¹ Elder Russell M. Nelson, “The Sabbath Is a Delight.” April 2015 General Conference.

⁴² Elder Russell M. Nelson, “Thou Shalt Have No Other Gods.” April 1996.

word.” If we do not speak our own words—and we reject speaking the words of Satan—whose words do we then speak? The words of Christ, which in turn are the words of the Father! We surely can speak the words of Christ as we are filled by His spirit. ¶ Elder Gene R. Cook, formerly of the First Quorum of the Seventy, explained: “Since the scriptures come from the mind of Christ, they help us to have the Spirit, which brings us to a oneness of mind and heart with the Lord. Therefore, as you read and study and assimilate the words of the Lord through the scriptures, you are in the process of absorbing the mind of Christ. You begin to think as he thinks. You begin to feel as he feels. *You begin to speak as he speaks.* How can we know how well we are doing in our scripture reading? We can know we are doing well when we hear his voice (both in the scriptures directly and through revelation), when our hearts burn within us at hearing his word, when we receive the words of Christ into our bosoms, and when we receive them into our minds (and thus we learn how to feel as he feels and think as he thinks.)”⁴³

14 Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken [it].

Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD. The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “And trust continually in the Lord.” Instead of *delight*, the Peshitta (ܣ) has *trust*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “Then shalt thou be delighted in the Lord.” ¶ Elder D. Todd Christofferson taught: “[The Sabbath] is a day to ‘delight thyself in the Lord,’ to experience the spiritual healing that comes with the sacrament, and to receive the renewed promise of His Spirit to be with us.”⁴⁴ To delight oneself in the Lord is to receive a testimony so strong that He lives, and to feel of His presence in our lives. It is to commune with Him; to be able to count on the Lord and know that He is there when we need to converse with Him. ¶ *And I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth.* The Targum (Ⲛ) has, “And He shall cause thee to dwell in the strong places of the earth.” The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “He will then mount thee on the good places of the land.” ¶ Cowles suggests: “‘Riding upon the high places of the earth,’ is first used by Moses (Deuteronomy 32:13).” There, the Lord is reminding Israel of her blessings, and we see allusions to both expressions, “high places” as

well as “heritage of Jacob” found here in Isaiah: “*For the LORD’s portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.* He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the LORD alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him. *He made him ride on the high places of the earth,* that he might eat the increase of the fields; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock; Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape” (Deuteronomy 32:9–14, emphasis added, also an allusion to *Rain in Due Season*). Sadly, Israel did not retain these: “But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked &c.” (Deuteronomy 32:15a ff.). When compared with various like scriptures, it seems that the expression “upon the high places,” here means one of safety and military advantage as Alexander and several others suggest. Nevertheless, man’s high places are never high enough when pride takes over (cf. Deuteronomy 33:29; Amos 4:13; Micah 1:3). ¶ Ibn Ezra suggests: “*The high places of the earth*] The holy land.” Faussett speaks of the restoration to the land of Israel: “*ride upon ... high places*] I will make thee *supreme lord* of the land; the phrase is taken from a conqueror riding in his chariot, and occupying the hills and fastnesses of a country [Vitranga], (Deuteronomy 32:13; Micah 1:3; Habakkuk 3:19). Judea was a land of hills; the idea thus is, ‘I will restore thee to thine own land’ [Calvin]. The parallel words, ‘heritage of Jacob,’ confirm this (Genesis 27:28, 29; 28:13–15).” ¶ These words include a spiritual closeness to God; earthly blessings untold, and eternal life. ¶ *And feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father:* The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “And feed thee on the inheritance of thy father Jacob.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “And I will lift thee up above the high places of the earth, and will feed thee with the inheritance of Jacob thy father.” ¶ Rawlinson has in part, “The world itself was the ‘heritage of Jacob,’ since in him and his seed ‘all the families of the earth were to be blessed’ (Genesis 28:14).” These are the blessings we receive through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We read: “Among the promises made to Abraham were the following: his posterity would be numerous (see Genesis 17:5–6; Abraham 2:9; 3:14); his seed, or descendants, would receive the gospel and bear the priesthood (see Abraham 2:9); through the ministry of his seed, ‘all the families of the earth [would] be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of

⁴³ Gene R. Cook, *Searching the Scriptures: Bringing Power to Your Personal and Family Study*, pp.122–123 (emphasis added).

⁴⁴ Elder D. Todd Christofferson, “Why the Church.” October 2015 General Conference.

salvation, even of life eternal’ (Abraham 2:11).”⁴⁵ ¶ *For the mouth of the LORD hath spoken [it]*. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “For thus it is decreed by the Word of the Lord.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken these words.” ¶ Elder Dallin H. Oaks taught, “A Sabbath law that codifies certain acts as forbidden is pharisaical. Here, as much as in any area of gospel observance, ‘the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life’ (2 Corinthians 3:6). In terms of the appropriateness of various Sabbath activities, our actions are sometimes less important than our motives. An action that is wrong with one motive may be right with another. It is the motive that determines whether a Sabbath excursion is a joyride or an errand of compassion. We look to the purpose of the Sabbath to identify the motives by which our Sabbath activities should be regulated. The Sabbath was blessed and sanctified as a holy day, a day of rest (Genesis 2:3; Moses 3:3; Exodus 20:9–11). But this sanctification and

commandment of rest was for a purpose—not that man should refrain from work in order to pursue his own pleasure, but that man should serve God and worship him. The prophet Isaiah taught that principle clearly: ‘If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it’ (ISAIAH 58:13–14).”⁴⁶

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⁴⁵ Abrahamic Covenant, LDS.org, URL accessed 11 September 2016, <https://www.lds.org/topics/abrahamic-covenant?lang=eng>

⁴⁶ Oaks, Dallin H. *Pure in Heart*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1988, pp. 26–29.

Isaiah 59

The final words of the prophecy, that a covenant would be established forever and that the Spirit of the Lord would not depart from the mouth of the prophets “henceforth and forever” shows us that at least part of this prophecy is focused on the time of the restoration. Angel Moroni quoted ISAIAH 59:20 and gives us a context posterior to the return of the lost tribes from the north, in the latter days. There also seem to be other portions of the prophecy that point to the latter-days, speak of false doctrines abounding, and of the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum as well as the persecution of the early Saints. Comments made by the Savior in 3 Nephi 16 also seem to be related to this prophecy and speak of the gospel going forth to the nations, and then to Israel as the times of the Gentiles comes to an end. Jenour notes: “... although there is a consolatory promise at the conclusion of the chapter, the general tenor of the prophecy is denunciatory.”

vv. 1–8. Horsley suggests: “... the Prophet [Isaiah] argues that God’s apparent disregard of the complaints of his people, under the sufferings they were to endure, proceeded not from any want of power in Him to give them redress, nor from any mutability in his purposes, but from the enormity of their own corruptions.” Jenour notes that Paul paraphrases much of ISAIAH 59:3–8: “What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes” (Romans 3:9–18). Jenour adds: “The picture [so quoted] indeed is bad; but is it not a faithful delineation of mankind at large? Are we any better?” This is always a good question to ask. “Lord, is it I?” (Matthew 26:22b). ¶ Now, let us turn to Christ’s words during His visit to the American continent as He began by blessing the Gentiles: “And blessed are the Gentiles, because of their belief in me, in and of the Holy Ghost, which witnesses unto them of me and of the Father” (3 Nephi 16:6). The Savior then contrasts between the belief of the Gentiles and the unbelief of Israel: “Behold, because of their belief in me, saith the Father, and because of the unbelief of you, O house of Israel, in the latter day shall the truth come unto the Gentiles, that the fulness of these things shall be made known unto them” (3 Nephi 16:7). The Lord, next, speaks to warn the unbelieving of the Gentiles: “But wo, saith the Father, unto the unbelieving of the Gentiles—for notwithstanding they have come forth upon the face of this land, and have

scattered my people who are of the house of Israel; and my people who are of the house of Israel have been cast out from among them, and have been trodden under feet by them; And because of the mercies of the Father unto the Gentiles, and also the judgments of the Father upon my people who are of the house of Israel, verily, verily, I say unto you, that after all this, and I have caused my people who are of the house of Israel to be smitten, and to be afflicted, and to be slain, and to be cast out from among them, and to become hated by them, and to become a hiss and a byword among them—“ (3 Nephi 16:8–9). The next verse in the Book of Mormon coincides closely with that of ISAIAH 59:3–15), “And thus commandeth the Father that I should say unto you: At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel, and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, and shall be *lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations*, and above all the people of the whole earth, and shall be filled with all manner of lyings, and of deceits, and of mischiefs, and all manner of hypocrisy, and murders, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, and of secret abominations; and if they shall do all those things, and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them” (3 Nephi 16:10, emphasis added). This theme, of the fulfillment of the *day of the Gentile*, is a strong one in the Book of Mormon. We also encounter it in the Bible as well as in the Joseph Smith History, when the Angel Moroni appeared to young Joseph: “And he further stated that the fulness of the Gentiles was soon to come in” (JS–History 1:41b). We must also quote the very last verse in this chapter in the Book of Mormon, as it fits very well with ISAIAH 59:1, “The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God” (3 Nephi 16:20).

1 ¶ BEHOLD, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:

BEHOLD, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Behold, it is not on account of *any* deficiency in the power of the Lord that ye are not saved.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “It is not that the hand of the Lord is unable to save.” ¶ Cowles has: “As usual the hand is the symbol of power. Its being ‘shortened’ supposes it unable to reach his remote creatures for their relief.” Alexander has: “The Prophet merely pauses, as it were, for a moment, to exonerate his Master from all blame, before continuing his accusation of the people.” ¶ Elder George Q. Cannon testified: “His eye does not grow dim by the lapse of ages; his ear does not become heavy by the passage of time, neither does his arm become short or feeble. He is the God whom we worship. When we call upon him, though he may be remote from us, dwelling in his holy habitation in the midst of the eternities, the very thoughts of our hearts, the very conceptions of our minds, the feeble whisperings of our voices, they ascend to him, are carried to him, his ear comprehends them; his bowels of compassion are moved towards us his children, his all-piercing eye penetrates eternity, and the glance of his vision reaches us.”¹ ¶ *Neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Nor because it is too difficult for Him to hear, that your prayer is not received.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Nor that his ear is grown dull to hear.” Instead of *heavy*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *dull* (Lamsa) / *hardened* (BPE). ¶ Orelli explains: “כָּבֵד, of the senses: *to be heavy*, sluggish, dull.” That is, in terms of His ability to hear. Shalom Paul suggests: “This expression comes from the medical jargon, as one learns from the Akkadian cognates *uznā kabta* (The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, or CAD K:15), and the variant *nešmū kabit* (‘heavy or hard of hearing’).” ¶ President Orson Hyde noted: “The fact is, your very life must be suspended on a thread, as it were [if you wish to see your Savior] where no mortal arm can rescue, no earthly power save! When all other things fail, when everything else proves futile and fruitless, then perhaps your Savior and your Redeemer may appear; his arm is not shortened that he cannot save, nor his ear heavy that he cannot hear; and when help on all sides appears to fail, my arm shall save, my power shall

rescue, and you shall hear my voice, saith the Lord.”² Elder Mark E. Petersen taught, “We are told that the heavens are sealed as brass over our heads and that there can be no more revelation ... At no time has He sealed the heavens—but, rather, the iniquities of the people have done so. It was the case even in Isaiah’s time, for he gave this explanation: ‘Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you.’ When men supplanted revelation with their own wisdom, when they allowed worldly power to eliminate spiritual direction, of course God ceased speaking to them. Of course the heavens closed. But humans were the cause of it. Has He not always promised to answer prayer? Has He not always spoken through prophets when the people listen? And has He not always said that He would do nothing ‘but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets’?”³ ¶ God indeed hears our sincere prayers. All day long His ears are open to hear us and to converse with us, if we will but learn the difference between God hearing our prayers and giving us what we think we want. As we ask God if He has heard our prayers He will fill us with comfort. And if He has heard, can we not be filled with extraordinary joy? If our petitions are not granted, it is because there is a higher purpose in play. But that He hears our prayers, I solemnly testify.

2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid [his] face from you, that he will not hear.

✓ or, have made him hide

But your iniquities have separated between you and your God. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “But your sins make a separation between you and your God.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲫ) has *divided* rather than *separated*.

Alexander explains: “כִּי אֵם is the usual adversative after a negation, corresponding to the German *sondern*, which has no distinct equivalent in English.” Regarding the word *separated* [מִבְדִּילִים root בָּדַל] Kay notes: “In Exodus 26:33 the word is used in reference to the veil before the Ark of the Covenant, which was drawn aside only once a year, and that for a short time; on the day of Atonement.” Barnes similarly has: “The word

¹ Elder George Q. Cannon, Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 5 October 1879. “Unchangeableness of God.” JD 21:73b.

² President Orson Hyde, General Conference, Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 6 October 1853, “Overcoming.” JD 1:125.

³ Petersen, Mark E. *The Way to Peace*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1969, pp. 277–278.

used here (כָּל) conveys the idea of division, usually by a curtain or a wall (Exodus 26:33; Ezekiel 42:20). Thus the ‘firmament’ (רָקִיעַ, ‘expanse’) is said to have ‘divided’ or ‘separated’ (מִבְדִּיל) the waters from the waters (Genesis 1:6).” So, here, iniquities had separated men from God. Barnes quotes Jeremiah, “Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that *our* prayer should not pass through” (Lamentations 3:44). ¶ John Gill says of *his own Church denomination*: “Like a partition wall dividing between them, so that they enjoy no communion with him in his worship and ordinances; which is greatly the case of the reformed churches: they profess the true God, and the worship of him, and do [only] attend the outward ordinances of it; but this is done in such a cold formal way, and such sins and wickedness are perpetrated and connived at, that the Lord does not grant his gracious presence to them, but stands at a distance from them.” Also see ISAIAH 29:13, Matthew 15:8 and Joseph Smith—History 1: 19. ¶ Most were horrified at the very idea of revelation at the time of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the restoration of the Gospel. They indeed had pronounced God as incapable of speaking or hearing. ¶ *And your sins have hid [his] face from you, that he will not hear.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And your sins have caused Him to take away the favour of His Shekinah from you, not to receive your prayer.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And on account of your sins he hath turned away his face from you that he may not exercise compassion.” ¶ Rawlinson has: “Literally, *your sins have caused his face to be hidden from you.*” ¶ Elder Mark E. Peterson observed: “Lack of communication between human beings is responsible for much of the distress in the world. But when communication breaks down between God and man, even worse situations arise.”⁴ Such was the state of mankind before the light shone forth upon the boy Prophet in that 1820 spring day in the Sacred Grove.

3 For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness.

For your hands are defiled with blood. The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “For your hands are associated with innocent blood.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “For your hands are polluted with blood.” ¶ Rawlinson commented: “On the ‘innocent blood’ shed by the Jews of the later Judæan kingdom, see 2 Kings 21:6, 16; 24:4; 25:25; 2 Chronicles 24:21; 28:3; 33:6; 36:16, etc.) It consisted

in (1) sacrifices of children to Moloch; (2) persecution of prophets; and (3) judicial murders, either actual (like that of Naboth, in Israel) or virtual, i.e. such perversion of justice as produced general poverty and misery, and tended to shorten men’s lives.” Cheyne leaning on Weir has: “*Your hands*] ‘The very hands ye stretch out in prayer, ISAIAH 1:15’ (Dr. Weir).” ¶ President Gordon B. Hinckley explained: “The burden of their message [i.e., of the prophets] was a denunciation of wickedness. And the peril of those times was not peculiar to the Old World. The Book of Mormon documents that in the Western Hemisphere the armies of the Jaredites fought to the death. The Nephites and the Lamanites also fought until thousands had died and Moroni was forced to wander alone for the safety of his own life. His great and final plea, directed toward those of our day, was a call to righteousness.”⁵ Jenour has: “*Your hands are defiled with blood &c.*] Murder, one evil act of the hands, is put for evil actions generally, because it is the worst that can be done. And so with the rest. The reader will observe that most of the members of the body are referred to [in these verses].” ¶ Whatever other applications that these verses may have, I also believe they apply to those mobs who persecuted the Saints and spilled their innocent blood. ¶ *And your fingers with iniquity.* The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And your fingers with sins.” Cowles notes: “... the prophet represents every physical organ of their body—hands, fingers, lips and tongue—as actively engaged in sinning as if to show that every power of their being was pressed to its utmost capacity of wrong doing.” These same organs, on the other hand, can be used to avoid evil and embrace all that is good. ¶ Gill says: “From a general charge, the prophet proceeds to a particular enumeration of sins they were guilty of; and idolatry not being mentioned, as Jerome observes, shows that the prophecy belongs to other times than Isaiah’s, when that sin greatly prevailed. He begins the account with the sin of shedding blood; the blood of innocents, as the Targum; designing either the sin of murder, now frequently committed in Christian nations; or wars between Christian princes, by means of which much blood is shed; or persecutions of Christian brethren, by casting them into prisons, which have issued in their death; and at least want of brotherly love, or, the hatred of brethren, which is called murder (1John 3:15) ...”

¶ Hands and fingers were also used to write calumny and incite the mobs against the Saints. ¶ *Your lips have spoken lies.* The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Your lips have spoken iniquity.” ¶ Luther speaks of it as the teaching of

⁵ President Gordon B. Hinckley, “The Dawning of a Brighter Day,” April 1981 General Conference.

⁴ Elder Mark E. Petersen, “Another Prophet Now Has Come!” October 1972 General Conference.

false doctrine and accusing those who have the truth of being false. Gill likewise suggests: "... or 'falsehood' (שקר 'falsitatem,' Montanus, Cocceius; 'falsum.' Junius & Tremellius, Piscator); that is, false doctrines, so called because contrary to the word of truth, and which deceive men." ¶ Once again, lips and mouths were used to speak untruths against the early Church and even today, this effort has multiplied and has not ceased. According to Oliver Cowdery, Angel Moroni shared the following with the young Prophet Joseph Smith on the instance of his first visit to the spot where the Book of Mormon had been buried: "[Moroni instructed the Prophet and taught him that after the Gospel was restored and the Church founded] Then will persecution rage more and more; for the iniquities of men shall be revealed, and those who are not built upon the rock will seek to overthrow this Church; but it will increase the more opposed, and spread farther and farther, increasing in knowledge till the saints shall be sanctified and receive an inheritance where the glory of God shall rest upon them."⁶ ¶ *Your tongue hath muttered perverseness.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "deceit" for *perverseness*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, "And your tongue uttereth iniquity." In the Talmud (T. Bab. Sabbat. fol. 139. 1) these are explained of the several sorts of men in a court of judicature; the 'hands' of the judges; the 'fingers' of, the Scribes; the 'lips' of advocates and solicitors; and the 'tongue' of adversaries, or the contending parties." ¶ Gill explains: "That which is a perversion of the Gospel of Christ, and of the souls of men; what is contrary to the sacred Scriptures, the standard of faith and practice, and that premeditated, as the word {תהנה, μελετα, LXX (Ⲯ)} signifies; done with design, and on purpose: the abounding of errors and heresies in the present day, openly taught and divulged, to the ruin of souls, seems here to be pointed at." ¶ This is the same idea of the teaching of false doctrines. ¶ The Lord sees the wickedness of those who persecuted His restored Church: "Wo unto all those that discomfort my people, and drive, and murder, and testify against them, saith the Lord of Hosts; a generation of vipers shall not escape the damnation of hell" (D&C 121:23).

4 None calleth for justice, nor [any] pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.

⁶ Brigham H. Roberts, *New Witness for God*, Volume II, p. 65. Special thanks to Monte S. Nyman, *Great are the Words of Isaiah*, pp.225–226, who quotes these words from Oliver Cowdery, *MA*, October 1835, p. 199.

None calleth for justice. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "There is none that truly prayeth." The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, "None speaketh just things." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, "There is none that calleth upon justice." ¶ Cowles has: "They do not administer law in honesty and faithfulness." Alexander notes: "Kimhi makes the verb [קרא] a simple passive, meaning to be tried or judged—'no one is fairly tried.'" Barnes says: "There is a love of litigation; a desire to take all the advantage which the law can give; a desire to appeal to the law, not for the sake of having strict justice done, but for the sake of doing injury to others, and to take some undue advantage." ¶ How many times was Joseph Smith taken to court on trumped up charges? ¶ *Nor [any] pleadeth for truth:* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "Nor any that pleadeth for faithfulness." The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, "Nor is there any just judgment." Instead of *pleadeth for truth*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *judges faithfully*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, "Neither is there any one that judgeth truly." ¶ Gill says, "For the truth of the Gospel." Oswalt suggests, "... one should not overlook Pieper's alternate interpretation. He points out the important connections with ISAIAH 58, where the people call on God, but not in righteousness (v. 2), where they seek justice from God while practicing injustice (vv. 2–4). Thus he argues that this verse is another indictment of religion that is not backed up by action." Luther says, "To judge means to teach. Judgment is the office of teaching and preaching. Then it is also a discerning of the spirit, because they are unable to distinguish between true and false." ¶ *They trust in vanity.* The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, "They trusted in vanities." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, "But they trust in a mere nothing." ¶ Horsley has: "Vanity and idle speech may denote the sophisms of irreligious philosophy" regardless of where it comes from. ¶ *And speak lies.* The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, "And they speak lies." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, "And speak vanities." ¶ The philosophies of the world over God's truths. ¶ *They conceive mischief.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "They hasten." The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, "Because they hatch mischief." Instead of *mischief*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *iniquity* (Lamsa) / *deceit* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, "They have conceived labour." ¶ Wade notes: "*they conceive mischief*, etc. The phrase recurs in Job 15:35: cf. also Psalm 7:14." Gill explains: "They 'conceive' and contrive 'mischief' in their minds against those that differ in doctrine and practice from them: 'and bring forth iniquity': do that which is criminal and sinful, by words and actions, by calumnies and reproaches, by violence and persecution." ¶ *And bring forth iniquity.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "And bring forth words of violence out of their heart." The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, "Therefore they bring forth iniquity." Instead of *iniquity*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *grief* (Lamsa) / *pain*

(BPE). The persecution against the Saints caused untold pain and suffering, murder and rapine.

5 They hatch cockatrice' eggs, and weave the spider's web: he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper. ✓ ✓

✓ or, adders':

✓ ✓ or, sprinkled is as if there brake out a viper

They hatch cockatrice' eggs. The Targum (ⲧ) has, "Behold, they hatch as it were eggs of a basilisk." The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "They hatched the eggs of asps." The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲫ) has, as in the margin ||, *adders*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, "They have broken the eggs of asps." ¶ Shalom Paul suggests: "*They hatch adder's eggs*] a metaphor for conceiving evil plans." Cowles has: "One figure grows out of another. Having begun with the figure of 'conceiving mischief' and 'bringing forth iniquity,' he next thinks of their eggs as hatching out into adders—the most venomous of reptiles; or as death to the eater; or if crushed under foot, lo, a viper springs to life. Next, their plots are like the spider's woven web, which however in the outcomes of his figure, is not so much a snare to catch insects as a garment under which to conceal their malicious purposes, which yet is an abortive⁷ endeavor." Jenour suggests: "*The eggs of the basilisk*, mean the thoughts, principles, and doctrines, of the persons spoken of, because these, like eggs, are the *embryos* of actions; for by *brooding*, as it were, upon a certain sort or train of thoughts, actions are at length produced." Keith explains: "The expression 'they hatch cockatrice' eggs,' implies that their purposes against each other were mischievous and dangerous as serpents are; and that they nurtured these carefully until put in execution, as the serpent sits upon its eggs." McFadyen has: "The **basilisks' eggs**, symbolic of the schemes hatched by the wicked, are fatal alike to those who *eat* them (cherish them), and to those who attempt to *crush* them. As this figure brings out the *deadly* nature of those schemes, the other figure of the **spider's web**, which is amplified in ISAIAH 59:6, brings out their *futility*." Wordsworth interestingly says of the cockatrice and the spider, respectively: "The one, the offspring of malice; the other, of human pride and intellectual presumption." Kay notes: "John Baptist, when preaching repentance, applied the term 'brood of vipers,' to the [hypocrites] (Matthew 3:7)." Luther suggests, "When they have brooded for a long time, they hatch for themselves disciples like them, full of malice and the most

poisonous vileness. The more showy they are in their hypocrisy, the viler and worse they are." Gill has: "Invent false doctrines according to their own fancies, which may seem fair and plausible, but are poisonous and pernicious." This is a description of full apostasy, where truly the darkness was not able to comprehend the light (John 1:5). ¶ *And weave the spider's web:* The Targum (ⲧ) has, "They are like the threads which the spiders weave." The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "And are weaving a spider's web." Birks explains: "The basilisk, a venomous serpent, and the spider, a venomous insect, are a double emblem for these plans of iniquity, hatched or woven with pains and care, only to ensnare and destroy." ¶ *He that eateth of their eggs dieth.* The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "And he who was about to eat some of their eggs." ¶ Jenour has: "Now the *eggs of the basilisk*, it is clear, were considered as poisonous, causing *death* to those who eat them. So then would their principles and doctrines lead to the eternal ruin of those who imbibed them." Gill explains: "As a man that eats of cockatrice eggs dies immediately, being rank poison; so he that approves of false doctrines, receives them, and feeds upon them, dies spiritually." ¶ *And that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, "And when they are hatched, they bring forth the flying serpents." The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "Upon breaking one that was hatched found therein a viper." The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲫ) has, "And those which hatch out will be found to be vipers." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, "And that which is brought out, shall be hatched into a basilisk." ¶ All of these actions were intended to do harm to the Saints.

6 Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works: their works [are] works of iniquity, and the act of violence [is] in their hands.

Their webs shall not become garments. The Targum (ⲧ) has, "Behold, like a spider's web." The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "Their web will not serve for a mantle." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, "Their webs shall not be for clothing." ¶ Birks well explains: "The spider's web is now made to yield a further lesson. These subtle schemes, whereby they ensnare and destroy others, shall be worthless to themselves, as the spider's web is too flimsy to form a garment." Wordsworth similarly has: "Their webs shall not become garments] The ingenious schemes and subtle theories, which they spin, will be as vain as spiders' webs (see Job 8:14)." ¶ *Neither shall they cover themselves with their works:* The Targum (ⲧ) has, "With which no one can be covered." The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "Nor can they clothe themselves with their works." ¶ Fausset suggests: "The artificial self-

⁷ Fruitless or unsuccessful (Webster). In other words, they cannot conceal their wickedness.

deceiving sophisms of human philosophy (1 Timothy 6:5; 2 Timothy 2:16, 23).” Barnes has: “The spider’s web is unfit for clothing; and the idea here is, that their works are as unfit to secure salvation as the attenuated web of a spider is for raiment. The sense is, says Vitringa, that their artificial sophisms avail nothing in producing true wisdom, piety, virtue, and religion, or the true righteousness and salvation of people, but are airy speculations. The works of the self-righteous and the wicked; their vain formality, their false opinions, their subtle reasonings, and their traditions, are like the web of the spider. They bide nothing, they answer none of the purposes of a garment of salvation.” ¶ *Their works [are] works of iniquity, and the act of violence [is] in their hands.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Their works are the works of violence, and the work of a lie is in their hands.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “For their works are works of iniquity.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “Their works are unprofitable works, and the work of iniquity is in their hands.” ¶ Henderson, of ISAIAH 59:5–6 explains: “The figures here employed are simple, but forcibly expressive of the fruitlessness of all ungodly plans, and the certainty, that, sooner or later, they will recoil on the head of their inventors.” Gill has: “Persecuting such that preach and profess the contrary doctrine.”

7 Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts [are] thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction ✓ [are] in their paths.

✓ breaking

Their feet run to evil. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Their feet run to do that which is evil.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Their feet are running to evil.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “Their feet run to evil.” ¶ Wordsworth and others mention that Paul quoted this verse: “Their feet are swift to shed blood” (Romans 3:15). Luther says, “Under the guise of religion they thirst for the blood of the righteous all day long ... The hypocrites hurry on the task of destruction and to the killing of the righteous ... *They run*, that is, they are most eager to do harm. I, Martin Luther, have been burned by them.⁸ I am familiar with those who crave and thirst for my blood under the guise of doing homage to God. The prophet had to suffer this too.” Wade notes: “Cf. Proverbs 1:16, 24:2.” Cowles has: “‘Running’ and ‘making haste’ even to murder the innocent, testify to their eagerness in sinning and to their absolute, reckless committal to unscrupulous crime.” Barnes explains: “In accordance with the design of the prophet to show the entireness of

their depravity, he states that all their members were employed in doing evil ... The words ‘run,’ and ‘make haste,’ are designed to intimate the intensity of their purpose to do wrong. They did not walk slowly; they did not even take time to deliberate; but such was their desire of wrong-doing, that they hastened to execute their plans of evil. People usually walk slowly and with a great deal of deliberation when any good is to be done; they walk rapidly, or they run with haste and alacrity when evil is to be accomplished.” ¶ Certainly, they ran up the stairs in Carthage to do their bloody deed. The antithesis is found in the Book of Mormon, “And it came to pass that when Moroni had proclaimed these words, behold, the people came running together with their armor girded about their loins, rending their garments in token, or as a covenant, that they would not forsake the Lord their God; or, in other words, if they should transgress the commandments of God, or fall into transgression, and be ashamed to take upon them the name of Christ, the Lord should rend them even as they had rent their garments” (Alma 46:21). Shalom Paul points us to Proverbs where we find, “These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren” (Proverbs 6:16–19). ¶ *And they make haste to shed innocent blood:* The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “They are swift to shed blood.” See Haun’s Mill Massacre, Carthage jail and Calvary. ¶ *Their thoughts [are] thoughts of iniquity.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “violence” rather than *iniquity*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “Their thoughts are unprofitable thoughts.” Alexander has: “The word translated *thoughts* [מַחְשְׁבוֹת], has here and elsewhere the specific sense of purposes, contrivances, devices, which last Lowth employs as an equivalent.” Alma explains that we may be: “raised to endless happiness to inherit the kingdom of God, or to endless misery to inherit the kingdom of the devil, the one on one hand, the other on the other—The one raised to happiness according to his desires of happiness, or good according to his desires of good; and the other to evil according to his desires of evil; for as he has desired to do evil all the day long even so shall he have his reward of evil when the night cometh” (Alma 41:4b–5). King Benjamin taught: “But this much I can tell you, that if ye do not watch yourselves, and your thoughts, and your words, and your deeds, and observe the commandments of God, and continue in the faith of what ye have heard concerning the coming of our Lord, even unto the end of your lives, ye must perish. And now, O man, remember, and perish not” (Mosiah 4:30). ¶ *Wasting and destruction [are] in their paths.* The Targum (Ⲯ)

⁸ Martin Luther was born in 1483 and died of illness in 1546. But many other of the reformers were, indeed, burned for their beliefs.

has, “plunder” rather than *wasting*. The LXX (⚡) reads, “Destruction and misery are in their ways.” Instead of *wasting*, the Peshitta (⚡) has *plunder*. Rabbi Ibn Ezra says, “The second half of the verse contains the same idea as the first half.” ¶ Gill has: “They waste and destroy all they meet with in their ways, their fellow creatures and their substance; and the ways they walk in lead to ruin and destruction, which will be their portion for evermore.”

8 The way of peace they know not; and [there is] no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.

✓ or, right

The way of peace they know not; and [there is] no judgment in their goings: The Targum (⚡) has, “The way of peace they know not; and there is not justice in their ways.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “And the path of peace they do not know, nor is there any judgment in their ways.” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has *steps* instead of *goings*. ¶ Oswalt well says, “Whatever else the world may offer us, it can never offer us peace.” Birks has: “‘The way of peace’ is the way of holiness.” Gill explains: “[There is] no justice in their actions, in their dealings with men; no judgment in their religious duties, which are done without any regard to the divine rule, or without being able to give a reason for them; they have no judgment in matters of doctrine or worship; they have no discerning of true and false doctrines, and between that which is spiritual and superstitious in worship; they have no knowledge of the word of God, which should be their guide both in faith and practice.” ¶ Elder John Taylor contrasted between those who truly love the Lord and others: “There is a very material difference between associating with those that have the fear of God before their eyes, whose first object is their own salvation, the salvation of their progenitors and posterity, and the building up of the kingdom of God, and associating with those who ‘have not God in all their thoughts,’ who regard him not in all their transactions, but who are living ‘without God and without hope in the world,’ whose hearts—and I am sorry to say it, but yet it is true—whose hearts are ‘full of cursing and bitterness,’ who roll sin under their tongues as a sweet morsel, ‘whose feet are swift to shed blood,’ and ‘the way of peace,’ as the Prophet hath said, ‘they have not known.’” ¶ *They have made them crooked paths:* The Targum (⚡) has, “They have perverted their ways.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “For the paths which they travel are crooked.” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, “Their paths are become crooked to

them.” ¶ Cheyne has: “Note the four words for ‘way’ in this and the preceding verse, all found in the Book of Proverbs. In ISAIAH 59:7 we have the laboriously constructed ‘highway’: in ISAIAH 59:8, first, the most general word for ‘way,’ next, the waggon-tracks, and lastly, the paths made by the constant treading of wayfarers ... *Crooked*] reminds us of Proverbs 10:9, 28:18, 2:15.” Birks explains: “The last figure is that of a tortuous or winding footpath.” Such routes move people away from the straight and narrow path of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Savior taught: “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matthew 7:13–14). Cowles has: “*They have made crooked paths, &c.*] Every deviation from the divine law, in the language of scripture, is a *crooked* path. God has in his word pointed out a *direct* way to eternal life, and we must not depart from it to follow courses of our own.” Gill says: “they have devised paths and modes of worship of their own, in which they walk, and which they observe, that are not according to the rule of the word; but deviate from it.” ¶ *Whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.* The LXX (⚡) reads, “And peace they do not know.” Instead of *goeth*, the Peshitta (⚡) has *walks*. The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, “Every one that treadeth in them, knoweth no peace.” ¶ Peace, true peace, can only be found through discipleship to our Lord Jesus Christ.

vv. 9–15. These words show the state of affairs at the time when the Gospel was restored to the earth, at the time the Father and the Son appeared to the boy Prophet.

9 ¶ Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, [but] we walk in darkness.

Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: The Targum (⚡) has, “Therefore is judgment removed far from us, and *the least* righteousness does not meet us.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “Therefore judgment is far from them, and saving mercy shall not overtake them.” ¶ Right before the latter-day restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ there were many honest individuals who realized that the Gospel and the authority to act in God’s name was not yet present in the world. They looked forward to the day when the Gospel, in its plainness, would be restored. ¶ *We wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, [but] we walk in darkness.* The LXX (⚡) reads, “When

they were waiting for light, darkness came upon them, expecting a blaze of light they walked in obscurity.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “We looked for light, and behold darkness: brightness, and we have walked in the dark.” ¶ Cowles has: “‘Light’ is the favorite Hebrew emblem of happiness and prosperity.” And that happiness and prosperity came because the windows of heaven were opened to pour out light and truth, revelation from God, which was heeded by the people. Darkness and obscurity are the very opposite. Obscurity describes apostasy while light the restoration of the Gospel. Horsley suggests: “Rather, ‘in the midst of brightness we walk in obscurity.’ For they had eyes, and yet they saw not; light came into the world, but they loved darkness rather than light.”

10 We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if [we had] no eyes: we stumble at noonday as in the night; [we are] in desolate places as dead [men].

We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if [we had] no eyes. The Targum (T) has, for the second half, “We stumble at noonday as those who stumble in the dark; it is shut up before us, as the graves are shut up before the dead.” The LXX (G) reads, “They shall grope like blind men for a wall and feel about like men who have no eyes, and fall at mid-day as at midnight.” For the last clause, the Peshitta (S) has, “We groan as those who are near death.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, for the second half, “We have stumbled at noonday as in darkness, we are in dark places as dead men.” Wade, “at noonday. i.e. at a time when relief might be fully expected, their calamitous condition is unredressed.” Wordsworth has: “We grope along the wall to guide us.” Rawlinson also, “*We grope for the wall*] rather, *we grope along the wall.*” ¶ Wade shows the connection to a verse in *Rain in Due Season* “cf. Deuteronomy 28:29.” Kay likewise has: “*We grope for*] Or, *We grope as blind men along the wall* (Deuteronomy 28:29⁹; Job 5:14); seeking in vain for an exit from prison; or, for the entrance into the city of peace (cp. Genesis 19:11).” Rabbi Rosenberg uses “We tap a wall like blind men” rather than *grobe*. Fausset suggests: “There is no relaxation of our evils; at the time when we might look for the noon of relief, there is still the night of our calamity.” Gill says: “the eyes of their reason and understanding; but which either were not opened, or they made no use of them in searching the Scriptures, to come at the light and knowledge of divine things; and therefore only at most groped after them by the dim light of nature, if thereby they might find them.” These

comments about blind men are a description of the terrible apostasy that would fill the earth. ¶ Oswalt reminds us that in ISAIAH 6, the prophet had accused his hearers of blindness, “And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not” (ISAIAH 6:9). Also, that true vision would have to be reserved for a latter day in the future. Oswalt also quoted ISAIAH 8:16-17 about sealing the testimony for a later date. ¶ Elder James E. Talmage well said: “Regarded from a spiritual point of view we have only to remember how commonly sin is contemplated in Scripture as a moral blindness (Deuteronomy 28:29; ISAIAH 59:10; Job 12:25; Zephaniah 1:17), and deliverance from sin as a removal of this blindness (ISAIAH 6:9, 10; 43:8; Ephesians 1:18; Matthew. 15:14); and we shall at once perceive how fit it was that He who was the ‘light of the world’ should often accomplish works which symbolized so well that higher work which He came into the world to accomplish.”¹⁰ President Joseph Fielding Smith said, “Peter declared: ‘Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.’ And there is no sound reason that can be given why the Lord cannot speak today through the agency of holy men, and give commandment to his children. The only reason that would preclude such revelation coming now is that his children refuse to hear his voice, or the voice of his servants. The words of Isaiah are just as true today as they were seven hundred years before the birth of Christ, when he said: ‘Behold the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear ... We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes: we stumble at noonday as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men’ (ISAIAH 59:1–2, 10). Come, let us reason together. In the midst of the religious confusion; when there are hundreds of conflicting doctrines; when men dispute over the meaning of every principle of eternal truth; when the pulpits are filled with disagreement; when modern revisions of the Bible, miscalled translations, have flooded the world with changed interpretations; when ordinances are changed and strange customs introduced in the religious worship, should we not seek the coming of a messenger from the presence of the Lord to set this babel of strife and disunity in order? ... Never in the history of the world has there been more confusion and disagreement among religious professors than today.

⁹ One of the tragedies predicted if Israel would be disobedient, see *Rain in Due Season*.

¹⁰ James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ: A Study of the Messiah and His Mission According to Holy Scriptures Both Ancient and Modern*, pp.260, 302

How else will this confusion which holds the religious world bound so helplessly in dispute and disagreement ever be brought to a unity in the pure love of God but by new revelation?"¹¹ Elder Wilford Woodruff manifested: "Until the light [of the restored Gospel] came, we were groveling in the dark, in a great measure. Though we might be honest, and we might be actuated by the best and holiest feelings, yet, until the fulness of the Gospel was revealed, the world were like the blind groping for the wall. We had no Apostles—no Prophets; we had no inspired men to rise up and tell us what to do to be saved; and we had to go through with all that trouble, misery, and darkness to which the children of men are subject while living under false doctrines, false traditions, and false teachers."¹²

¶ President George A. Smith warned against personal apostasy: "The facts are, brethren, that the work of the Lord does not depend upon us. If we go into darkness, if we let our hearts be filled with covetousness or corruption, or give way to licentiousness, drunkenness, Sabbath breaking, unbelief, or any crime that corrodes our system or organization, so that our tabernacles become unfit for the holy Spirit to dwell in, it will withdraw from us, and the light that is in us becomes darkened, and that darkness is so great that we grope as a blind man and wander hither and thither, and those who suffer themselves to be led by these blind men fall into the ditch with them, but the work rolls right along."¹³ Of those who leave the light and the spirit behind, the Lord warned: "Behold, ere he is aware, he is left unto himself, to kick against the pricks, to persecute the saints, and to fight against God" (D&C 121:38).

¶ Elder Orson Pratt testified of the importance and wonder of living by the Spirit: "The great difficulty with me, and I presume it is also the experience of almost every man and woman in the Church of the living God, is, we are not so faithful as some of the servants of God have been in former days. Some of them were so faithful that they lived constantly in the light of revelation. Their minds were opened to it, and scarcely a thing could transpire but what they understood it beforehand. They did not need the news or intelligence to be brought to them from a distance, but there was a spirit within them and the candle of the Lord gave that spirit understanding in regard to things that were transpiring thousands of miles distant. They lived for this; they walked before the Lord so faithfully

that they were entitled to know, not only things that were present with and that would benefit themselves and the people among whom they dwelt, but also things in the future—ages and ages to come were opened up to their minds, and their minds comprehended them by permitting this candle of the Lord to shine upon and illuminate them. It is my most earnest desire to live so as to discern under every condition and circumstance in life precisely what would be most pleasing in the sight of God for me to do, and when I comprehend this I can act as a person who does not grope in the dark, like the blind man who gropes for the wall; but if I live for it, the path in which I should walk will be plain, the Spirit of God being as it were a lamp to my feet, and my guide and instructor by day and by night. Do you not desire Latter-day Saints to be instructed in this way? Every honest-hearted person will answer yes. Everyone who hungers and thirsts after righteousness, and who desires eternal life will acknowledge that he does desire to be thus guided and led."¹⁴ ¶ *We stumble at noonday as in the night; [we are] in desolate places as dead [men]*. The idea is that apostates stumble in their own darkness while everyone around them can see perfectly well. The antithesis is the restoration of the Gospel and the bringing forth of the Book of Mormon in the last days. When the Angel Moroni visited the boy Prophet, he reported: "While I was thus in the act of calling upon God, I discovered a light appearing in my room, which continued to increase until the room was lighter than at noonday, when immediately a personage appeared at my bedside, standing in the air, for his feet did not touch the floor" (JS—History 1:30).

11 We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but [there is] none; for salvation, [but] it is far off from us.

We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: The Targum (ⲧ) has, "We all roar (literally, according to the Royal Polyglot, 'we gnash with our teeth') like bears by reason of our enemies, who are gathered against us, and mourn like doves." The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "When dying they will groan like a bear and mourn like a dove." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, "We shall roar all of us like bears, and shall lament as mournful doves." ¶ Calvin says: "He describes two classes of those who cannot silently endure their afflictions without making them known by external signs; for some howl fiercely, and others *moan* [ⲙⲟⲁⲛ] *like doves*. This latter metaphor was employed by him in describing the groans [ⲙⲟⲁⲛⲉⲥ] of

¹¹ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Restoration of All Things*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1973, pp. 70–71.

¹² Elder Wilford Woodruff, "Blessings of the Saints." Delivered in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 27 December 1857. JD 6:137. Also see JD 9:224b.

¹³ President George A. Smith, Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, in the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 6 October 1874. JD 17:196.

¹⁴ Elder Orson Pratt, "Spirit of Light and Truth," delivered in the 13th Ward Assembly Rooms, 24 November 1872. JD 13:233.

Hezekiah (ISAIAH 38:14).” Cheyne has: “*Like bears ... like doves*] The ‘dove’ is a well-known symbol of lamentation (comp. ISAIAH 38:14, Ezekiel 7:16, Nahum 2:7) ... but no other Biblical writer, speak of the bear as ‘groaning’ (*gemere, gemitus*).” Alexander says: “The Latin poets also speak of the voice of bears and doves as a *gemitus* or groaning.” Rabbi Ibn Ezra has: “*We roar*, etc. We cry, but nobody comes to our assistance, nobody comes to do us justice.” Who are those lamenting here? The second part of this verse gives us a clue: those *who look for judgment and salvation*. Perhaps it is written of the early Saints who were so unfairly treated at every turn. See, for instance the mourning experienced by Joseph Smith while he was falsely imprisoned in Liberty Jail: “O GOD, where art thou? And where is the pavilion that covereth thy hiding place? How long shall thy hand be stayed, and thine eye, yea thy pure eye, behold from the eternal heavens the wrongs of thy people and of thy servants, and thine ear be penetrated with their cries? Yea, O Lord, how long shall they suffer these wrongs and unlawful oppressions, before thine heart shall be softened toward them, and thy bowels be moved with compassion toward them? O Lord God Almighty, maker of heaven, earth, and seas, and of all things that in them are, and who controllest and subjectest the devil, and the dark and benighted dominion of Sheol—stretch forth thy hand; let thine eye pierce; let thy pavilion be taken up; let thy hiding place no longer be covered; let thine ear be inclined; let thine heart be softened, and thy bowels moved with compassion toward us. Let thine anger be kindled against our enemies; and, in the fury of thine heart, with thy sword avenge us of our wrongs. Remember thy suffering saints, O our God; and thy servants will rejoice in thy name forever” (D&C 121:1–6). ¶ *We look for judgment, but [there is] none*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “hoped” rather than *look*. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And at their departing say, ‘We waited for judgment and there is none.’” In the same section of Doctrine and Covenants that we just quoted above, the Savior warned against those who had so persecuted the Saints: “And they who do charge thee with transgression, their hope shall be blasted, and their prospects shall melt away as the hoar frost melteth before the burning rays of the rising sun ... Also because their hearts are corrupted, and the things which they are willing to bring upon others, and love to have others suffer, may come upon themselves to the very uttermost ... and their hopes may be cut off; And not many years hence, that they and their posterity shall be swept from under heaven [allusion, among other things, to the Civil War], saith God, that not one of them is left *to stand by the wall*. Cursed are all those that shall lift up the heel against mine anointed, saith the Lord, and cry they have sinned when they have not sinned before me, saith the Lord, but have done that which was meet in mine eyes,

and which I commanded them” (D&C 121:11, 13, 14b–16, emphasis added). The injustice would not be remedied in a moment, but in the Lord’s time. Certainly, those who persecuted the Saints did not know the way of justice and salvation, and their feet run to do iniquity and hands to evil. Also, note especially, 121:23, which we quoted in relation to ISAIAH 59:3. ¶ *For salvation, [but] it is far off from us*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “For salvation, but it is far removed from us.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And as for safety, it is far from us.” ¶ These thoughts seem to take us back to the questions asked by the Prophet Joseph Smith in Liberty Jail, regarding of the time when their rights would be protected and justice carried out.

12 For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions [are] with us; and [as for] our iniquities, we know them;

In ISAIAH 59:12 we might have a parenthetical comment made by those who have persecuted the Saints and now find themselves in the Spirit Prison feeling the full weight of their hateful actions. ¶ *For our transgressions are multiplied before thee*. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For our manifold iniquity is before thee.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has *iniquities* instead of *transgressions*. ¶ Kay notes regarding *all of the פְּשָׁעֵיכֶם, חַטָּאתֶם, עֲוֹנוֹת*: “The confession attains its fulness; embodying the three terms, which were used by the high priest on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:21); ‘transgressions ... sins ... iniquities.’ They have now exhibited the true ‘affliction of soul’ and are fit objects of the Redeemer’s pity [ISAIAH 59:20].” Westermann notes: “The accumulation of words for ‘sin’ is very noticeable: ‘few chapters in the Bible are so rich and diverse in their vocabulary of sin (cf. Psalm 51)’ (Muilenburg).” ¶ Gill says: “Not only an increase of immorality among the people in common, but among professors of religion.” It is these professors of religion who led the mobs against the Saints of the Most High God. ¶ *And our sins testify against us*: The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And our sins are risen up against us.” These words may be applied to the mobs that stole the land from the Saints in Missouri and elsewhere, and stained their hands with the blood of the Saints. ¶ *For our transgressions [are] with us*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “For our iniquities are revealed unto us.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For our iniquities are in us.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “For our wicked doings are with us.” ¶ McFadyen has: “It is interesting to find apostasy, **turning away from our God**, which in ISAIAH 57 took the form of idolatry, here expressed in terms of morality.” Once again, those who have harmed the

Saints will have to face the awful torment for having done so. Returning to D&C 121 we have: “Cursed are all those that shall lift up the heel against mine anointed, saith the Lord, and cry they have sinned when they have not sinned before me, saith the Lord, but have done that which was meet in mine eyes, and which I commanded them. But those who cry transgression do it because they are the servants of sin, and are the children of disobedience themselves. And those who swear falsely against my servants, that they might bring them into bondage and death—Wo unto them; because they have offended my little ones they shall be severed from the ordinances of mine house. Their basket shall not be full, their houses and their barns shall perish, and they themselves shall be despised by those that flattered them. They shall not have right to the priesthood, nor their posterity after them from generation to generation. It had been better for them that a millstone had been hanged about their necks, and they drowned in the depth of the sea” (D&C 121:16–22). ¶ *And [as for] our iniquities, we know them.* The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And we know our transgressions.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “And we have known our iniquities.” Barnes has: “We recognize them as our sins, and we cannot conceal from ourselves the fact that we are transgressors.” And here let us quote the next verses in D&C 121: “Wo unto all those that discomfort my people, and drive, and murder, and testify against them, saith the Lord of Hosts; a generation of vipers shall not escape the damnation of hell. Behold, mine eyes see and know all their works, and I have in reserve a swift judgment in the season thereof, for them all; For there is a time appointed for every man, according as his works shall be” (D&C 121:23–25).

13 In transgressing and lying against the LORD, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood.

In transgressing and lying against the LORD, and departing away from our God. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “We have rebelled, and acted falsely against the Word of the Lord; we have turned backward¹⁵ from following after the worship of our God.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “We have sinned: we have lied, and turned back from following our God.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “In sinning and lying against the Lord: and we have turned

away so that we went not after our God.” ¶ Again we see the description of the deepest of apostasies. Cowles has: “The original [Hebrew] of ISAIAH 59:13 is a model of compact and forcible description which can scarcely be transferred to our language.” Leeson translates it as: “We transgressed and denied the Lord, and departed away from our God; we spoke oppression and revolt, conceived and brought forth in our heart words of falsehood.” LITV renders it: “transgressing and lying against Jehovah, and backsliding from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and murmuring words of falsehood from the heart.” Horsley offers: “*Apostasy* and treachery towards Jehovah, A turning away from following our God, *Deceiving speech* and revolt: *Words of falsehood* have been conceived and studied in the heart” (emphasis added). ¶ Cheyne has: “A threefold description of apostasy opens the verse.—**Treason** (lit., ‘diruptio’ *sc.* *foederis*), **unfaithfulness** (lit., ‘belying,’ i.e., atheism, Jeremiah 5:12), and **drawing back** (i.e., the overt act of apostasy). Evidently the prophet refers to a paganising movement of special intensity ...” Gill says: “They transgress the doctrine of Christ.” Once again, still speaking of those who persecuted the Prophet Joseph Smith and the Saints. ¶ *Speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “We have spoken falsehood and apostasy, hastening and bringing forth from their hearts lying words.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “We have spoken things unjust, and have been disobedient; we have conceived and meditated from our heart lying words” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “But spoke calumny and transgression: we have conceived, and uttered from the heart, words of falsehood.” ¶ Horsley has: “The ‘words of falsehood’ I take to be the sophisms of philosophers and the quibbles of hypocrites ... ‘Deceiving speech’¹⁶ is the same thing.” Cheyne, continuing from before, has: “Then follow sins of the lips (comp. on ISAIAH 6:5).—**Transgression**] Lit., ‘deviation’ Hebr. *sārāh*.” Nägelsbach remarks that this phrase (‘speaking deviation’) is elsewhere used only of the false teaching of ‘pseudo-prophets’ Deuteronomy 13:5 (Biblia Hebraica 13:6), Jeremiah 28:16, 29:32), and that the writer is probably alluding to the seductive discourses of such persons. This is possible indeed, but far from certain, as sins of the lips are ascribed to the whole nation in v. 3, and ‘deviation’ from moral and spiritual truth was not peculiar to prophets.” Gill has: “The Targum renders it, ‘falsehood and apostasy’; false doctrine, which leads to apostasy from Christ ... false doctrines; such as agree not with, but are contrary to, the word of God; these are of their own conceiving and contriving; the produce of their own brains; the fruit of their own fancy and

¹⁵ Uses the Aramaic (Ⲯ), “and turn around backward,” **וְאַסְתַּחֲרֵנָּא לְאַחָרָא**. Similarly, see verse 14 in the Ⲯ. The Masoretic text (Ⲛ) in verse 14 uses the same root-based expression: **וְהִסְפֵּן אַחֲרָיִךְ**.”

¹⁶ See Horsley’s translation, above.

imaginations.” Many words of calumny were spoken against the Saints.

14 And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.

And judgment is turned away backward. The LXX (6) reads, “We have indeed turned judgment backward.” YLT reads: “And removed backward is judgment, And righteousness [מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה] afar off standeth.”

¶ Rotherham has: “So then there hath been a driving back of justice, And righteousness [מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה], afar off, standeth.” Luther says, “*Judgment and justice* must be present so that we may turn away from evil, and justice, so that we may do what is good.” Regarding the lack of justice and righteousness, please see below, ISAIAH 59:16, the report of the Prophet Joseph Smith and President Martin Van Buren, where precisely these words were used by the Prophet. Also, the Governor of Illinois, Thomas Ford, did nothing to protect the Prophet Joseph and those incarcerated with him. President Gordon B. Hinckley related: “[Joseph Smith] told the governor of the danger surrounding him. The governor dismissed it. He said he was going to Nauvoo the next day and promised that if he did so, he would take Joseph with him. He repeated that pledge when he left that morning. In the afternoon, the constable arrived at the jail accompanied by men of the Carthage Grays. The prisoners were marched to the courthouse in public humiliation. There, after an hour of debate over legal matters, the court adjourned until noon the next day. Joseph and Hyrum were brought back to the jail. The weather was sultry and hot and miserable. The next morning, Dan Jones, who had spent the night in the jail with Joseph and Hyrum, left to carry a message. He talked with Frank Worrel, one of the Carthage Grays. He reported that Worrel said: ‘We have had too much trouble to bring old Joe here to let him ever escape alive, and unless you want to die with him, you had better leave before sundown ... You’ll see that I can prophesy better than old Joe, for neither he nor his brother, nor anyone who will remain with them will see the sunset today.’ Dan Jones reported this to Governor Ford who responded that Jones was ‘unnecessarily alarmed.’ At 10:30 that morning, Governor Ford and his troops left for Nauvoo, leaving those in the jail behind at the mercy of the mob militia.”¹⁷ Where was judgment or truth in any of this? ¶ *And justice standeth afar off:* The LXX (6) reads, “Therefore saving mercy

standeth aloof.” ¶ As one reads matters related to the history of the Church one senses the hatred and enmity against the Saints. Truly, nothing was done, except by a very few righteous men who refused to harm the Saints. ¶ *For truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.* The Targum (7) has, “For they that follow truth stumble in the street; and they that follow faithfulness cannot shew themselves.” The LXX (6) reads, “Because truth was destroyed in their ways and; they could not walk in straight paths.” The Douay-Rheims (8) has, “Because truth hath fallen down in the street, and equity could not come in.” ¶ President John Taylor quoted this scripture as he spoke of the increasing epidemic of abortion in America in 1884.¹⁸ ¶ Cheyne suggests: “*Hath stumbled in the broad place*” ‘Broad places’ was a name specially given to the recesses on each side of the city-gate, ‘used as places of assembly during the day, and as places of rest for guests [say rather for strangers, Judges 19:20] during the night’ (Layard, *Nineveh and Babylon*, p. 57) ... *Cannot enter*] i.e., cannot find admittance to the tribunal, to give evidence for the right.” Henderson has: “רחוב” properly signifies a wide open street, but here it seems rather to be used in reference to the forum, or broad open place at the gate, where justice was administered.” ¶ As I read this verse I thought of the Prophet Joseph Smith as he fell down to the ground in Carthage jail, the day he was martyred along with his brother Hyrum. And also, of the two Prophets in Jerusalem, that shall be martyred in the last days. And then, I read this from Luther, “This is what happens when the preachers of the truth are condemned and killed ...” Continuing with the narrative by President Hinckley of the happenings surrounding Carthage jail, we have: “The jailer suggested about 5:00 P.M. that the four of them in the jail—Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, Willard Richards, and John Taylor—might be safer if they went into the cell at the back of the second floor. Joseph indicated that they would do so after supper. A few moments later, a noise was heard outside, followed by a cry of surrender. Then came two or three gunshots. Willard Richards looked out the window and saw a large group of men with painted faces. The mob ran up the steep stairs and began firing. The prisoners pushed the door shut and then tried to knock down the guns sticking through the door. John Taylor used Stephen Markham’s large hickory cane, and Willard Richards used John Taylor’s cane. A bullet fired through the door hit Hyrum on the left side of the nose. Another ball, coming through the window, hit him in the back almost simultaneously. Two other balls hit him as he fell. John Taylor was then hit. One of the balls struck his watch. It stopped at 5:16 P.M. We still have that watch. One or two balls then hit Joseph. He

¹⁷ President Gordon B. Hinckley, “Joseph, the Seer.” September 1994 *Ensign*.

¹⁸ President John Taylor, Ogden, 19 October 1884. JD 25:354.

jumped to the window, paused for a moment, cried out, ‘Oh Lord, my God,’ then fell out the window, his body resting against the curb of the well. It was all over. Joseph was dead. Hyrum was dead. John Taylor was wounded. Willard Richards miraculously escaped.”¹⁹

15 Yea, truth faileth; and he [that] departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: [✓] and the LORD saw [it], and it displeased him [✓] that [there was] no judgment.

- ✓ or, is accounted mad
- ✓ ✓ it was evil in his eyes

Yea, truth faileth; and he [that] departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, for the first half, “And they that follow truth are hidden.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And truth was removed and they substituted opinion in place of knowledge.” The Peshitta (Ⲯ), “Yea, truth is hid, and *understanding* (Lamsa) / *prudence* (BPE) has departed from our mind.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “And truth hath been forgotten: and he that departed from evil, lay open to be a prey.” ¶ Skinner says: “*maketh himself a prey*] ... Another, and possibly a better rendering is, ‘withdraws himself’; compare the peculiar use of the simple verb in Ruth 2:16 (‘draw out’ corn from the sheaf).” ¶ Rawlinson has: “Once let there be no regard for truth in a state, no discredit attaching to lying, and all virtue is undermined, all soundness is vanished—nothing remains but ‘wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores’ (ISAIAH 1:6).” Gill notes: “He that does not give in to the prevailing vices of the age in which he lives, now become fashionable, but abstains from them, and departs from doctrinal as well as practical evils; from all false doctrines, and from all superstitious modes of worship; becomes a prey to others; a reproach and a laughing stock to them; they scoff at him, and deride him for his preciseness in religion; for his enthusiastic and irrational notions in doctrine; and for his stiffness in matters of worship: or, ‘he makes himself reckoned a madman’ (משתולל) *‘facit ut insanus habeatur,’* Junius & Tremellius; *‘habitus est pro insano,’* Vitringa; so Abendana, ‘he that fears God, and departs from evil,’ יחשבוהו לשוטה, ‘they reckon him a fool or a madman.’); as some render it; and this is a common notion with profane men, and loose professors, to reckon such as madmen that are upright in doctrine, worship, and conversation; see Acts 26:24.” Cowles well says: “Let us pause here for a moment to note that

such flagrant immoralities, such utter prostration of all justice, even in those civil institutions which God had established among his people for its support, are accounted of God as overwhelming proofs of utter apostasy. In his view there can be no piety where there is such utter lack of common morality. His professed people are hopelessly degenerate; even their religion has become a mass of putridity.” Such conditions point to the state of affairs in every epoch of apostasy. It is not limited to the apostasy of Israel but encompasses also the Christian apostasy. It not only describes the violence [חַמָּס] with which the Savior was treated during His sojourn upon the earth, but also how His servants were treated when His Gospel was restored upon the earth in the latter days. ¶ *And the LORD saw [it], and it displeased him that [there was] no judgment.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “It is revealed before the Lord, that there is no justice, which is evil in His sight.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Therefore the Lord took a view, and it displeased him that there was no judgment.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “And the Lord saw, and it appeared evil in his eyes, because there is no judgment.” ¶ Alexander writes: “*Then Jehovah saw and it was evil in his eyes that there was no judgment*] or practical justice.” Wade has: “The writer, in ISAIAH 59:16–17, projects himself into the future, and relates what is to be as though it had already happened. The prophetic perfects are replaced by the future in ISAIAH 59:18 f.” Cheyne has: “All is still future, though described as past in the language of prophetic certitude.” ¶ וַיֵּרָא בְּעֵינָיו, *and it displeased him,* literally, as in the margin ||, is *and it was evil in his eyes*, as noted by the Targum (Ⲯ), and also see Barnes, LITV, YLT. ¶ One can see the mounting tension, where the Lord is not pleased with the way His Saints are being treated.

vv. 16–18. There was no man in government to stand and make sure that the Saints were protected from mobocracy.

16 ¶ And he saw that [there was] no man, and wondered that [there was] no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him.

And he saw that [there was] no man, and wondered that [there was] no intercessor: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And it is revealed in His sight that there is no man who hath good works, and it is known to Him that there is no man, who would arise and seek after them.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “When he took a view and there was no man;

¹⁹ President Gordon B. Hinckley, “Joseph, the Seer.” September 1994 *Ensign*.

and made close observation.” Instead of *intercessor*, the Peshitta (S) has *one to help* (Lamsa) / *no one to come to the rescue* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “And he saw that there is not a man: and he stood astonished, because there is none to oppose himself.” ¶ Rawlinson has: “God looked for some champion of the oppressed to arise; it was to be expected under the circumstances. But, alas! ‘there was no man.’ None stood up to resist the unrighteous and protect the innocent; much less did any stand up to deliver Israel from its heathen adversaries.” Wade has for אֵין מִפְּנֵי: “*no intercessor*” Better, *none to interpose*. The verb, though identical with that used in ISAIAH 53:12 [פָּנִיעַ], root פָּנַע, here has a different sense and means one who intervenes actively to aid.” Cheyne has: “The apparent parallelism of Jeremiah 5:1 is delusive; ‘no man’ does not here mean ‘no man of honesty and integrity,’ but ‘no champion.’ It corresponds to the phrase in the next line, ‘none to interpose.’” Alexander says: “The repetition of the words *and he saw* connects this verse in the closest manner with the one before it.” “Cowles has: “‘Man’ in the sense of a whole man, a hero, and ‘intercessor’ in the sense of one who intervenes for help, are equivalent expressions, meaning, that God saw no helper and no help for this state of things, and therefore aroused himself to the needful work.” The word “hero” here is an interesting one. In ISAIAH 9:6 some have substituted the word *God* for *hero* (e.g., see Luther and Moffatt). One of my Jewish friends insisted in translating it using the word *hero*, also, which of course is a way of taking Christ out of the equation. See also Whitehouse, who says, “... conception of Yahweh as a warrior-hero.” Gratefully, almost all translators use the word *God* in ISAIAH 9:6, as does the KJV: “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” And this verse in ISAIAH 59 certainly seems to be speaking of the Christ as an intercessor. Even in pre-mortal life Christ offered Himself to be our intercessor, which is what we see in ISAIAH 63:3, 5. He alone would expiate for us. ¶ In ISAIAH 63 we will see some similar statements as made here, but in that place the reference is to the atonement as well as to the day of vengeance. Here, there is an allusion to the atonement, which the Lord had to carry out on His own, but it also refers to the lack of man, especially the governors and even the President of the United States, in protecting the Saints from the persecutions they were submitted to. Indeed, there was no intercessor to defend the Saints against mobocracy. In the *History of the Church*, we read this from the Prophet Joseph Smith: “During my stay I had an interview with Martin Van Buren, the President [of the USA], who treated me very insolently, and it was with

great reluctance he listened to our message, which, when he had heard, he said: ‘Gentlemen, your cause is just, but I can do nothing for you;’ and ‘If I take up for you I shall lose the vote of Missouri.’ His whole course went to show that he was an office-seeker, that self-aggrandizement was his ruling passion, and that *justice and righteousness* [מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה] were no part of his composition”²⁰ (emphasis added, see ISAIAH 59:14, above). ¶ *Therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him.* The Targum (T) has, “Therefore He will redeem them by the arm of His strength, and by the Word of His delight He will help them.” The LXX (G) reads, “And there was no helper; then with his own arm he defended them and with mercy supported them.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “And his own arm brought salvation to him, and his own justice supported him.” ¶ Skinner also mentions the prophetic perfect: “That the whole description refers to a future event can hardly be questioned. The perfects in this verse and the next are those of prophetic certainty.” Jenour quotes Revelation 19:11 (“In righteousness doth he judge and make war”) and says: “But if the reference be to the salvation of the righteous, as is perhaps the case, for both the one and the other are treated of in these verses, then the expression, ‘His righteousness sustained him,’ must signify, that in accomplishing the work of redemption, the Son of God was sustained by that perfect and divine righteousness which was inherent in him.” ¶ This verse speaks of the Lord’s arm to be stretched forth for the benefit of the Saints.

17 For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance [for] clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke.

For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head. The Targum (T) has, “It is revealed, that He will work a great salvation for His people.” The LXX (G) reads, “And he put on righteousness as a breast plate, and placed on his head the helmet of salvation.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has *justice* instead of *righteousness*. ¶ McFadyen has: “The fullest description in the Old Testament of Jehovah as a ‘man of war’ (Exodus 15:3), and the model for the New Testament descriptions of the Christian’s armor (1 Thessalonians 5:8; Ephesians 6:14–17).” Alexander notes: “צִדְקָה signifies the righteousness of God.” Barnes says: “That is, God the Redeemer. The prophet here introduces him as going forth to vindicate his

²⁰ *History of the Church* 4:80.

people clad like an ancient warrior.” Gill suggests: “Here the Lord is represented as a warrior clothed with armour, and as Christ is, and as he will appear in the latter day on the behalf of his people, and against their enemies, who is called faithful and true, and in righteousness will make war, Revelation 19:11, he will proceed according to justice and equity in righting the wrongs and avenging the injuries of his people; and both in saving them, and destroying their enemies, he will secure the honour of his faithfulness and justice, and the credit of his name and character; which will be preserved by his conduct.” ¶ *And he put on the garments of vengeance [for] clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Yea, He will render vengeance to His enemies.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And threw around him the mantle of vengeance; and his cloak.” The Peshitta (Ⲯ) is missing the second clause, *and was clad &c.* ¶ Once again, this means that the Lord would avenge the Saints. And in a future day, will avenge Israel when she is under attack, also.

18 According to [their] deeds, ✓
accordingly he will repay, fury to his
adversaries, recompence to his enemies;
to the islands he will repay recompence.

✓ recompences

According to [their] deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “He is the Lord of retributions, He shall render recompence: vengeance to His enemies, retribution to His adversaries.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “As about to retribute retribution — reproach to his adversaries.” The first clause, in the Peshitta (Ⲯ), reads something like, “To the end that he may seek vengeance upon those who hate him.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “As unto revenge, as it were to repay wrath to his adversaries, and a reward to his enemies.” The only ancient manuscript that makes any sense here is the Syriac (Ⲯ). The Spanish Syriac (Ⲯ) translation is not as clear: “A fin de vengarse de los que lo aborrecían y retribuir a sus adversarios. Dara el pago a las islas”.²¹ ¶ Rawlinson has: “*He will repay*” The ordinary future here, and in the remainder of the prophecy, replaces the ‘perfect of prophetic certitude,’ which has been employed in ISAIAH 59:16–17.” Keith well says: “This language is applied to the destruction of the nations which shall be gathered against Jerusalem.” ¶ Elder Orson Hyde used this scripture to teach that we ought to fear God more than man.²² This scripture has other

²¹ *Biblia Peshitta en Español. Traducción de los antiguos manuscritos arameos.* Holman.

²² Elder Orson Hyde, “Zion,” *Tabernacle*, Salt Lake City, 10 March 1872. JD 5:141b.

applications, also. The Saints looked for redress from the government to no avail, and the Lord permitted the US Civil War to take place, partly in fulfillment to the persecutions and atrocities against the Saints. Brent D. Dowdle says in his paper, “Although acknowledging that the [Civil] war would come at a tremendous cost to the nation, Brigham Young believed that America had contracted a substantial debt through its persecution of the Saints and that any result other than the ‘overthrow’ of the nation ‘would rob justice of its claims.’” [Brigham Young to Charles C. Rich, April 4, 1861, Brigham Young Office Files, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City]²³ ¶ *To the islands he will repay recompence.* The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “He will repay the like to the islands.” Lamsa’s Syriac (Ⲯ) has: “That he may seek vengeance upon those who hate him, and retribution to his adversaries, and to the islands he will render recompence.”²⁴ As does Bauscher’s interlinear, “And he shall repay his enemies and to the islands he will pay reward.”²⁵ Oswalt notes that *repay* or *recompence*—as *appeasing debts* (שָׁלוֹם, from שָׁלוֹם), come from the same root as *peace* (שָׁלוֹם). Oswalt says, “It is hard to escape the sense that the choice of the word is ironic. God will give שָׁלוֹם, ‘peace,’ to those who love him (cf. ISAIAH 57:19), but he will ‘pacify’ all accounts with his enemies.” We know that the people of the islands would become disciples of the Lord. Keith well says: “Israel is to be recovered at last from the islands of the sea (ISAIAH 41:4); they are called on as particularly concerned in the final restoration of Israel (ISAIAH 41:1); and to them the knowledge of the Lord is at last to extend (ISAIAH 51:5).”

vv. 19–21. Now, let us return again to the words of the Savior in 3 Nephi 16: “And then will I remember my covenant which I have made unto my people, O house of Israel, and I will bring my gospel unto them. And I will show unto thee, O house of Israel, that the Gentiles shall not have power over you; but I will remember my covenant unto you, O house of Israel, and ye shall come unto the knowledge of the fulness of my gospel” (3 Nephi 16:11–12). The Lord will be merciful upon the Gentiles, also: “But if the Gentiles will repent and

²³ Brett D. Dowdle, “‘What Means This Carnage?’: The Civil War in Mormon Thought,” in *Civil War Saints*, ed. Kenneth L. Alford (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2012), 107–25. URL accessed 25Oct2016. <https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/civil-war-saints/what-means-carnage-civil-war-mormon-thought>

²⁴ George Lamsa *Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts*, Holman.

²⁵ Rev. Glenn David Bauscher, *The Aramaic-English Interlinear Peshitta Old Testament, An Interlinear Translation*, Lulu Publishing.

return unto me, saith the Father, behold they shall be numbered among my people, O house of Israel. And I will not suffer my people, who are of the house of Israel, to go through among them, and tread them down, saith the Father” (3 Nephi 16:13–14). To the Gentiles who reject the Gospel and the Book of Mormon the Lord says: “But if they will not turn unto me, and hearken unto my voice, I will suffer them, yea, I will suffer my people, O house of Israel, that they shall go through among them, and shall tread them down, and they shall be as salt that hath lost its savor, which is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of my people, O house of Israel. Verily, verily, I say unto you, thus hath the Father commanded me—that I should give unto this people this land for their inheritance” (3 Nephi 16:15–16).

¶ Elder Orson Pratt rejoiced: “But when the Lord begins to move, and show forth his power, when he begins to light up the habitations of Zion, when he comes to Zion to turn away ungodliness from Jacob, then I think the nations will begin to wake up. Let us read a little more about the glory of Zion in the 59th and 60th chapters of ISAIAH. I told you a little while ago that Jesus would come to Zion and would show forth his glory there ... Now let me read a prophecy in the latter part of the 59th chapter of ISAIAH. ‘So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words that I put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth even forever. Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.’ You notice here, then, that the Redeemer is to come to Zion, at the time when every habitation is lighted up with his light, and to all that turn from transgression in Jacob. Now let me here remark that this remnant of the house of Israel or Jacob, which we term the American Indians, are eventually to become a righteous branch of the house of Israel; when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, they will be numbered among the people of the covenant made with ancient Israel, they will be a branch of the Lord, beautiful and glorious, excellent and comely, and the power of the Lord will be upon them. In that day Jesus will come to them, they being a remnant of the tribe of Joseph. Then will be fulfilled that which was predicted by the Patriarch Jacob upon the descendants of Joseph. Speaking of Joseph he says, ‘Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall: The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: But his bow abode in strength, and

the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel.)’ (Genesis 49:22–24). When Jesus comes to Zion as is here predicted, in the 59th chapter of ISAIAH, he will come in the character of a great shepherd. Not in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; but appearing in the midst of Zion and administering to the remnants of Joseph in the character of a shepherd. From thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel (Genesis 49:24). Now we all know that Jesus sprang from Judah; but here is a declaration that from Joseph is the shepherd, the stone of Israel. That is, he will come the second time as a shepherd. He will gather his flock, or as the Psalmist David has said, ‘Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; stir up thy strength, and come and save us’ (Psalm 80:1–2). He will come as a shepherd, he will stir up his strength and show forth his power and the remnant of Joseph will be led by their shepherd, long before the Jews are redeemed. ‘Arise, and shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee’ (ISAIAH 60:1).”²⁶

19 So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard[✓] against him.

✓ or, put him to flight

So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And they from the west shall revere the name of the Lord; and they from the rising of the sun, his glorious name.” Instead of *fear*, the Peshitta (Ⓔ) has *revere*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “And they from the west, shall fear the name of the Lord: and they from the rising of the sun.” ¶ Kay suggests: “The consequence will be the spread of true religion—the ‘fear of the name of the Lord,’ Psalm 102:15—over the whole world (Malachi 1:11²⁷). The *west* is mentioned first; resuming the ‘isles’ of ISAIAH 59:18.” Now observe Henderson’s comments here: “It is particularly worthy of notice, that, while in every other passage of Scripture in which the spread of the Gospel is spoken of, it is uniformly represented as advancing from the East towards the West, that order is here reversed. True religion is first set forth as flourishing in the West, and then in the Eastern regions of the earth.” See notes on ISAIAH 18. ¶ *When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against*

²⁶ JD 14:354a–355a.

²⁷ Better, with AMP, Leeser, and others, “among the *nations*.”

him. The Targum (T) has, “When the oppressors shall come in like an inundation of the river Euphrates, they shall be broken (or, ‘dispersed’) by the Word of the Lord.” The LXX (G) reads, “For he will come like an impetuous stream—for the wrath of the Lord will come with fury.” Instead of *enemy*, the Peshitta (S) has *oppressor*; and instead of *lift up*, *bring down* (BPE) / *humble* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “His glory: when he shall come as a violent stream, which the spirit of the Lord driveth on.” ¶ Wordsworth notes: “... the Hebrew verb to ‘lift up a *standard*’ (נָסַח), carries back the thoughts to *Jehovahnissi* (יְהוָה נָסִיחַ), Exodus 17:15).” Alexander explains: “נָסַח [here is given] the sense of *when*.” Gill has: “When Satan, the common ‘enemy’ of mankind, the avowed and implacable enemy of Christ and his people, ‘shall come’ into the world ... and has already entered ‘like’ an impetuous flood, threatening to carry all before him, introducing a flood of immorality and profaneness, as in the days of Noah and Lot, to which the times of the Son of Man’s coming are likened, Luke 17:26 or else a flood of error and heresy of all sorts; see Revelation 12:15 and likewise a flood of persecution, as will be at the slaying of the witnesses, that hour of temptation that will come upon all the earth, to try the inhabitants of it, Revelation 3:10 ... Christ and his Gospel, or Christ the standard lifted up in the ministry of the Gospel (ISAIAH 11:10), a set of ministers shall be raised up, having the everlasting Gospel, which they shall publish to all nations, and which shall have an universal spread; and by means of which the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea; and which will be a sufficient check to the enemy’s flood of immorality, error, and persecution; and which, after this, shall be no more; see Revelation 14:6.” Kay suggests: “So, above all, when *the prince of this world came*, expecting to complete his victory over man (John 14:30). So at all later epochs (Revelation 12:15–17).” Horsley has: “‘He shall come as a river straitened in its course.’²⁸ The river straitened in its course, and acquiring force and velocity from its confinement, is an image of the suddenness and irresistible force of the Messiah’s coming in the latter ages, when the reasons that have so long restrained the full display of his might shall no longer operate.” Keith suggests: “When the guilty nations of the earth shall have gathered in great force against Jerusalem, the Lord, through some instrumentality, will meet them, and put them down (margin ||): ‘I will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them for my people and for my heritage Israel,’ (Joel 3:2).” Skinner suggests: “For the image in the last clause cf. ISAIAH

²⁸ This is an interesting figure in that very old rivers twist and wind like a serpent, while younger ones are straighter and faster.

30:28 (‘His breath is as an overflowing stream’).” Clarke notes: “Kimhi says, he that was the standard-bearer always began the battle by first smiting at the enemy. Here then the Spirit of the Lord is the standard-bearer, and strikes the first blow. They who go against sin and Satan with the Holy Spirit at their head, are sure to win the day.” Shalom Paul observes: “The word נָסַח is thus an attribute of the river (Abravanel), described as having a devastatingly strong current {so too LXX (G) and Vulgate (V)}.”

20 And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD.

The Targum (T) has, from the second clause, “And turn²⁹ the transgressors of the house of Jacob to the law, saith the Lord.” The LXX (G) reads, “For the sake of Sion the Deliverer will come, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And there shall come a redeemer to Sion, and to them that return from iniquity in Jacob, saith the Lord.” The Targum tradition (Seder Mo’ed, Yoma 86b) has “Great is repentance, because it brings about redemption, as it is said And a redeemer will come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, i.e., why will a redeemer come to Zion? Because of those that turn from transgression in Jacob” (Talmud, Soncino).

¶ The expression וְלָשׁוּב נָפֶשׁ, and [to] turn from transgression, is a beautiful one. As we have said, in the Old Testament, the words *turn* or *return* (from the root שׁוּב), indicate *repentance*—or else, apostasy, turning away from God. Whitehouse also points out that “turn” [וְלָשׁוּב] here means “converted.” ¶ Henderson suggests, regarding ISAIAH 59:20–21: “It is impossible for anyone impartially to examine the scope and management of the Apostle’s argument, Romans 11, and not to perceive that he quotes this passage in verses 26–27, for the express purpose of proving, from the Old Testament, the future conversion of the Jewish people. The chronology of the two writers is in the strictest harmony. For, as Isaiah introduces the conversion of the Jews as happening after the general extension of true religion among the Gentiles, so Paul manifestly links the two events together in the same order: ‘Blindness in part is happened to Israel UNTIL THE FULNESS OF THE GENTILES BE COME IN. AND SO ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED: as it is written,’ &c... . The principal idea being the conversion of the Jewish people ... From the circumstance that the advent of the Saviour

²⁹ Here the Masoretic text (M) has וְלָשׁוּב נָפֶשׁ, associated with the שׁוּב of repentance, while the Targum (T) has וְלָשׁוּב נָפֶשׁ.

is limited, in the way of promise, to such of the Jews as should repent, and turn to God.” Oswalt observes that **יִשְׂרָאֵל** is also mentioned in ISAIAH 58:1, but there **Jacob** is declared as rebellious while here repentant: “Thus the section (ISAIAH 58:1–59:21) has moved from declaration of sin to turning from sin, and from judgment to redemption.” ¶ Elder Reed Smoot said in General Conference, “... it had been declared (Numbers 24:17): ‘There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel.’ The great Prophet Isaiah later explained (ISAIAH 59:20): ‘The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord.’ This was to Israel the promised and hoped for Christ, who so firmly declared this basic principle of faith in the living God (John 14:1): ‘Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me.’”³⁰ Birks suggests: “*And there shall come for Zion*] The renderings ‘unto Zion,’ AV, ‘for the sake of Zion,’ LXX, ‘out of Zion,’ Romans 11:26, are not inconsistent. The Hebrew is ‘for’ in the sense, ‘on behalf of,’ which ‘unto’ nearly expresses, only not being understood in its local sense. The Apostle’s version ‘out of’ seems an allusion to Psalm 14:7. That this Redeemer will ‘turn away ungodliness from Jacob’ is implied, though not clearly expressed. After the dark description in ISAIAH 59:11–15, the fact that so many converts are found is a proof that this Redeemer has been exalted ‘to give repentance to Israel.’” Cheyne notes: “*To Zion*] i.e., to the remnant of Israel—‘those that have turned from rebellion’ (comp. ISAIAH 1:27), as the parallel line tells us. This limitation is one which English students of the prophecies would do well to remember: it shows that the Messianic promises to Israel are only meant for a converted and regenerate people.” Wordsworth notes: “*the Redeemer shall come to Zion*] Compare to Malachi 3:1, ‘The Lord shall suddenly come to His Temple.’” President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “Malachi speaks of the Lord sending his messenger to prepare the way before him, and while that does have reference to the coming of John the Baptist, it is one of those prophecies in the scriptures that has a double fulfilment. It has reference also to the coming of the Prophet Joseph Smith, because that messenger which was to come and prepare the way before him, was to come in this day.”³¹ ¶ Birks has: “It amounts to the same thing whether it be said that Christ comes to Zion to deliver, or that the deliverer appears from that quarter. Both agree on the direction from which salvation is to come to Judea and to the world. But while the fact of some manifestation of Christ’s presence in Zion is made clear, the manner of it is left

as much in the dark.” Perhaps not so dark to the LDS. ¶ Elder Orson Pratt explained: “[The Lord] will return [the Saints] to Jackson County, and in the westerns part of the State of Missouri they will build up a city which shall be called Zion, which will be the headquarters of this Latter-day Saint Church; and that will be the place where the prophets, apostles, and inspired men of God will have their headquarters. It will be the place where the Lord God will manifest Himself to His people, as He has promised in the Scriptures (Zechariah 2:10; ISAIAH 59:20) as well as in modern revelation (D&C 45:67; D&C 116:1).”³² Similarly, President Brigham Young stated: “When will Zion be redeemed? When will the Savior make his appearance in the midst of his people? (D&C 1:36). When will the veil be taken away, that we may behold the glory of God? Can any of you answer these questions? Yes, readily, when I tell you. The redemption of Zion is the first step preparatory to the two last-named events. Just as soon as the Latter-day Saints are ready and prepared to return to Independence, Jackson County, in the State of Missouri, North America, just so soon will the voice of the Lord be heard, ‘Arise now, Israel, and make your way to the Center Stake of Zion.’”³³

21 As for me, this [is] my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that [is] upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.

As for me, this [is] my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that [is] upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth. The Targum (ⲧ) has, for the first half, “And as for me, this shall be my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My Holy Spirit that is upon thee, and the words of my prophecy which I have put in thy mouth.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And this shall be my covenant with them, said the Lord, this spirit of mine which is upon thee, and these words which I have put in thy mouth shall not fail from thy mouth, nor from the mouth of thy seed, (for the Lord hath spoken) from this time forth forever.” Instead of *covenant with them*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *covenant with you*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) begins with, “This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord: My spirit &c.” ¶ Rawlinson has: “*As for me*]

³⁰ Elder Reed Smoot, General Conference – October 1933, p. 111.

³¹ President Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*.

³² Elder Orson Pratt, “The Latter-Day Kingdom of God,” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 10 April 1870. JD 13:138a.

³³ President Brigham Young, “Gathering of the Saints.” Bowery, Great Salt Lake City, 28 July 1861. JD 9:137.

literally, *and P*” [פֶּן]. Wade has: “The opening words have some resemblance to Genesis 9:9, 17:4,” the latter related to the Abrahamic covenant. Young says, “It is because the Lord once made this covenant with Abraham that He will come for Zion.” Henderson says: “The subject, [in] ISAIAH 59:21, is the dispensation of the spirit and truth to the restored Israelites, of which they should no more be deprived as in times past. The change from the third person plural to the second singular is not uncommon in Hebrew, and seems to be here specially made with a view to give greater point and interest to the promise ... the events to which the prediction refers—the future conversion of the Jews.” And not the Jews only, but also all the tribes of Israel. Barnes has: “In the verse previous, it had been stated that the qualifications on the part of people for their partaking of the benefits of the Redeemer’s work, were, that they should turn from transgression ... The word ‘thee’ here does not refer, as Jerome and others suppose, to the prophet, but to the pious Hebrew people.” That is, to Israel. Cowles suggests: “It is naturally associated most closely with the word of truth which God puts into the mouth of his Son, and then through him and through the Spirit, into the mouth and into the heart of all his people, his spiritual seed, and their seed onward through all generations of the church to the end of times.” Rabbi Rosenberg notes that the covenant we have here is that which is mentioned in Jeremiah 31:31–34. It is the new and everlasting covenant that is here mentioned, including the Abrahamic covenant. Ibn Ezra associates these promises with those of Joel, “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions” (Joel 2:28). This particular verse in Joel was one which Angel Moroni told the Prophet Joseph Smith was soon to take place (Joseph Smith—History 1:41). ¶ *Shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and [until] forever.* מִעַתָּה וְעַד-עוֹלָם. Bishops’ Bible translates it as: “from this time foorth for euermore, worlde without ende.” Shalom Paul suggests that “Israel is destined to be a nation of prophets,” and quotes Moses, “Would God that all the LORD’S people were prophets,³⁴ and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!”

³⁴ The Prophet Joseph Smith explained that spiritual things are shown to the Prophets and those who humble themselves as little children: “Wherefore, we again say, search the revelations of God; study the prophecies, and rejoice that God grants unto the world Seers and Prophets. They are they who saw the mysteries of godliness ... they saw the stone cut out of the mountain, which filled the whole earth; they saw the Son of God come from the regions of bliss and dwell with men on earth; they saw the deliverer come out of Zion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob (—E&MS August, 1832. DHC 1:282–284).” Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, pp. 12–13.

(Numbers 11:29b). Birks has: “[From] Israel, ISAIAH 49:3, righteousness will now overflow to the whole people. They will be raised at length to their high calling as the Lord’s royal priesthood; and the oath to Abraham, and the truth to Jacob, be fulfilled through successive generations, as it had been sworn to the fathers from the days of old.” Alexander well says, and this fits perfectly with what we know as LDS, “The true explanation seems to be that Israel is here, as in many other parts of this great prophecy, regarded not merely as a receiver but as a dispenser of the truth.” Indeed, it is Ephraim and Manasseh who shall help gather the rest of Israel, scattered throughout the world, into Zion. ¶ Elder Erastus Snow declared: “[The Lord] promised Abraham on another occasion that in him and his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed ... This was a great work that the Lord purposed concerning the seed of Abraham, and it was for this reason and purpose that he promised to establish his covenant with them forever.”³⁵ ¶ Now, Keith’s comments here are of particular interest: “His Spirit, then poured upon the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, will continue with them, keeping them faithful to him who will then be in reality, as well as by title, the King of the Jews. It is of this period of their history that it is similarly said, ‘I will make a covenant of peace with them, it shall be an everlasting covenant with them, and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore,’ (Ezekiel 37:26).” The Ezekiel scripture is the one associated with the Book of Mormon as a tool to gather Israel and re-establish the Abrahamic covenant (see also Wade’s comment at the beginning of this verse) through the Book of Mormon.

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³⁵ Apostle Erastus Snow, Logan, 6 May 1882. JD 23:182a

Isaiah 60

The emphasis of the early Church leaders—as it relates to this beautiful chapter of Isaiah—was to speak of Zion or the *New Jerusalem* to be built in Jackson County, Missouri, and surrounding area. Nothing that is said about the New Jerusalem or the American Zion is meant in any way to take away from the glory that the Lord will also place upon Jerusalem in the Holy Land (e.g., see Elder Orson Pratt, JD 14:355-56). We know that the Lord has promised that in the Millennium, “He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem” (Micah 4:2b). ¶ Regarding the *New Jerusalem* we read: “The place where the Saints will gather and Christ will personally reign with them during the Millennium. Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent, and the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory (A of F 1:10). It also refers to a holy city that will come down out of heaven at the beginning of the Millennium” (LDS Guide to the Scriptures). In Doctrine and Covenants we further read: “And with one heart and with one mind, gather up your riches that ye may purchase an inheritance which shall hereafter be appointed unto you. And it shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the Most High God; And the glory of the Lord shall be there, and the terror of the Lord also shall be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it, and it shall be called Zion” (D&C 45:65-67, and compare with ISAIAH 60:5-7, below). Also see Ether 13:1-12. ¶ Elder Parley P. Pratt spoke of Zion with much tenderness: “But in order to form a still more striking idea of the prosperity, wealth, beauty, and magnificence of the cities of Zion and Jerusalem, we will quote ISAIAH 60: [ISAIAH 60 is quoted here]. In this chapter we learn—First, that there is a city to be built in the last days, unto which not only Israel, but all the nations of the Gentiles, are to flow; and the nation and kingdom that will not serve that city shall perish and be utterly wasted. Second, we learn that the name of that city is Zion, the city of the Lord. Third, we learn that it is called the place of his sanctuary, and the place of his feet. Fourth, that the best of timber, consisting of fir, pine and boxwood, is to be brought in great plenty, to beautify the place of his sanctuary, and make the place of his feet glorious. Fifth, the precious metals are to abound in such plenty, that gold is to be in the room of brass, silver in the room of iron, brass in the room of wood, iron in the room of stones. Their officers are to be peace-officers, and their exactors righteous exactors; violence is no more to be heard in the land; wasting nor destruction within their borders. Their walls are to be Salvation, and their gates Praise; while the glory of God, in the midst of the city, outshines the sun. The days of their mourning are ended; their people are all righteous, and are to inherit the land forever, being the branch of the Lord’s planting, that he may be glorified. A little one shall become a strong nation, and the Lord will hasten it in his time.”¹ ¶ President Joseph Fielding Smith also explained: “When Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon, he learned that America is the land of Zion which was given to Joseph and his children and that on this land the City Zion, or New Jerusalem, is to be built. He also learned that Jerusalem in Palestine is to be rebuilt and become a holy city. These two cities, one in the land of Zion and one in Palestine, are to become capitals for the kingdom of God during the Millennium ... We accept the fact that the center place where the City New Jerusalem is to be built, is in Jackson County, Missouri. It was never the intention to substitute Utah or any other place for Jackson County. But we do hold that Zion, when reference is made to the land, is as broad as America, both North and South—all of it is Zion ... At the April conference of the Church, held at Nauvoo in 1844, the Prophet Joseph Smith declared that the whole of America was Zion” (Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3:71). ¶ The Gentile exegetes agree on quite a few important points with the LDS perspective. These authors, however, would mostly speak of the glory that will surround Jerusalem in the Holy Land and do not understand that two separate places are involved. Birks speaks of a latter-day “restoration of Israel” and also mentions “a still future recovery of Israel, when the broken olive branches [meaning the natural branches or Israel—GB] shall be grafted in once more.” There are constant allusions to ISAIAH 60 (as well as other portions of Isaiah) in Revelation 21: “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and *they shall be his people*, and *God himself shall be with them, and be *their God**. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and *I will be his God*, and *he shall be my son* ... And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me

¹ Pratt, Parley P. *A Voice of Warning and Instruction to All People Or, an Introduction to the Faith and Doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* By Elder Parley P. Pratt. New Edition. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1957. Included is the preface to the First American Edition (1837) and the Second European Edition (December 4, 1846), pp. 128-132.

that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Revelation 21:1-4, 7, 9-27). ¶ In ISAIAH 60, then, we hear of both the New Jerusalem (in the American Continent) as well as Jerusalem (in the Holy Land). Some of the prophecies will be fulfilled before and others after the Second Coming.

vv. 1-8. There would be much spiritual darkness in the latter-days, after which the Gospel light would burst forth with the restoration of the Gospel. After the restoration, however, there would be an ever increasing gap between the light of the restored Gospel and the darkness of mystic Babylon. Of a truth, Isaiah's prophecy would be fulfilled, wherein people would "call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" (ISAIAH 5:20b). Ironside has: "Restored Israel is brought to the forefront of God's plan and blessing for the whole earth ... The nations that once persecuted [Israel will] acknowledge that God is with them, and they will seek to enter into fellowship and communion with them. This is to be taken literally. God will deal thus with His people Israel and bring the nations that once antagonized and persecuted them into this blessed harmony in the last days."

1 ¶ ARISE, shine; for thy light is come, ✓
and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.

✓ or, be enlightened; for thy light cometh

The Targum (T) has, "Arise, shine, O Jerusalem, for the time of thy redemption is come, and the glory of the Lord is revealed upon thee." The LXX (G) reads, "BE ENLIGHTENED: be enlightened, Jerusalem! for thy light is come; and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." The Douay-Rheims (D) begins with, "Arise be

enlightened, O Jerusalem: for thy light &c."

¶ Alexander explains: "The Hebrew אֲרִיזָה ... means not to rise in general, but to rise above the horizon." Cowles has: "*Is risen upon thee*] Gives the Hebrew a beautiful allusion to the rising sun." Jennings has: "Jehovah shines on Jerusalem. Jerusalem shines on the earth." Wordsworth notes: "Observe the contrast between Zion and Babylon. To Babylon it is said, 'Come down, and sit in the dust' (ISAIAH 47:1); but to Zion it is said, 'Awake, awake' (lit. Wake thyself, wake thyself), 'stand up' (ISAIAH 51:17); 'Awake, awake; shake thyself from the dust; Arise' (ISAIAH 52:2); 'Arise, shine!' (ISAIAH 60:1)." Wordsworth also reminds us that it is mystic Babylon that will be humbled and Zion, exalted. Keith sees the fulfillment of Malachi: "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall" (Malachi 4:1-2). Skinner says: "The image in these strikingly beautiful verses is that of a city glittering in the first rays of the morning sun." Oswalt, leaning on Muilenburg points out: "*Glory* is characteristic of divine theophanies. When God appears, it is his כְּבוֹד, his overwhelmingly majestic reality, that impresses itself on the observer." So it is that we have, "And it came to pass that he saw One descending out of the midst of heaven, and he beheld that his luster was above that of

the sun at noon-day” (1 Nephi 1:9); and furthermore, “I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me” (JS-History 1:16b). The words light and sun are so often associated. ¶ Elder Orson Pratt says: “I will cite the attention of the congregation to the first verse of the 60th chapter of Isaiah,—‘Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon thee.’ The passage which I have quoted from Isaiah has reference to the latter-day Zion, about which the choir sang at the opening of the meeting. That there may be no misunderstanding about the people to whom the Prophet had reference, I will read some other passages connected with it,— ‘And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord.’ The Zion that is here spoken of is called upon to ‘arise and shine, for the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.’ There is no one thing more fully revealed in the Scriptures of eternal truth, than the rise of the Zion of our God in the latter days, clothed upon with the glory of God from the heavens—a Zion that will attract the attention of all the nations and kindreds of the whole earth. It will not be something that takes place in a corner on some distant island of the sea, or away among some obscure people; but it will be something that will call forth the attention of all people and nations upon the face of the whole earth. The rise of Zion, the latter-day Zion. What are we to understand by the meaning of Zion? What I understand, and what the Scriptures have portrayed in regard to the meaning of Zion is, a people who shall receive the law of God, and who shall be acknowledged of the Lord as *his people*—a people who shall be gathered together from the nations of the earth, and *build a house* to the name of the Lord¹ in the latter-

¹ Note allusion to *Rain in Due Season*, “And I will set my tabernacle among you ... And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people” (Leviticus 26:11a-12). Regarding the durability of the Temples, Elder Orson Pratt also taught: “Now, in this world there will be Temples, and these Temples will be constructed according to the most perfect law of the celestial kingdom, for the world in which they are built or in which they stand will be a celestial body. This last Temple that I am speaking of, or this last one to be built in Jackson County, Missouri, will be constructed after that heavenly pattern in all particulars. Why? Because it will never perish, it will exist forever ... I say there is a higher law, a controlling power over all the laws of nature, that will prevent these buildings from decaying; and I wish while dwelling upon this subject to say a little about another subject; that is, the building up of Palestine with the new Jerusalem. It will be the old Jerusalem rebuilt upon its former site. Now, will that city ever be destroyed, will it ever decay? Will the Temple to be built in Palestine ever be thrown down or ever be furrowed with hail, rain, snow and frost—will these ever have any effect upon it? No, not in the least. Why? Because God will be there. So He will be in the temple of Zion on this continent, and by His power, by His laws—which are superior to all those grosser laws of nature—He will preserve both of these cities, one on the western hemisphere, and one on the eastern hemisphere, from any decay whatever ... Shall I limit that power to the preserving of a Temple!

days. A people who shall have their abiding place in the mountains, and who shall build a city that shall be called Zion. All these things are clearly portrayed in prophecy. The people of God must be a people who give the most diligent heed to his word; they will be guided by revelation from him, and among them his power will be made conspicuously manifest. These are characteristics concerning this latter-day Zion, spoken of by the ancient Prophets, which, if the Spirit of the Lord will enable me to clearly comprehend the subject, I will endeavor, this afternoon, in my simple language and in my simple manner, to lay before this congregation.”² Elder Charles Penrose testified: “... out of this Church may be built up the kingdom that all the prophets and inspired men of God have seen from the beginning, upon which the glory of God shall shine, and over which the Lord shall rule. This work will prevail, no matter what opposition may be brought to bear against it ... All manner of lies are circulated concerning us, which, however, only serve to increase our strength.”³ ¶ President John Taylor often quoted this scripture: “We are going to build up Zion. What then? When Zion is built up—and it is not built up yet; but it will be built up; and when that is done, Jerusalem that is spoken of shall be built—and we are a long way from that—but when that is built up and the glory of God shall rest upon it, upon every dwelling of Mount Zion as it did in former times then we will build up our Zion after the pattern that God will show us, and we will be governed by his law and submit to his authority and be governed by the holy priesthood and by the word and will of God. And then when the time comes that these calamities we read of shall overtake the earth, those that are prepared will have the power of translation, as they had in former times, and the city will be translated. And Zion that is on the earth will rise, and the Zion above will descend, as we are told, and we will meet and fall on each other’s necks and embrace and kiss each other.”⁴ At another time President John Taylor showed

No. The same Being could preserve the city round about the Temple, hence it is a city that shall never be destroyed nor thrown down from that time henceforth and forever. God will be in the city.” In this most precious prophetic talk, Elder Orson Pratt also said: “We have lived here long enough to fulfill a great many of the prophecies that are contained in this good Jewish Bible. But we have not yet got through with fulfilling prophecies” (Apostle Orson Pratt, Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 26 October 1879, JD 24:25-28). I recommend the reading of that complete talk, some of which we have reproduced in this chapter.

² Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*, June 15, 1873, Delivered in the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday afternoon. The rise of Zion in the last days, pp. 78-79. Emphasis added.

³ Elder Charles W. Penrose, *The Testimony of the Gospel, Etc.*, delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday, 14 August 1881. JD 22:216-217.

⁴ President John Taylor, *The Great Principles of Truth As Taught By Revelation to the Ancients, and Also to the Saints in Our Day*. Ogden Tabernacle, Sunday, 21 March 1880. JD 21:253b.

us the way to follow: “If we will cleave to God and do our duty and purge ourselves from unrighteousness and live our religion and keep His commandments, Zion will arise and shine, and the glory of God will rest upon her. And when this nation and other nations shall crumble to pieces, Zion and the glory thereof will extend from nation to nation, and it will continue to spread and grow until the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and his Christ, and every creature in heaven and on the earth will be heard to say, Blessing and glory and honor and praise and power, and might and majesty and dominion be ascribed to Him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb forever.”⁵ Our final quote from President John Taylor here is: “We are living in the dispensation of the fulness of times, when God has commenced to gather together all things in one. He has revealed to us His law, and He is continuing to do so. It is for us to learn to subject ourselves to that law, to obey His commands, submit to His authority, and pursue that course that we can always have the approbation of the Most High. Let us eschew evil, cleave to that which is good, honor our God and our religion, and the blessings of heaven will rest upon and abide with us from this time henceforth and forever. Zion will arise and shine, the power of God will be made manifest in our midst, and no hand, nor any power that shall rise against us, shall be able to injure or destroy us.”⁶

2 For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: The Targum (ⲧ) has, “kingdoms” instead of *people*. The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Behold darkness will cover the earth and thick

darkness the nations.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has *mist* instead of *gross darkness*. ¶ Keith says: “The[re is a] contrast which is drawn between the condition of Israel and that of the Gentile world. Theirs [the Gentiles], at the period of Israel’s conversion, is said to be a state of gross darkness, that is, spiritual darkness.” Rawlinson has: “As in Egypt a ‘thick darkness’ covered the whole land⁷ at the word of Moses (Exodus 10:22), while still ‘the children of Israel had light in their dwellings,’ so now the world and ‘the nations’ of the world lay in a deep obscurity, into which scarcely a ray of light penetrated, while on Israel there dawned a glory which streamed from the throne of God.” ¶ President Gordon B. Hinckley explained: “Ignorance and evil enveloped the world, resulting in what is known as the Dark Ages. Isaiah had predicted: ‘Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people.’ . . . But somehow, in that long season of darkness, a candle was lighted. The age of Renaissance brought with it a flowering of learning, art, and science. There came a movement of bold and courageous men and women who looked heavenward in acknowledgment of God and His divine Son. We speak of it as the Reformation. And then, after many generations had walked the earth—so many of them in conflict, hatred, darkness, and evil—there arrived the great, new day of the Restoration. This glorious gospel was ushered in with the appearance of the Father and the Son to the boy Joseph.”⁸ Elder LeGrand Richards said: “My testimony is such that I say that if the veil were parted and we could understand why this world has made such great progress in the last one hundred and thirty years since the gospel was restored as compared with all the history of the past, we would know that it was because the Father and the Son had come and broken the darkness, just as the scriptures say. Isaiah said, ‘The darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people’ (ISAIAH 60:2). During that time the world made no progress. Year after year, century after century, they lived in the same kind of houses and traveled in the same crude manner and lived in the same crude homes with no modern conveniences. Then all at once the light broke forth. The Lord said: ‘I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and...your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions’ (Joel 2:28).”⁹ ¶ *But the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “But in thee the Shekinah of the Lord shall dwell, and His glory shall be revealed upon thee.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “But upon thee the Lord will shine and

⁵ President John Taylor, “Slain for the Testimony of Jesus,” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 3 August 1879. JD 20:254a. President John Taylor also taught: “We talk about being a good people ... but we ought to be twenty times better than we are today. And if we, as Latter-day Saints, were to strictly observe the Sabbath day, and pay our tithes and offerings, and meet our engagements, and be less worldly minded, be united in temporal and spiritual things, Zion would arise and shine, and the glory of God would rest upon her. And it would not be long before all nations would call us blessed.” (Elder John Taylor, “Honor the Sabbath,” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 7 July 1878. JD 20:24). Furthermore, Elder John Taylor testified: “Israel will rise and shine, and the power of God will rest upon his people, and the work that he has commenced will roll forth ‘until the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God, and his Christ; and he shall rule for ever and ever’ (Revelation 11:15)” (Elder John Taylor, Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 7 October 1874. JD 17:211).

⁶ Elder John Taylor, “Instructions to Missionaries,” Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 14 April 1867. JD 12:23b.

⁷ The American Continent also experienced such darkness after the death of Christ.

⁸ President Gordon B. Hinckley, “The Dawning of a Brighter Day,” April 1981 General Conference.

⁹ Elder Richards in 1960, *Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year*. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1960-1966, p. 3.

his glory over thee will be conspicuous.” Instead of *arise*, the Peshitta (ܣ) has *shine*. ¶ Nyman quotes the prophet Joseph Smith in relation to this verse: “Consider for a moment, brethren, the fulfillment of the words of the prophet; for we behold that darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the minds of the inhabitants thereof—that crimes of every description are increasing among men ... the rising generation growing up in the fullness of pride and arrogance ... and indifference toward the things of eternity increasing among those who profess a belief in the religion of heaven ... and denying the faith of Jesus (TPJS, p. 47).” Elder Dallin H. Oaks spoke about “the deterioration in religious faith that has happened in my own life,” especially in regards to the divinity of Jesus Christ. As an antidote to this growing cancer, Elder Oaks said, “That is one reason the Lord inspired his prophet, Ezra Taft Benson, to have us reemphasize our study and testimony of the Book of Mormon, whose mission is ‘the convincing of Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God’ (Book of Mormon, title page).”¹⁰ The Doctrine and Covenants similarly has: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, *darkness covereth the earth, and gross darkness the minds of the people*, and all flesh has become corrupt before my face” (D&C 112:23, emphasis added, also see 112:19-34). Elder Wilford Woodruff taught, “When I was a boy, fifty years ago, the kingdom of God had not been established among men; the angels of God had not visited the earth; the Lord Almighty had not clothed his servants with the Priesthood and commanded them to go and warn the nations of the earth of the judgments which awaited them. There was not the wickedness then that there is today. The wickedness committed today in the Christian world in twenty-four hours is greater than would have been committed in a hundred years at the ratio of fifty years ago. And the spirit of wickedness is increasing...”¹¹ ¶ To summarize, the Restoration burst forth as a light upon a dark world. Since then, the light found in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day

Saints stands as a beacon in contrast to much of the increasing darkness; a light that is ever attracting the honest at heart to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and membership in His Church.

3 And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

And the Gentiles shall come to thy light. The LXX (6) reads, “And kings will walk by thy light.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “And the Gentiles shall walk in thy light.” ¶ I prefer to here translate גוֹיִם as *nations*, with the idea that the light of the Gospel is what will attract Israel as scattered upon the Gentile nations and throughout the world. Birks points us to Revelation 21:24. Keith suggests: “As the bright dawning of the sun arrests the eye, so will the favoured condition of Israel, when the glory of the Lord shall be seen upon her, excite the notice and the interest of the Gentiles, and they shall go to witness and to participate in her blessings.” הָלַךְ, and walk, from the root, הָלַךְ. Alexander explains: “*And nations shall walk in thy light*] The Hebrew preposition לְ does not correspond to our *to* as a particle of motion or direction, but expresses relation in the widest and most general manner ... In this case it seems to mean that they shall walk with reference to the light in question, which in English may be best expressed by *in*, but not as a literal translation.” ¶ Elder Wilford Woodruff said: “Whether men believe or not, this Zion so often spoken of in holy writ, has got to arise and put on her beautiful garments; these mountain vales have got to be filled with the saints of God and temples reared to his holy name, preparatory to the time when ‘the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.’ And this time will come when the nations are fully warned by the preaching of the servants judgments commence to be poured out upon the world, in fulfillment of the revelations of St. John (Revelation 16:1-21)”¹² After quoting ISAIAH 60:3, Elder Orson Pratt said: “... showing clearly, and plainly that the Gentiles, and even the kings of the earth, will in that day be excited by the glory of God, that will shine forth upon Zion, which will be as a city set on a hill whose light cannot be hid.”¹³ Elder Wilford Woodruff taught that ISAIAH 60:3 would begin to be fulfilled in his day: “These things are to come to pass in our day, and the beginning has

¹⁰ Elder Dallin H. Oaks, “Witnesses of Christ,” October 1990 General Conference.

¹¹ Elder Wilford Woodruff, “Eventful Times.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 1 January 1871, JD 14:3. This verse has been frequently quoted by the Brethren including: Elder Charles W. Penrose, “Insufficiency of Mere Belief in Christ.” Salt Lake Assembly Hall, 25 April 1880. JD 21:88; Elder Charles W. Penrose, “The Work of Restitution of All Things.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 17 August 1879. JD 20:294-295; Elder Wilford Woodruff, “The Gospel Embraces All Truth.” General Conference, New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 7 April 1873. JD 16:37; Elder Orson Pratt, “Book of Mormon.” New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 18 July 1875. JD 18:164; Elder Orson Pratt, “The Setting Up of God’s Kingdom in These Latter Days.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 4 February 4, 1872, JD 15:74b; Elder Orson Pratt, “The Apostasy.” New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, June 14, 1868, JD 12:248; Elder Orson Pratt, JD 16:83, 15 June 1873. Also, see Elder Orson Pratt, “Zion.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 10 March 1872, JD 14:355.

¹² Elder Wilford Woodruff, “Fulfillment of Prophecy.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 30 June 1878, JD 19:359b.

¹³ Elder Orson Pratt, “The Rise of Zion in the Last Days.” New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 15 June 1873, JD 16:83a. Also see Elder Orson Pratt, “Fulfillment of Prophecy.” New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 30 August 1875, JD 18:153-154.

commenced, and the end will come by the power of God and in fulfillment of his promises; and it is at our hands the work is required. Therefore I feel to bear my testimony today that this is the work of God, that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God ... We are called to build on the foundation he laid, until Zion shall arise and put on her beautiful garments and the people of God become united as the heart of one man; until the little stone, cut out of the mountain without hands, becomes a mountain and fills the whole earth, and accomplishes all God has spoken concerning it.”¹⁴ ¶ *And kings to the brightness of thy rising.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And kings to thy brightness.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And nations by thy splendour.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has *in* rather than *to*. ¶ President Heber C. Kimball explains the term *kings*: “You all say that we are to become a kingdom of kings and priests, of queens and priestesses.”¹⁵ See also, Keith’s comments in ISAIAH 61:6. No doubt, among the traditional kings, there will also be much interest in the manifest goodness and light coming from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. There also is an allusion to the kings of the earth that played a role in the restoration of Israel as a nation.

4 Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at [thy] side.

Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: The Targum (ⲧ) has this about Jerusalem, and the second clause, “And see all the children of the people if thy captivity.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Raise thine eyes around.”

¶ Delitzsch says: “Zion is now exhorted, as in ISAIAH 49:18, to lift up her eyes, and turn them in all directions; for she is the object sought by an approaching multitude.” Barnes has: “Jerusalem is here addressed as a female with eyes cast down from grief. She is directed to lift them up, and to see the great multitudes that were flocking to her.” Gill suggests: “... the vast number of converts flocking from all parts of the world to join themselves to the church of Christ, and to behold the wonderful work of God among the Jews now converted.” ¶ *All they gather themselves together, they come to thee:* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Who are gathered together.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And behold thy

children gathered together.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “All these are gathered together, they are come to thee.” ¶ Fausset has: “The Gentile peoples come together to bring back the dispersed Hebrews, restore their city, and worship Jehovah with offerings.” Delitzsch suggests: “The multitude that are crowding together and coming near are the diaspora of her sons and daughters that have been scattered far away (ISAIAH 11:12).” Gill likewise has: “This seems to have respect ... to the Jews themselves, who are scattered up and down in the world; but now, being in a wonderful manner converted, shall gather together in a body, and go up to Jerusalem, where a Christian church of them will be formed, and to which they will join themselves.” This will happen *after* Jerusalem is under attack on all quarters and the Savior stands on the Mount of Olives. ¶ Elder Orson Pratt taught: “There will be millions ... who will come up to Zion, besides the Saints of God; they will come to behold the glory of God which will rest upon Zion.”¹⁶ The world’s attention will be focused on The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

¶ *Thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at [thy] side.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Thy sons shall come from far into thy midst, and thy daughters shall be carried upon the arms (literally, ‘on the sides’).” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “All thy sons are come from afar, and thy daughters shall be carried on shoulders.” Instead of *thy side*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *cradles*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, for the second clause, “And thy daughters shall rise up at thy side.”

¶ Gesenius explains: “עַל צֶדֶק at the *side*, i.e. on the arms where children are carried.” Cowles explains: “The Hebrew means, borne as a child in the arms, and not strictly ‘nursed’ as the English version has it.” Some other translations include: “Thy sons are coming from afar, and thy daughters are brought along in arms” (Leeser); “Thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be carried in the arms” (ASV); and “Your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be carried on the hip” (ESV, also see Henderson, Nägelsbach, and Skinner). הָאֵמְנָה from the root אָמַן, means “not only to nurse, but also to bear, carry” (Keith). TDOT also includes the idea of *caring for*, and HAL, “to occupy oneself constantly with,” and BDB *to support*. In other words, to dangle the daughters on the hip, but more than that, to truly take care off a child with parental interest. This clause seems to be a reference to the children of Israel being gathered from every nation under the heavens with the utmost care, as that which is given to those who hear the gospel from the missionaries. Birks well says: “The sons and daughters are ... [the] children [of Israel] returning from

¹⁴ Elder Wilford Woodruff, “Eventful Times.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 1 January 1871, JD 14:6.

¹⁵ President Heber C. Kimball, “Gathering of the People of God in The Last Days—Return to Jackson County.” Great Salt Lake City, 17 February 1861. JD 8:349. See also “And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These *are* the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel” (Exodus 19:6).

¹⁶ Elder Orson Pratt, “The Kingdom of God.” Bowery, Great Salt Lake City, 8 July 1855, JD 3:73-74.

their former dispersion, when ‘he that scattered Israel will gather him’ (Jeremiah 31:10).”

5 Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, [✓] the forces [✓] of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.

✓ or, noise of the sea shall be turned toward thee

✓ ✓ or, wealth

Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Then thou shalt see and be enlightened (or, ‘be made to shine’), and thou shalt be struck with awe (i.e., ‘to fear with reverence’), and thine heart shall be enlarged on account of the terror of sinners.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Then thou wilt look and be filled with awe and astonished at heart.” The BPE (Ⲥ) has, “Then thou shalt see and shine; thou shalt rejoice and thy heart shall enlarge.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “Then shalt thou see, and abound, and thy heart shall wonder and be enlarged.” ¶ The context of פחד here is not one of fear but one of joy as in the Peshitta (Ⲥ). פחד is often used with the idea of *trembling* (TDOT), but one can *tremble with joy* or to be *startled*, *shiver* or *tremble* (HAL). “Estremecerse de emoción” or *tremble with emotion*, is what is suggested by the *Diccionario de Hebreo Bíblico* (DHB). TLOT well explains: “The original meaning of the root, evident throughout, is ‘to quiver, shake’ (cf. Job 4:14 *hip ‘il*; P. Joüon, *Bib 6* [1925]: 175; Becker, op. cit. 7f.). It produces both the meaning ‘to shake with joy’ (ISAIAH 60:5 ‘your heart will shake and become wide [רחב qal],’ Jeremiah 33:9 par. רננ ‘to tremble’) and the dominant meaning ‘to shake with terror.’” AMP thus offers: “Then you shall see and be radiant, and your heart shall thrill and tremble with joy.” ASV renders it: “Then thou shalt see and be radiant, and thy heart shall thrill and be enlarged.” Bishops’ has, “Then thou shalt see this and be glorious, thou shalt maruayle exceedingly, and thyne heart shalbe opened.” HCSB translates it: “Then you will see and be radiant, and your heart will tremble and rejoice.” Horsley likewise has: “Thine heart shall fear and be enlarged] Rather, ‘thine heart shall beat and be enlarged.’ I imagine that פחד, when לב is its subject, may denote the accelerated beating of the heart from the sudden emotion of any other passion as well as fear.” Westermann beautifully says: “Thrilled and trembling with joy, what she [Zion] sees first of all are the strangers bringing Zion’s sons and daughters ... Some

editors connect this with the pilgrimage of the nations to Zion in ISAIAH 2 and Micah 4.” In Isaiah we there have: “And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem” (ISAIAH 2:2–3). ¶ The next clause through ISAIAH 60:7 seem to speak of the great wealth that would be obtained from the ocean and from the earth, with precious materials for the construction of the House of the Lord—and probably also that of the New Jerusalem as well as Jerusalem. ¶ *Because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “For the riches of the west shall be transferred unto thee.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Because the riches of the sea and of nations and peoples will pour in upon thee.” The BPE (Ⲥ) has, “For the abundance (or *riches*, Lamsa) of the sea shall return to thee.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has *multitude* instead of *abundance*. ¶ Most translations have the idea of the HCSB, “because the riches of the sea will become yours.” Oswalt suggests: “Whenever people who have groped in darkness find the light, especially the light of life, their reaction is gratitude, and that is what is described here.” In other words, the converts would come ready to give all, as they live the law of consecration. ¶ *The forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “treasures” for *forces*. The BPE (Ⲥ) has as in the margin ¶, “And the riches (or *strength*, Lamsa) of the nations shall come unto thee.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has *strength* rather than *forces*. ¶ Cowles has: “The cause is touched briefly in the last clause where the words ‘abundance’ and ‘forces’ may mean either the wealth or the multitudes of people. Probably both ideas are embraced—the masses of people *coming with their substance*, as the prophet goes on to show. The view of such incoming hosts, not poverty-stricken hordes, but caravans laden with wealth; people coming to enrich the holy city and adorn her godly temples—how could it fail to agitate her throbbing bosom!” Barnes says: “*The forces of the Gentiles*] Margin ¶, ‘wealth.’ The margin ¶ has undoubtedly the correct interpretation. The word used here (חיל), usually, indeed, denotes strength, might, valor; an army, forces, host; but it also means riches, wealth (Genesis 24:29; Deuteronomy 8:17-18; Ruth 4:11; Job 20:15. The LXX (Ⲭ) renders the passage, ‘The riches of the sea, and of the nations, and of the people will come over to thee.’ The sense is, that the wealth of the pagan world would be consecrated to the service of the church.” *Cambridge* points us to Haggai

2:7, “And I will cause to quake all the nations, and the precious things of all the nations shall come *hither*: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts” (Leeser). ¶ Of the Ten Tribes, see D&C 133:26–28, 30–31).

6 The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the LORD.

The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: The Targum (ܬ) has, “A multitude of Arabians shall cover thee round about, the dromedaries of Midian and Holad (according to the Royal Polyglot **עִפָּה**, the Hebrew text signifying ‘weariness,’

answering to the Arabic **هَلَد**, ‘weary.’ Midian was a son of Abraham by Keturah, and Ephah = Holad the son of Midian. Genesis 24:4), all of them from Sheba (Sheba was another son of Abraham by Keturah) shall come.” The LXX (8) reads, “And for thee will come herds of camels and those of Madiam and Gaipha will cover thee, and those of Saba will come.” ¶ Keith offers: “‘The **multitude** [שְׂפָעָה (שְׂפָעָה)—GB] of camels,’ is expressed still more strongly in the original, which signifies ‘an inundation of camels.’ The significance of the expression is understood by those who have witnessed the immense herds of those animals which are reared in the East, and which form a common and large item of property, and an index of wealth.” Alexander similarly has: “Ewald has greatly improved upon the usual translation of שְׂפָעָה by exchanging **multitude** for **stream** or **flood**, the version given by Jerome (*inundatio*), and not only more expressive than the other, but in perfect accordance with the etymology, and with the usage of the noun itself in Job 22:11, 38:34 ... This explanation of שְׂפָעָה throws light upon the phrase *shall cover thee*, a term elsewhere applied to water (e.g. ISAIAH 11:9), and suggesting here the poetical idea of a city not merely thronged but flooded with Arabian caravans.” Nägelsbach points out: “*The multitude of camels glorified thee*] A multitude of camels, without the definite article [i.e., *a* rather than *the*, without the **ה**]—GB].” Whitehouse notes: “The word **multitude** in the original properly means *abundance* or *overflow* (applied to water in Job 22:2, 38:34, to animals, i.e. horses, in Ezekiel 26:10, and to human beings in 2 Kings 9:17).” Birks, speaking of ‘A stream of camels.’ A lively figure to describe their

constant succession, laden with Eastern treasures. Not the Queen of the South alone, as in the days of Solomon, nor a few, like the wise men, but ‘all they from Sheba shall come’ with tributes of which these were only dim earnest. Midian, Ephah, Sheba, Kedar, Nebaioth, all children of Abraham after the flesh, the sons of Keturah (*i.e.* incense) and of Ishmael (God shall hear), will have a main share in the promise, when the words are fulfilled;—‘In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed,’ (Genesis 22:18; Acts 3:25).” Rawlinson notes: “The ‘Sheba’ intended is doubtless that whose queen visited Solomon, and brought with her gold in abundance, and ‘of spices very great store, and precious stones’ (1 Kings 10:10) ... *The dromedaries*] Rather, *the young camels*, or *the camel colts* ... *they* (the camels of Midian and Ephah) *shall come all together from Sheba*.” Gesenius explains: “**בֶּכֶר** *a young he-camel*, already fit for carrying light burdens ... To this answers the Arab. **بَكْر** *a young camel*, which they observe signifies the same age as **الغَي** *a young man*, in men.” Henderson says that Arabs refer to the camel as “the ship of the desert.” ¶ President Heber C. Kimball explained: “Who is to gather the people of God? You all say that we are to become a kingdom of kings and priests, of queens and priestesses; and the Bible supports this doctrine. Now, the truth is, you are the very kings and priests that have got to gather the Saints, and your wives have got to school them and nurse them. I might put this in different language, but this will answer the purpose and convey to you the true meaning of the text. We are informed in the Bible that in the last days the sons of God shall be brought from afar, and his daughters from the ends of the earth; and also that the elect will be gathered from the four quarters of the globe. Now, this will most assuredly be fulfilled, and this is the work which you and I have got to perform. How shall we bring them together? The Scriptures say they shall come upon swift beasts and dromedaries; and I will add mules and oxen.”¹⁷ President Orson Hyde has: “The Savior says, the kingdom of heaven is like a fish net that is cast into the sea, which took of every kind, both good and bad, and by and by they brought the net to the shore, and gathered the good into vessels, and cast the bad away. So shall it be in the last days, in the end, when the gathering dispensation shall be introduced, and the Gospel net be drawn to shore; not in some foreign clime or mountain, beyond the bounds of time and space; but on the shore that skirts the margin of the water, as testified by this figure; so on earth, the gathering of the people will be. We are also told the manner in which they shall come. They shall come upon swift beasts upon dromedaries and camels; and the

¹⁷ President Heber C. Kimball, “Gathering of the People of God in The Last Days—Return to Jackson County.” Great Salt Lake City, 17 February 1861. JD 8:349.

ships of Tarshish shall bear them home, and a highway shall be cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in. That highway is not an immaterial one, that leads to mansions in the sky, but it is a highway that has to be cast up on earth; and it may be that the very railroads that are being cast up are one means by which this operation of the gathering will be greatly facilitated ... The old Prophet had his eye upon the increased speed of ships; but our translators have made him to say that swift messengers¹⁸ shall be sent to the nations afar off in vessels of bulrushes ...”¹⁹ ¶ *They shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the LORD.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “They shall be laden with gold and frankincense, and those that are coming with them, shall shew forth the praises of the Lord.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Bringing gold and will also bring frankincense, and with joy proclaim the salvation of the Lord.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲫ) has, “They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall publish abroad the praises of the LORD.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “Bringing gold and frankincense: and shewing forth praise to the Lord.” ¶ These precious materials were among those brought to the child Christ: “And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh” (Matthew 2:11). It is clear from ISAIAH 60 that similar gifts will be poured out in the end of days. Also note the *hymns of praises* towards the Lord.

7 All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory.

All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Arabians” for *Kedar*. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And all the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together; and the rams of Nabaioth will come.”

¶ Cowles reminds us: “Nebaioth and Keder are Arab names. They were respectively the first and second sons of Ishmael (Genesis 25:13).” Wade has: “*shall minister unto thee*] i.e., shall serve thy needs in providing victims for thy sacrifices (cf. ISAIAH 60:10; 56:6).” The term *flocks*, לְבָנִים, here, *all flocks*, stand for the

“*Small cattle*, i.e., *sheep and goats*,” while *rams*, אֵילִם, are the male sheep. The Lord promised that Ishmael’s posterity would also be blessed. Brother James A. Toronto shared: “As early as 1855, at a time when Christian literature generally ridiculed Muhammad as the Antichrist and the archenemy of Western civilization, Elders George A. Smith (1817–75) and Parley P. Pratt (1807–57) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles delivered lengthy sermons ... speaking highly of Muhammad’s leadership. Elder Smith observed that Muhammad was ‘descended from Abraham and was no doubt raised up by God on purpose’ to preach against idolatry ... Elder Pratt went on to express his admiration for Muhammad’s teachings, asserting that ‘upon the whole, ... [Muslims] have better morals and better institutions than many Christian nations.’ Latter-day Saint appreciation of Muhammad’s role in history can also be found in the 1978 First Presidency statement regarding God’s love for all mankind. This declaration specifically mentions Muhammad as one of ‘the great religious leaders of the world’ who received ‘a portion of God’s light’ and affirms that ‘moral truths were given to [these leaders] by God to enlighten whole nations and to bring a higher level of understanding to individuals.’”²⁰ ¶ *They shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “offered up with acceptance” instead of *come up with acceptance*. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And acceptable offerings will be made on mine altar, and my house of prayer will be glorified.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “They shall be offered upon my acceptable altar, and I will glorify the house of my majesty.” ¶ THE acceptable sacrifice would be provided by the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Cowles has: “Isaiah in vision sees far in the future the glorious diffusion of the gospel among the nations of the earth and its wonderful fruits in the complete and unreserved consecration of wealth and of soul to the service and worship of God.” ¶ Birks says: “The question of the bearing of this passage on the revival of animal sacrifice is too wide for a brief and passing notice.” Jennings acknowledges that many squirm with the idea of a renewal of animal sacrifice, but he accepts it: “No Christian will admit for a moment that any animal sacrifice can ever rival, and still less replace, that one Offering, the efficacy of which has abolished them in that sense of rivalry forever. That is surely true. But that must not be allowed to evaporate all meaning from what is here so clearly stated, that in a coming day Israel’s sacrifices shall be accepted.” The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that animal sacrifice would be restored in the last days: “These sacrifices, as well as

¹⁸ See ISAIAH 18.

¹⁹ President Orson Hyde, “Gathering the Saints.” Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 8 October 1854. JD 2:62a.

²⁰ James A. Toronto, “A Latter-day Saint Perspective on Muhammad.” *Ensign*, August 2000.

every ordinance belonging to the priesthood, will, when the temple of the Lord shall be built [in Jerusalem—GB], and the sons of Levi be purified, be fully restored and attended to in all their powers, ramifications and blessings.”²¹

8 Who [are] these [that] fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?

The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “Who are these that are coming openly like swift clouds, and tarry not? the captives of Israel, who are gathered together, come to their land, lo, as doves which return to their dove-houses.” The LXX (Ⓜ) reads, “Who are those? They are flying like clouds, and like doves with their young towards me!” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “Who are these, that fly as clouds, and as doves to their windows?” ¶ Regarding אֲרָבֵיתָהּ-אֵל, Horsley suggests, “Rather, ‘to their holes.’ The wooden boxes, with a narrow entrance to each, usually fixed against the sides of houses, for doves to make their nests in, are commonly called pigeon-holes, and seem to be intended here.” Several exegetes, including Alexander, describe the holes as *latticed windows*. Gesenius gives as one of the acceptations of אֲרָבֵיתָהּ, a *dove house*. ¶ In terms of the *gathering of Israel*, Birks has: “The ships of Tarshish, with their outspread sails, crowding the seas to restore the wanderers [i.e., the scattered of Israel, also see the idea of fast vessels in ISAIAH 18—GB], are compared to a fleecy cloud before the wind, or doves flocking home to their young.” Cowles says: “The spirit of the verse is analogous to that of ISAIAH 49:21. ‘Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these? Whence come these throngs of my children?’ Surprise and joy blend in their strongest and most thrilling emotions.” Keith has: “This verse describes the return of the remnant of Israel by the comparison of a cloud and of a flight of doves. These may denote either the numbers of Israel, or the rapidity of their return, or both may be combined. A cloud is a scriptural symbol of numbers, —‘so great a cloud of witnesses,’ —and a cloud driven rapidly before the wind is a natural symbol of speed. Doves also, from their multitude in the East, and from the celerity of their flight on their return in the evening to their dove-cots to their young, from every quarter of the surrounding country over which they have scattered themselves, symbolize the same things. Probably, however, the figure is here a single one, in allusion to the fact that in the East, as in some other countries, the flights of doves are often on so great a scale as to extend as far as the eye can reach, obscuring the sun and literally forming a cloud. The suddenness of

Israel’s final return is repeatedly foretold, — ‘Shall a nation be born in one day?’” Cheyne connects these doves to the gathering of Israel as spoken in Hosea: “They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria: and I will place them in their houses, saith the LORD” (Hosea 11:11). ¶ Elder John Longden commented: “Is the airplane flying in the skies from one country to another a sign? The heavens are filled with them, and people are fulfilling the prophecy of ISAIAH 60:8. ‘Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?’”²² Elder Charles W. Penrose taught: “Those who receive the Gospel come in here ‘as the doves to their windows.’ From the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, God is gathering His elect from the four quarters of the earth.”²³ Elder Penrose also said: “Isaiah saw [the gathered of Israel] coming ‘as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows;’ and through him the Lord has said, ‘I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth’ (ISAIAH 43:6).”²⁴ ¶ President John Taylor wrote, “It may be proper here to remark, that there will be two places of gathering ... the Jews are to be gathered to Jerusalem in unbelief, as spoken of in Zechariah; and when the Messiah appears among them, being ignorant of Jesus, they shall ask, ‘What are these wounds in their hands?’ Then he shall answer, ‘Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends’ (Zechariah 13:6). And then a fountain shall be opened for the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and they will enter into the covenant by baptism (Zechariah 13:1). But the people of Zion, the Lord will take them one of a city, and two of a family, and bring them there, and give them pastors after his own heart, that shall feed them with knowledge and understanding (Jeremiah 3:14,15) ... Jesus said, ‘My sheep hear my voice, and know me, and follow me, and a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers.’ Those who love truth, and desire to be governed by it, will embrace it, and enter into the covenant which the Lord will make with his people in the last days, and be gathered with them; they will be taught of the Lord in Zion, will form his kingdom on the earth, and will be prepared for the Lord when he comes to take possession of his kingdom ... The prophets hailed this day with pleasure [when Zion would be built], as the ushering in of those glorious times, which were to follow ... Isaiah with rapture gazed upon the scene, and in ecstasy cried out, ‘Who are these

²¹ HC 4:207-12; in *Discourses of the Prophet Joseph Smith*.

²² Elder John Longden, “The Second Coming of Christ.” April 1964 General Conference.

²³ Elder Charles W. Penrose, “Divisions of Modern Christendom.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 17 July 1881, JD 22:167-168.

²⁴ Elder Charles W. Penrose, “Partaking of the Lord’s Supper.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 1 May 1880, JD 22:95a.

that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring they sons from afar, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord they God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee. And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee’ (ISAIAH 60:8-10).”²⁵ ¶ President George Q. Cannon taught: “When I hear of people coming from remote lands, impelled by their faith, who have heard the preaching of the Elders who have gone forth in their weakness, and in many instances, yes, in the most of instances, in their scholastic ignorance, to proclaim the Gospel—when I see the wonderful results of their preaching, men and women from foreign lands with the testimony of God in their hearts, that this is His work, which they have received through repentance and being baptized by a man having the authority, each man testifying in his own language ... all flocking together like doves to their master’s windows, many of them never having seen an Elder from Utah, but having heard men who had the authority to teach this Gospel—all coming from the various points of the compass, testifying in all humility and in the name of Jesus, that God has given unto them a knowledge of the truth—when I see these things my heart is filled with gladness and thanksgiving.”²⁶ ¶ President Brigham Young taught specifically of the restoration of the Lamanites: “The kingdom rises, increases, and spreads out to the right and left—it goes to the east, to the west, to the north, and to the south; and when the Gentiles are faithfully warned by the words of life freely given to them, and they utterly reject them, you will then find that the blood of Abraham that is scattered upon the islands of the sea and on this continent, will come like doves to the windows, and like clouds before a mighty torrent of wind. They will come and acknowledge the truth, though not at once, and they will greatly increase in the knowledge of their fathers. We can say to the praise of God’s name, and to the praise of the industry of the Saints, that this will commence, and hundreds and thousands of them begin to turn from their wickedness, forsake their folly and their loathsome degradation, wash themselves, and begin to live more as men and women should, and to learn at the hands of the servants of God. They will go into the waters of baptism, confessing their sins, and taking upon them the new and everlasting covenant, by thousands; and it will increase; and many generations will not pass away before they

²⁵ Taylor, John. *The Government of God*. Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1852. Also see President John Taylor, “Gathering.” 17th Ward Meetinghouse, 15 December 1878, JD 20:226. Also see Elder John Taylor, “Revelation.” Bowery, Great Salt Lake City, 20 September 1857, JD 5:264.

²⁶ President George Q. Cannon, “Hopes for the Future.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 24 September 1882, JD 24:106.

become a white and delightsome people (2 Nephi 30:6).”²⁷ Elder Orson Pratt felt that these words also applied to the Gentile nations: “Now how do we know, but when the gates of Zion shall be open to the nations, that the Gentiles will come flocking in, like a flowing stream? A flowing stream is one that runs continually; and the Gentiles will, in that day, come to us as a flowing stream (ISAIAH 66:12) and we shall have to set our gates open continually (ISAIAH 60:11), they will come as clouds and as doves in large flocks.”²⁸ Elder Orson Hyde, in his very last discourse, taught: “The Elders of this Church, my brethren and sisters, have faithfully labored during the last half century in almost every nation on the globe ... knowing that the world would not be converted by the preaching of the Gospel ... [yet those who would be gathered] will ‘come like clouds, and like doves to their windows.’”²⁹

vv. 9-14. More is taught about the gathering of Israel. The nations would come and bring their resources and build up temples to the Lord. Henderson says: “Monarchs shall regard it as a privilege to aid in the work, by employing whatever legitimate influence they may possess in advancing [the restoring Judah to the land of Israel].”

9 ¶ Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee.

Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish (תַּרְשִׁישׁ) first. See ISAIAH 23:1. The Targum (ܬ) has, “Surely, the isles shall wait for my Word, and those that embark in the ships of the sea.” The LXX (Θ) reads, “For me the islands waited, and among the first the ships of Tarsis.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “For, the islands wait for me, and the ships of the sea in the beginning.” ¶ The Isles, as we have said throughout, often represent the American Continent, Hawaii and the South Pacific and Rapa Nui, where a large number of persons belong to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Rawlinson has: “The ‘isles,’ or maritime

²⁷ President Brigham Young, “God Will Take Care of His Own Work.” Bowery, Great Salt Lake City, 28 June 1857, JD 4:371.

²⁸ Elder Orson Pratt, “Redemption of Zion.” Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 20 May 1855, JD 3:16a.

²⁹ Substance of a Discourse by Elder Orson Hyde, “Preparation for Coming Events.” Delivered at Mount Pleasant, Sanpete County, Utah, on 3 November 1878, said to have been the last delivered by him while living in the flesh, JD 20:99b.

countries of the West, have long waited for a Redeemer.” Not just a Redeemer, but *the* Redeemer, as we know from the Book of Mormon, where the coming of Christ was much anticipated and known. *To wait* means to serve the Lord. The idea of vessels being used to gather Israel—or to send latter-day Saint missionaries to recover her we argued, along with Horsley, in ISAIAH 18 (please see notes there, especially about missionaries bringing a present to the Lord). Birks has: “The judgment (ISAIAH 2:16), on ‘the ships of *Tarshish*’ and ‘all their pleasant merchandise,’ is here exchanged for a blessing, and their merchandise will become ‘holiness to the Lord’ (ISAIAH 23:14, 18) ... Britain and America, the great maritime powers, will probably take precedence in the steps which minister to Israel’s final recovery.” So also Keith, “The assistance which will be given by other nations in forwarding the return of Israel, and in re-establishing them in their own land, is here foretold.” Although Alexander himself ridicules the idea, his comments are stimulating: “It is an interesting question, therefore, what we are to understand in this connection by the *ships of Tarshish*, to which such extraordinary prominence is given in the work of restoration ... the ships of Tarshish are ... identified with the commercial navy of Great Britain and perhaps America ... consisting of a literal return to the literal Jerusalem.” ¶ The ships of *Tarshish* seem to have originally been ships built in Spain, but here they may well represent a type. President Orson Hyde explained: “They shall come upon swift beasts, upon dromedaries and camels; and the ships of Tarshish shall bear them home, and a highway shall be cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in.”³⁰ These speak of both the restoration of Ephraim (northern tribes) and of Judah (southern tribes). ¶ *To bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “The hand that stretcheth out their sails shall be first (or, ‘as at the first’), to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “To bring thy children from afar and their silver and their gold with them.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, for the first clause, “That I may bring thy sons from afar.” ¶ Cowles suggests: “[Bringing] their silver and their gold with them, as the best proof that their hearts are *in* this coming, and with a Hebrew reference also to beautifying and furnishing God’s temple at Jerusalem ...” Daniel H. Ludlow quotes Elder Woodruff as the latter prophesied regarding the riches of the Jews being used to bring back Judah to the land of Israel: “The time is not far distant when the rich men among the Jews may be called upon to use their abundant wealth to gather the dispersed of Judah and purchase the ancient dwelling places of their fathers in and about Jerusalem

and rebuild the holy city and temple ... The Lord has decreed that the Jews should be gathered from all the *Gentile nations* where they have been driven, into their own land, in fulfillment of the words of Moses their law-giver (MS 41:244, *also see* JD 22:173)”³¹ ¶ As I have read accounts of the formation of latter-day Israel, these prophesies have been fulfilled. I wonder if these treasures of silver and gold do not also represent much more than riches, but also other contributions such as knowledge of the arts and sciences; government and sport; medicine and construction of temples and other buildings; and all manner of wisdom, to help build Zion and uplift others. When we look at the top scholars in most fields of endeavor, do we not find LDS among them? ¶ *Unto the name of the LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee.* The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And because of the holy name of the Lord, and because the Holy One of Israel is glorious.” ¶ Whitehouse suggests: “*To the name of Yahweh*” Here ‘name,’ as elsewhere, means *personal presence*.” Gill has: “That is, their persons shall be brought unto him, and their riches also; they shall give up themselves, and all they have, to the Lord, and devote themselves and their substance to his glory, and the good of his interest.” So also Barnes who says: “The idea is, that all this wealth would be devoted to Yahweh, and employed in his service ... [and because he hath glorified thee] He has honored thee by imparting to thee the true religion.”

10 And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee.

And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Therefore strangers shall rebuild thy walls and their kings shall wait upon thee.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has *children* instead of *sons*. Oswalt well suggests regarding *בְּנֵי-יָכָר*: “*sons of foreigners*” The presence of the same phrase in ISAIAH 56:3, 6 makes plain that the persons referred to here are not to be considered as slaves but as those who have joined themselves to the covenant.” Several exegetes point out that kings would not be coerced into service but would do so voluntarily. Luther suggests that even kings shall be converts to the cause of Christ. ¶ *And their kings shall minister unto thee.* In connection to the kings, Shalom Paul mentions

³⁰ President Orson Hyde, “Gathering the Saints.” Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 8 October 1854, JD 2:62.

³¹ Daniel H. Ludlow, *Companion to your study of the Old Testament*. Also see David B. Galbraith, D. Kelly Ogden, and Andrew C. Skinner, Jerusalem: *The Eternal City*, p.4, 527, who also quote Zechariah 14:14. Emphasis added.

that שָׂרָה generally, but not always, is associated with temple service. Keith remarks: “The singular circumstance of the most despised of nations becoming the most honoured, is often predicted in language very similar to the text; ‘The Lord will yet choose Israel—and the people shall take them and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord for servants and for handmaids,’ (ISAIAH 14:1-2a); ‘They shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord³² out of all nations, upon horses and in chariots, to my holy mountain Jerusalem’ (ISAIAH 66:20) ... It may even be said that the work of ministering to Israel by kings is already on a small scale begun. The monarchs of England and Prussia have erected a Protestant church in Jerusalem, and the recent presence of consuls there from different kingdoms [give in a small scale weight to these prophecies of Isaiah].” ¶ President Heber C. Kimball spoke, as we said, of a kingdom of kings and priests, of queens and priestesses. President John Taylor said, “And thus we will go on, and God will assist us in the work in which we are engaged. He will yet make us the richest of all people.³³ He will pour wealth into our laps, inasmuch as we keep His commandments. And what else is said? ‘Sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee’ (ISAIAH 60:10). Men shall call you the ministers of our God (ISAIAH 61:6). And we want to minister for God in time and throughout the eternities that are to come.”³⁴ ¶ *For in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee.* The Targum (Ⓢ) only contains the second clause. The LXX (Ⓢ) reads, “For on account of my wrath I smote thee, but for mercy’s sake I have loved thee.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓢ) has, “For in my wrath have I struck thee, and in my reconciliation have I had mercy upon thee.” ¶ This reminds us of ISAIAH 54:7-8: “For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.” It is part of the Hosea Principle, wherein the Lord, after chastising us, will manifest His love for us.

³² Once again, see ISAIAH 18.

³³ President Brigham Young warned that these riches would yet constitute the greatest test for the Latter-day Saints: “The worst fear I have about this people is that they will get rich in this country, forget God and His people, wax fat, and kick themselves out of the Church and go to hell. This people will stand mobbing, robbing, poverty, and all manner of persecution and be true. But my greatest fear is that they cannot stand wealth” (*Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Student Study Guide*. The Legacy of President Brigham Young: A Latter-day Moses).

³⁴ President John Taylor, “Manifestations to Be Looked For.” Delivered at the time of the Dedication of the Temple, in the Tabernacle, Logan, Cache County, 18 May 1884, JD 187-188.

11 Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that [men] may bring unto thee the forces[✓] of the Gentiles, and [that] their kings [may be] brought.

✓ or, wealth

Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night. The LXX (Ⓢ) reads, “And thy gates shall be open continually (by day or by night they shall not be shut).” Birks, citing Revelation 21:25, explains at least one reason why the gates will be open continually, “And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.” Cowles suggests: “So great is the pressure upon her of these throngs of returning converts, that her gates must needs stand open day and night.” Henderson, who wrote in the 19th Century, said: “Modern travelers greatly complain of the inconvenience to which they are put, when they do not reach Jerusalem before the gates are closed.” Of this verse, Alexander says: “The two ideas expressed are those of unobstructed access and undisturbed tranquility.” ¶ President Spencer W. Kimball spoke about the increasing amount of work to be carried out in the temples: “The day is coming and not too far ahead of us when all temples on this earth will be going night and day ... There will be a corps of workers night and day almost to exhaustion, because of the importance of the work and the great number of people who lie asleep in the eternity and who are craving, needing, the blessings that can come to them (Address given at Priesthood Genealogy Seminar Banquet, Aug. 4, 1977, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 4-5).”³⁵ ¶ Elder Orson Pratt said: “We shall in due time walk forth into Jackson County and build up the waste places of Zion. We shall erect in that county a beautiful city after the order and pattern that the Lord shall reveal, part of which has already been revealed. God intends to have a city built up that will never be destroyed nor overcome, but that will exist while eternity shall endure; and he will point out the pattern and show the order of architecture; he will show unto his servants the nature of the streets and the pavement thereof, the kind of precious stones that shall enter into the buildings, the nature of the rock and precious stones that will adorn the gates and the walls of that city; for the gates will be open continually says the Prophet Isaiah, that men may bring in the force of the Gentiles. The nature of the city of Zion is nowhere fully described. John the revelator has described in his 21st

³⁵ The Life and Ministry of Spencer W. Kimball. Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball, (2006), xiv-xxxvii.

chapter, two cities coming down from God out of heaven. The first one is the New Jerusalem. That will come down on the land of Joseph. After John had seen that, one of the angels who had one of the vials of the seven last plagues came to him and said, ‘Come hither, John, and I will show you another city, that is that great city, the holy Jerusalem.’ He took him to the summit of a high mountain and showed him that great city descending from God out of heaven, and John describes that city, the height of its walls, the number of its gates, the names that are to be upon the gates, and a great many particulars in relation to that city are clearly revealed. But the New Jerusalem is nowhere so fully described, only as the Psalmist David says, ‘Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.’ David also says, in speaking of this same city, ‘Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.’ From these declarations we can at least believe that Zion will be a very beautiful city—‘the perfection of beauty,’ whether it is constructed after the order of the old Jerusalem or not. Suffice it to say that God by revelation will inspire his servants and will dictate to them the order of the buildings of that city—the number and width of the streets, the kind of houses, the character of the Temple that is to be built therein, the kind of rock, timber and the various materials that will have to be brought from a distance to enter into the composition of that beautiful city.”³⁶ ¶ *That [men] may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and [that] their kings [may be] brought.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “treasures” for *forces*; and specifies that these kings shall be brought in chains. The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “To introduce to thee the wealth of nations and their kings

pompously attended.” ¶ Once again, I like the idea of the kings and priests, and queens and priestesses that President Heber C. Kimball has spoken off above, as Israel is gathered in the last days. Birks makes a similar comment: “‘Their kings shall be brought,’ not as reluctant captives, but willing trophies of the love and grace of the King of Zion [*i.e.*, of Jesus Christ—GB].” ¶ *The forces of the Gentiles*, **חֵיל גּוֹיִם**, is rendered by many as the *wealth of the nations*, or as the *riches of the nations*. Additional definitions of **חֵיל** include ability, strength, virtue and hosts (Gesenius) or armies (HAL). What are the wealth or riches of the nations but the converts of the house of Israel, the gift to the Lord mentioned in ISAIAH 18:7a, “In that time shall the present be brought unto the LORD of hosts of a people scattered and peeled.” Elder Orson Pratt said: “Mighty nations not a few, ere long will come up to Zion to seek wisdom and knowledge from the counselors in Zion ... [And people shall say] ‘surely the God of Israel is in your midst. Come, let us go up to Zion, let us hear from the wise legislators of Zion, and let us hear the laws proclaimed therein; let us learn of the wisdom that dwells in the servants of the Most High’ ... and the gates of Zion will be open day and night, and never be shut, to admit the forces that will come rushing in from all nations, to learn the wisdom, knowledge, and instruction that are poured out from the heavens upon the servants of the Most High.”³⁷ Even now, dignitaries from the nations of the world come to Salt Lake City and meet with the Brethren, and inquire of the Church regarding food storage, tithing, and a host of other topics, just as Elder Pratt explained. Cheyne suggests that the kings of the earth will be anxious to have positive dealings with Israel because: “The prosperity of Gentile nations shall depend on their relations to Israel.”

³⁶ Elder Orson Pratt, “Return to Jackson County—Glory of Zion.” 16th Ward Assembly Rooms, Salt Lake City, 9 March 1873, JD 15:365. Elder Orson Pratt also observed: “Hundreds and thousands, and tens of thousands of the Gentiles among the various nations of the earth will yet bow to the fulness of the Gospel; and they will come, and the gates of Zion will not be shut day nor night, that the forces of the Gentiles may flow unto her. The Lord will continue to work among both Israel and Gentiles [most likely meant *Gentile nations*—GB], and His power will increase, the more we send the Gospel among Israel; the more the servants of God seek for the seed of Jacob, the more will the powers of heaven be displayed for the redemption of that people. They are the promised seed; God has not forgotten the prayers of their fathers; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob prayed for their posterity, and they had faith for them, and in them all the nations of the earth are to be blessed ... Then will be fulfilled that which was written by the Prophet Ezekiel, that the Lord will gather them with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out: and He will assemble them in the wilderness, and there will He plead with them face to face, like as He plead with their fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt; thus saith the Lord, by the mouth of Ezekiel. He will plead with them by His power; He will plead with them by His angels; and He will plead with them by the revelation of His own face.” Elder Orson Pratt, “Preaching to Israel—The Times of the Gentiles.” New Bowery, Great Salt Lake City, 7 April 1855. JD 2: 262–263.

12 For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, [those] nations shall be utterly wasted.

For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish. The Targum (ⲧ) makes these nations as serving Jerusalem. The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “For the nations and kings which will not serve thee shall perish.” Birks has: “This promise, applied literally to Zion and the people of Israel, has nothing strange and unaccountable (Alexander). It results naturally from the whole tenour of sacred history. The first promise to Abraham contains the germ of this threatening, ‘I will curse him that curseth thee.’ Subordination, in heaven and earth, is the great law of the kingdom of God. To refuse honour

³⁷ Elder Orson Pratt, “Emigration of the Saints and the Nations.” Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 7 October 1854, JD 2:60-61.

to those whom God has honoured, is rebellion against His authority. When ‘the Holy One of Israel’ crowns His ancient people with signal honour after ages of judgment and sorrow, the sons of pride alone will find it strange or irksome to honour God himself in the people of His choice; and them that walk in pride He is able to abase.” Henderson notes: “In our most esteemed commentaries there is a perpetual vacillancy between the literal and the spiritual, the Jews and the Gentiles, the past and the future, which is anything but satisfactory. From many of them, indeed, it is evident that their authors, notwithstanding their strong propensity to apply these predictions to the past and present privileges of the Christian Church, as made up of Gentile converts, and the still fuller enjoyment of these privileges during the Millennium, have been compelled to admit that the Jews are not altogether to be excluded, though they still begrudge them a reestablishment, as a converted community, in the land of Palestine ... Not that he loses sight of the Gentiles: on the contrary, they are repeatedly brought forward, though it certainly is rather for the purpose of gracing the triumphs of his own people, than of exhibiting them in the all-engrossing light in which they have usually been presented.” Even the so called *Gentiles* mentioned as the converts of the latter-days are, for the most part, but the literal children of *scattered Israel* throughout the *Gentile nations*. ¶ Cowles has: “All kings and all people must come to Christ to serve him in his Zion, or must perish.” Orelli points us to Zechariah: “And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them *shall be no rain*” (Zechariah 14:16-17, emphasis added—see *Rain in Due Season* for the *rain* symbolism). ¶ The United States was formed under the motto, “In God we Trust.” To the degree this was true in former days, she was blessed. Elder Orson Pratt taught: “What will become of this great republic ... which is spreading forth continually? If they will comply with the ordinances of Zion, repent of their sins and be prepared for this great and glorious day, God will save them; but if they will not they will be utterly wasted away.”³⁸ ¶ Elder Wilford Woodruff testified: “The hand of God has guided this Church from its incipency to the present time. God will continue to direct its affairs, and there is no power on the earth or under the earth that can ever stop its progress, for he himself, has decreed that the Zion of the latter days shall never be overthrown; but on the contrary, as he

³⁸ Elder Orson Pratt, “Zion.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 10 March 1872. JD 14:355b.

has said through the mouth of the Prophet Isaiah, ‘For the nation and the kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.’ Pretty strong doctrine to be taught by a humble man of God. Nevertheless, time will bring it about and it is not in the power of man to prevent it. I am a believer in revelation. I am a believer, from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet, with every particle of spirit in me, that God will bring about, literally and to the very letter, all that he has spoken through his servants, ancient and modern.”³⁹ Elder Wilford Woodruff also said: “Point me out an individual or a people who have ever taken a stand against Joseph Smith or Brigham Young, the Zion of God or the Elders of Israel, and who have sought to overthrow this work, but what the curse of God has rested upon them. Show me one of that class who has not gone down to the dust, and as it has been in days past so it will be in days to come. Woe to that nation, kindred, tongue and people under the whole heavens who war against Zion in the latter days; every weapon shall be broken that is formed against her, and that nation that will not serve her shall be utterly wasted away saith the Lord of hosts.”⁴⁰ ¶ *Yea, [those] nations shall be utterly wasted*. The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Such nations indeed shall be utterly laid waste.” Instead of *wasted*, the Peshitta (Ⓔ) has *destroyed by the sword* (Lamsa) / *thrust through by the sword* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⓔ) has, “And the Gentiles shall be wasted with desolation.” ¶ Elder Orson Hyde taught, speaking of the governmental persecutions related to the time when the members of the Church practiced plural marriage: “I have no objection to any and all federal officers coming here to execute the laws, impartially in the spirit of justice and truth. I say, they have my cordial good will to do so. But when they come full of wrath, with a determination to immortalize their names by squelching out ‘Mormonism,’ pandering to the prejudices of an ungodly age, I cannot find language sufficiently strong to express my disapproval and contempt for their administration ... ‘For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.’”⁴¹ Elder Charles W. Penrose testified: “I will bear my testimony to this congregation in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ that this is not the work of man; that ‘Mormonism’ is the work of the Great God, and no power can overturn it. And I testify further, that every nation and kingdom that

³⁹ Elder Wilford Woodruff, “Faith.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 30 June 1878. JD 19:363.

⁴⁰ Elder Wilford Woodruff, “Zion to Be Built Up.” New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Semi-Annual Conference, 8 October 1873. JD 16:271-272.

⁴¹ Elder Orson Hyde, “The Judgments of God upon the Wicked—Opposition to Polygamy.” Mount Pleasant, Sanpete County, Utah, 3 November 1878, said to have been the last delivered by him while living in the flesh. JD 20:98-99.

shall rise against this work shall perish and be utterly wasted away.”⁴²

13 The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious.

The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary. The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “The glory of Lebanon also shall come to thee, with the cypress and the pine and the cedar, to adorn the place which is dedicated to me.” ¶ Jenour notes: “The place of my sanctuary means the temple.” Keith speaks here about the construction of the latter-day temple in Jerusalem, for the glory of Israel. Rabbi Ibn Ezra has: “*To beautify the place of my sanctuary*] To build the house of the Lord.” ¶ Elder Wilford Woodruff testified: “The predictions of the Bible never would have been fulfilled, had not the Lord, in these last days raised up a prophet as an instrument in his hands to again establish his Gospel on the earth, and gather together the house of Israel to the valleys of these everlasting hills, according to his decree to old father Jacob; and his seed have yet to make this western desert to blossom as the rose, bringing forth ‘the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary.’ The whole history of this people has been foretold by the prophet Isaiah, thousands of years ago; and it has been a steady growth from the commencement to the present.”⁴³ ¶ *And I will make the place of my feet glorious.* The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “Shekinah” for feet. ¶ The sense I make of the expression *place of my feet* is that it relates to the Holy Temples to be established in the last days. Redak, in Rabbi Rosenberg, explains that the Temple is “God’s footstool.” Birks explains: “The place of God’s feet denotes sometimes the Ark of the Covenant (1 Chronicles 28:2; Psalm 99:5; sometimes the temple (Ezekiel 43:7).” Cowles has: “In figure, this rebuilds Jerusalem and her temple with cedars of Lebanon and all the best varieties of choice wood.—By ‘the place of my sanctuary,’ some understand the city as being the locality of the temple—perhaps correctly.

⁴² Elder Charles W. Penrose, “Difference Between the Latter-Day Saints and All Other Professing Christians,” Salt Lake Assembly Hall, 11 April 1880. JD 21:145b. Also see Elder Wilford Woodruff, “No Man Can Build Up the Church of Christ without the Priesthood,” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 6 June 1880. JD 21:125; and President Spencer W. Kimball, “The Time to Labor Is Now,” October 1975 General Conference.

⁴³ Elder Wilford Woodruff, “Faith—Fulfillment of Prophecy,” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 30 June 1878. JD 19:359.

‘The place’ of Jehovah’s feet conceives of the city as his foot-stool, even as in ISAIAH 66:1, he represents the earth to be. ‘Heaven is my throne and the earth my footstool.’ In this sense Jerusalem was yet more specially the place of his feet.” Shalom Paul tells us that in Psalm 132:7, “The Temple is also referred to as הַדְּרוֹם רַגְלָיו (‘footstool’).” ¶ President Daniel H. Wells said, “It is the inestimable privilege of this people, if they will receive and honor it, to establish the principles of righteousness and truth, and to establish that kingdom which shall stand forever and ever ... We want to build up cities, and to cultivate and beautify the earth, and make the place of the Lord’s feet glorious. Every excellence, power, and blessing belongs to the Saints of the Most High God, if they will prove themselves worthy to receive them. We have means to perform foreign missions, to save the people; we have also means at home to bring forth the grain, to build up cities and temples, and to go forth upon the right and upon the left to protect the right, and to develop the resources of the land into which the Lord has brought us; to shield ourselves from the wicked and ungodly, and thwart them in all things.”⁴⁴

14 The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee. The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “enslaved” for afflicted. The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And to thee shall come trembling the sons of them.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓐ) has, “And the children of them that afflict thee, shall come bowing down to thee.” ¶ Cowles explains: “Public feeling toward the church of God is reversed; her old enemies bow submissively and humble themselves low at her feet, acknowledging that the true God is with her—there and there only.” In ISAIAH 18:2 we saw מְבוֹסָה for a nation treaded down, while here we have a people afflicted, מַעֲנִיָּה, also defined as depressed or oppressed (Gesenius). ¶ The expression used here, to come bending, means to bow down. Alexander has: “The act described is the oriental prostration as a sign of the profoundest reverence.” Beside the physical prostration, there is quite often a self-effacing manner in conversation where one of the parties seems to come bending. ¶ Elder George A. Smith said: “They will

⁴⁴ President Daniel H. Wells, “Responsibilities Resting Upon the Saints,” Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 4 May 1862. JD 9:352.

come to us by thousands by-and-by, saying—‘Can you not feed us?’⁴⁵ Can you not do something for us?’ It is said by the prophets they shall come bending, and shall say you are the priests of the Lord (ISAIAH 61:6). What priest could administer greater earthly blessings than food to the hungry, who have fled from a country where the sword, famine, and pestilence were sweeping away their thousands?”⁴⁶ ¶ *And all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “provoked the to anger” for *despised*. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Who afflicted and humbled thee.” Instead of *despised*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *provoked*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “And all that slandered thee shall worship the steps of thy feet.” ¶ Bow down is not a literal act but rather an expression of gratitude. The only one to whom we may bow is to God. My feeling is that this clause refers to the work that will take place in the Spirit World, or the work that will take place among some who have despised us here on earth. Yet we will have the opportunity to serve them as we bringing the saving ordinances into their lives. These individuals will be filled with gratitude. It will also be speaking of the hungry who will be so grateful to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its members, for the service carried forth in their behalf—which already takes place after earthquakes, floods and other natural disasters. How beautiful it is to serve those who may have despised us. What joy it brings to our heart to see their hearts soften. Furthermore, even to those who have not known us, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sends plane loads of food when disasters hit. Everywhere we see the LDS with their *Mormon Helping Hands* t-shirts helping others from other faiths. Is this not glorious? ¶ *And they shall call thee, The city*

⁴⁵ President Orson Hyde shared: “There is more salvation and security in wheat, than in all the political schemes of the world, and also more power in it than in all the contending armies of the nations. Raise wheat and lay it up in store till it will bring a good price; not dollars and cents, but kingdoms, countries, peoples, tribes, and tongues. ‘They have sold themselves for nought; and must be redeemed without money!’ It will take wheat to redeem them! Raise wheat and lay it up securely and it will preach the ‘gathering’ more eloquently, successfully, and extensively than all the missionaries that we can send out to sweep through the nations, with the proclamation of the judgments of God abroad in the land! If I feel at our approaching Conference as I now do, I shall ask to move that our home missions be not diminished, but increased, if possible; and all set to raising wheat, and make Zion a house and city of refuge for the Saints and for the sons of strangers [I feel the ‘strangers’ here spoken off by President Orson Hyde refer to גוֹיִם or the converts spread out through the gentile nations of the world.—GB], that they may come and build up our walls, even as the old Prophet hath spoken. Many of you have finished your seeding, perhaps, for the season; but suppose you add another edition, enlarged, if not revised. Trust in God! And if your works be good, and plenty of them, your faith will not be questioned!” (President Orson Hyde, “The Saints and the World.” Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City. 18 March 1855, JD 2:207a).

⁴⁶ Elder George A. Smith, “Storing Up Grain.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 9 October 1867, 12:142b.

of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, for the second half, “*The Zion in which the Holy One of Israel delights.*” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And thou shalt be called, City Sion of the Holy one of Israel.” ¶ Elder John Taylor said: “You will find by reading the 14th verse, that this place is to be called ‘The City of the Lord; the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.’ Here we find, that the Lord will have a house built; that it shall be upon the tops of the mountains, and be exalted above the hills; that many nations shall go there, to learn the will of the Lord, and that the law shall go forth from Zion; that the people shall come as clouds to it; that they shall take their silver and gold with them; that God’s worship will be known, and the religion of the Lord will lose its forbidding aspect; and God, and his religion, be popular among the nations of the earth.”⁴⁷ President Brigham Young said, “I am extremely happy for the privilege of living with those who are seeking to do the will of God. We are gathered together in the tops of these mountains for the express purpose of building up Zion, the Zion of the last days, the glory of which was seen by the prophets of the Almighty from the days of old. ‘And they shall call thee,’ says Isaiah, ‘The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.’”⁴⁸ ¶ Birks explains: “This title of God, ‘the Holy One of Israel,’ almost peculiar to Isaiah, comes here for the last time, with especial force. It has been forgotten or denied by Zion’s oppressors in the ages of her degradation; but will shine out at length with redoubled brightness, when He, who has been ‘the light of the Gentiles,’ reveals Himself as ‘the glory of His people Israel.’”

vv. 15-22. Apostle Orson Pratt places the context of these verses in the Millennium: “Zion upon this great western hemisphere will have a city called the New Jerusalem (because it has never been built before) and God will preserve it by His divine power. Read what the Psalmist, David, has said in the 50th Psalm: ‘Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.’ ... Is it a difficult thing for the Lord to make his people rich when they are prepared for it, after days of tribulation, after passing through a great many afflictions and difficulties, tossed to and fro; would it be a difficult matter for the Lord to open up whenever He pleases,

⁴⁷ Taylor, John. *The Government of God*. Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1852.

⁴⁸ President Brigham Young, “Why They Are Gathered.” Old Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 12 January 1868, JD 12:151.

means of unmeasurable riches, more than all the Latter-day Saints would know how to use? Hear what the Lord says: ‘For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders.’ Who were the people here spoken of? They were people that should be clothed upon with this light that I have been speaking of, this glorious light; the presence of the Lord will be in their midst, and it will radiate over their temples, it will light their city by night and by day. ‘But are you sure,’ says one, ‘that such a thing will take place?’ I have no time to read all the Lord says on the subject, but if you read the 60th chapter of Isaiah, you will find that the sun shall be no longer necessary by day, nor the moon by night, to give light to a certain people. Why? Because ‘the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down.’ Not like our sun which arises in the morning and exists above the horizon for a few hours, then descends, and darkness covers the earth. Not so with this light, the glorious divine light that will lighten up the heights of Zion. It will never go down, it will be a standing miracle by day and by night, from one week to another, month after month, year after year, until the one thousand years shall have rolled away over the heads of the people that dwell on the earth.”⁴⁹

15 ¶ Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through [thee], I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.

Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through [thee]. The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “outcast” for *forsaken*. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Because of thy having been forsaken and hated when there was no helper.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓜ) has, “Because thou wast forsaken, and hated, and there was none that passed through thee.” ¶ **And hated,** וְשִׁנְאוֹתָ. Rawlinson notes: “Zion has been a wife repudiated for her adulteries, ‘forsaken’ by her husband, and the object of his just ‘hate.’ So that no man went through thee] The mixed metaphor is awkward, but readily intelligible. Zion is at once a city and a wife. As a wife, she is ‘hated and forsaken,’ [yet] as a city, no man goes through her.” Cheyne points out: “The word ‘hated’ is used in Genesis 29:31, Deuteronomy 21:15, of a less beloved wife.” ¶ Delitzsch well explains it of *Jerusalem*: “The expression ‘no one walked through thee’ applies only to the desolate city as she lay in

ruins.” This could not apply to the whole of the Holy Land—as some exegetes suggest—because she was a major thoroughfare and the only land connecting this part of Africa and Asia. Two such major ways included the *King’s Highway* and the *International Coastal Highway*. ¶ *I will make thee an eternal* [עוֹלָם] *excellency, a joy of many generations.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “I will make thee an eternal glory, the house of joy for generation and generation.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “I will make thee an everlasting boast—a joy for perpetual generations.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓜ) has, “I will make thee to be an everlasting glory, a joy unto generation and generation.” ¶ True **joy**, Oswalt suggests, can only come through God—the rest are counterfeit and short lasting. Furthermore, Oswalt observes: “The word used here, מְשׁוֹשׁ, is a particular favorite of Isaiah {10 of its 17 OT occurrences are in this book: ISAIAH 8:6; 24:8 (bis), 11; 32:13, 14; 62:5; 65:18; 66:10}.” Gill suggests: “The church will be the joy of God and Christ, of the saints, and of the whole world, age after age, for a long period of time.” ¶ President Brigham Young noted regarding Zion: “Again, ‘Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.’ ... We talk and read about Zion, we contemplate upon it, and in our imaginations we reach forth to grasp something that is transcendent in heavenly beauty, excellency, and glory. But while contemplating the future greatness of Zion, do we realize that we are the pioneers of that future greatness and glory? Do we realize that if we enjoy a Zion in time or in eternity, we must make it for ourselves? That all who have a Zion in the eternities of the gods organized, framed, consolidated, and perfected it themselves, and consequently are entitled to enjoy it.”⁵⁰

16 Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the LORD [am] thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings: The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And thou shalt be satisfied with the riches of the nations, and in the spoil of their kings thou shalt delight thyself.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And thou shalt suck the milk of nations, and feed on the wealth of kings.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓜ) has, for the second clause, “And thou shalt be nursed with the breasts of kings.” ¶ Young suggests

⁴⁹ Apostle Orson Pratt, “Exhortation from Isaiah—New Jerusalem.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 26 October 1879. JD 24:27-29.

⁵⁰ President Brigham Young, “Building Up and Adornment of Zion by the Saints.” Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 23 February 1862. JD 9:282.

the following was an inspiration for Isaiah: “They shall call the people unto the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: *for they shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand*” (Deuteronomy 33:19, emphasis added). ¶ Cowles has: “The figures in the first clause need not be mistaken. She shall draw abundantly from the resources of all the *Gentile nations* and their kings; shall be enriched by their wealth and labors, and built up by their consecration to her interests. In her own joyful experience Zion shall know that Jehovah is her Savior; that her own Messiah is the Almighty God” (emphasis added). Orelli says: “God’s Church attracts to itself the best of all nations.” Keith remarks: “As readily as the mother suckles her babe, will the great and rich give of their wealth for Israel’s glory.” Wordsworth has: “[This is] a remarkable expression, showing that the royal care which God prescribes for the Church, is not to be rigid or despotic, but tender and parental, and even maternal.” ¶ *And thou shalt know that I the LORD [am] thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.* The LXX (6) reads, “And shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour, and that thy Redeemer is the God of Israel.” The children of Jacob will come to a knowledge of Jesus Christ as their Savior and Redeemer, including the children of Judah: “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for *his* only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn” (Zechariah 12:10).

17 For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness.

For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: The Targum (7) has, “For the brass which they spoiled thee of, O Jerusalem, I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for the stones iron.” The LXX (6) reads, “And instead of brass I will bring thee gold; and instead of iron I will bring thee silver; and instead of wood I will bring thee brass and instead of stones iron.” ¶ Margalioth, as seen earlier, considers the *thesis* and *antithesis* of this verse, using the words *instead of* / *and instead of*, תחת / תחת, “And it shall come to pass, that INSTEAD OF sweet smell there shall be stink; AND INSTEAD OF a girdle a rent; AND INSTEAD OF well set hair baldness; AND INSTEAD OF a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning INSTEAD OF beauty” (ISAIAH 3:24) and contrasts them to

those here in the second half of Isaiah. Whereas in ISAIAH 3 the comparison was of something good turned bad; the same words are inverted so that instead of good there would be something even better. While the AV uses, “and for” here, the Hebrew matches exactly that of ISAIAH 3:24, תחת, so substituting *and instead of* in place of *and for* we then have: “For brass I will bring gold, AND INSTEAD OF iron I will bring silver, AND INSTEAD OF wood brass, AND INSTEAD OF stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness” (ISAIAH 60:17). See also ISAIAH 55:13; and 61:3. ¶ Elder Orson Pratt taught: “And I expect that when we go from these mountains, by hundreds of thousands, down to that land⁵¹ to purchase it and to occupy it, that we will take with us a great deal of gold and silver—for the Lord will in those days make his people very rich, in fulfillment of another promise made in the same revelation, in which he says, that we shall become the richest of all people. If this is to be the case, the Lord will probably fulfil that prediction by Isaiah, contained in the 60th chapter of his book—‘For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron;’ and he will bestow upon his people riches that they will not know what to do with them, unless directed by the counsels of the servants of the living God. With this we will purchase the land, and go down and inherit it ... You have heard of the Center Stake of Zion, but did you ever read in the revelations of God that the place where the New Jerusalem is to be built is called a stake? There are other places, called Stakes of Zion, but they will be round about the city. And we will be multiplied by hundreds and thousands; and we will build, throughout the region of country, our meetinghouses, our schoolhouses, our academies and universities; and we will see to it, that all of our children have equal advantages,⁵² as far as possible, of becoming acquainted with all necessary and useful learning.”⁵³ ¶ President Brigham Young warned

⁵¹ “I am, and I presume a great many others who are acquainted with the revelations of God, as contained in the Doctrine and Covenants, are looking for the period of time to come, in the history of the Latter-day Saints, when we as a people shall possess a very different country from the one we are now inhabiting ... We do not expect that when that time shall come, that all Latter-day Saints, who now occupy the mountain Valleys, will go in one consolidated body, leaving this land totally without inhabitants. We do not expect any such thing. But we do expect, that there will be a period in the future history of the Church when many hundreds of this people—our youth, for instance, who will grow up in those days, when they will be consolidated as a body, and will go to the eastern portions of the state of Kansas, and also to the western portions of the state of Missouri to settle” (JD 21:149). Also see Elder Orson Pratt, “Fulfillment of Prophecy.” New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 30 August 1875. JD 18:154.

⁵² In other words, not “distinguished by ranks, according to their riches and their chances for learning” (3 Nephi 6:12b).

⁵³ Elder Orson Pratt, “Progress of the Saints to Union in Faith and Practice.” Tabernacle, Logan City, 1 November 1879. JD 21:151-152.

against the love of money, as he has done in other occasions: “Do you not know, brethren, that the day will come of which the Lord says, ‘For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron;’ and yet if those things were now delivered into our hands, there would be selfishness. I have seen that spirit manifested, and I am afraid of it. I am more afraid of covetousness in our Elders than I am of the hordes of hell. Have we men out now of that class? I believe so. I am afraid of such spirits; for they are more powerful and injurious to this people than all hell outside of our borders. All our enemies in the United States or in the world, and all hell with them marshaled against us, could not do us the injury that covetousness in the hearts of this people could do us; for it is idolatry.”⁵⁴ I love these words from Elder George Q. Cannon: “Speaking about the Zion of the last days, Isaiah says that the Lord will bring for brass gold, for iron silver, for wood brass, and for stones iron to build up the Zion of God. When will that be done? When we are united, so that we shall not consume the wealth that God will give us upon our lusts, upon creating class distinctions, raising one class above another, one class living in luxury and another class groveling in poverty; but when we are so organized that there will be no rich and no poor, but all partaking alike of the bounties that God shall give unto us, then, and in my opinion, not till then, can he bestow upon us the wealth that he has promised.”⁵⁵ ¶ *I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “I will also make thy pastors peace, and thy rulers righteousness.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And I will make thy chiefs peaceful and thine overseers righteous.” Instead of *extractors*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *rulers* (Lamsa) / *princes* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, “And I will make thy visitation peace, and thy overseers justice.” ¶ President Brigham Young taught: “We [are] engaged to sustain the good ... until we become one, and act as with one voice in maintaining every temporal and spiritual interest of the political kingdom of our God on earth, whose officers shall be peace and whose exactors shall be righteousness. Our judges will be of our own selection, who will deal out justice and righteousness to the people.”⁵⁶ President Brigham Young also said: “The kingdom that the Almighty will set up in the latter days will have its officers, and those officers will be peace. Every man that officiates in a public capacity will be

filled with the Spirit of God, with the light of God, with the power of God, and will understand right from wrong, truth from error, light from darkness, that which tends to life and that which tends to death ... The kingdom of God will be extended over the earth; and it is written, ‘I will make thine officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness.’ Is that day ever coming? It is; and the doctrine we preach leads to that point.”⁵⁷

18 Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.

Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders. The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And violence shall no more be heard in thy land, nor destruction nor misery in thy borders.” Instead of *wasting*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *spoil*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, for the first clause, “Iniquity shall no more be heard in thy land.” ¶ Elder Orson Pratt taught: “Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders.’ Who were the people here spoken of? They were people that should be clothed upon with this light that I have been speaking of, this glorious light; the presence of the Lord will be in their midst, and it will radiate over their temples, it will light their city by night and by day.”⁵⁸ In relation to this scripture, Elder Orson Pratt also taught: “Wars will cease in those days.”⁵⁹ Such comments make it clear that the millennial day is here spoken off. ¶ *But thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “They shall proclaim salvation on thy walls, and on thy gates there shall be those that praise.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “But thy walls shall be called Salvation and thy gates, sculpture.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, “And salvation shall possess thy walls, and praise thy gates.” ¶ Shalom Paul explains that it was not altogether uncommon to name walls in the ancient world. Cowles has: “Her walls synonymous with salvation; her gates with praise. God’s never failing protection, her bulwarks and city walls; justice always administered at her gates, to the honor of the gospel and the praise of God. The cry of violence heard no more in the land; the ravages of war never pass over her fair fields and glorious city again. The old calamities of her former time never return.” Orelli suggests: “The Church of Christ is the new free Jerusalem, whose wall as

⁵⁴ President Brigham Young, “Extent of the Latter-Day Work.” Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 25 October 1857, JD 5:353b.

⁵⁵ Elder George Q. Cannon, “Seek For Perfection.” Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, in the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 8 October 1874, JD 17:243-244.

⁵⁶ President Brigham Young, “Liberty of the Saints.” Old Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 12 January 1868, JD 12:155.

⁵⁷ President Brigham Young, “Human and Divine Government.” Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 31 July 1859, JD 6:345.

⁵⁸ Apostle Orson Pratt, “Exhortation from Isaiah.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 26 October 1879, JD 24:28b.

⁵⁹ Elder Orson Pratt, “Zion.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 10 March 1872, JD 14:355b.

salvation (cf. the name Jesus), whose gates stand always open to admit the elect of the nations desiring to serve the true God and publish His praise.” Gill has: “*But thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise*] or, ‘call Salvation thy walls, and Praise thy gates’; having no need of any other walls but the salvation of God, temporal and spiritual; nor of any other gates but the praise that will be in the hearts and mouths of the saints, on account of it; though temporal salvation may be included, which will be for walls and bulwarks to the church: yet spiritual and eternal salvation is chiefly meant, which flows from the invariable love of God.”

19 The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.

The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And thou shalt no more have the sun for a light by day nor shall the rising of the moon enlighten thy **night**; but the Lord will be to thee an everlasting light; and thy God will be thy glory.” For the final clause, the Peshitta (Ⓔ) has “and the days of your *mourning* (Lamsa) / *lamentation* (BPE) shall be ended.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓔ) has, for the second clause, “Neither shall the brightness of the moon enlighten thee: but the Lord &c.” ¶ Henderson has us note that: “The LXX (Ⓔ) and Targum (Ⓒ) have read, or at least supplied, **לַיְלָה**, which may have originally been omitted by an ellipsis.” More likely, the absence is an implied ellipsis; one that is easily understood. Shalom Paul reminds us of ISAIAH 30:26. Both contexts are certainly very similar. Skinner well suggests: “It is not implied that the sun and moon shall cease to exist; all that is said is that the New Jerusalem shall not be dependent on these natural luminaries.” So also Cowles: “Raising to its sublimest height the common Hebrew figure which represents calamity as darkness and prosperity as light, the prophet here sees such light and glory as no earthly sun and moon could produce. Hence the sun and the moon fade out as our stars are wont to do when the sun arises, and now God alone becomes the great Sun in the heavens of his Zion, irradiating her city by day and by night, for really there is no night there. This glorious sun never sets ... The reader will note in this chapter the twofold use of light as a figure; first, to represent moral truth—its source and its power; and secondly; its results in the blessedness of the people thus enlightened. First, Christ rises with his gospel as a light upon Zion, and through her instrumentality, upon the *Gentile nations*; and then the blessed fruits of this light are represented as a glorious and perpetual day, of

which God himself is the sun that never sets” (emphasis added). ¶ Elder Wilford Woodruff testified: “I do know that God will build up in Jackson County, Missouri, a great, and wonderful, and beautiful city, that shall be called ‘the perfection of beauty,’ the New Jerusalem. I do know that God will light up the habitations of that city by his power, by his glory, by a cloud in the day time, and by a pillar of fire in the night.”⁶⁰ Elder Orson Pratt attested: “Zion will not need the sun when the Lord is there, and all the city is lighted up by the glory of his presence. When the whole heavens above are illuminated by the presence of his glory we shall not need those bright luminaries of heaven to give light, so far as the city of Zion is concerned ... for the Lord will be there and his glory will be upon all their assemblies. So says Isaiah the Prophet, and I believe it.”⁶¹ President Brigham Young observed: “I am extremely happy for the privilege of living with those who are seeking to do the will of God. We are gathered together in the tops of these mountains for the express purpose of building up Zion, the Zion of the last days, the glory of which was seen by the prophets of the Almighty from the days of old. ‘And they shall call thee,’ says Isaiah, ‘The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.’ ‘The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.’ We are removed far away from those who bore rule over us and oppressed us, and who deprived the Saints of their constitutional rights. The Lord has led His people to a land where they can enjoy as much liberty as they are disposed to live for.”⁶²

20 Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the LORD shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.

Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “Thy kingdom shall cease no more, and thy glory shall not be removed.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “For thy sun shall not go down nor shall thy moon ever wane.” The Peshitta (Ⓔ) is missing ISAIAH 60:20. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓔ) has, for the second clause, “And thy moon shall not decrease.” ¶ Elder Orson Pratt speaks about the earth’s various stages, including that before the fall, the fall, the Millennium and its celestial condition: “But what says the revelation, called the ‘Olive Leaf,’ given December

⁶⁰ Elder Wilford Woodruff, “The Authority of the Priesthood, Etc.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 19 September 1880. JD 21:313b.

⁶¹ Elder Orson Pratt, “Zion.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 10 March 1872, JD 14:355b-356.

⁶² President Brigham Young, “Liberty of the Saints.” Old Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 12 January 1868. JD 12:151-152a.

27th, 1832, on this subject? We are told in this that the earth shall die, and pass away, but it shall be quickened again, for God shall quicken the earth upon which we live. It will become a new earth; but will be prepared more perfectly than it was under the three other conditions in which it was placed; first its spiritual creation, secondly its temporal, in which its spiritual and temporal were combined. The next condition is that of restoring it from the fall back to a temporal condition, and then a still greater change, like unto the death of our bodies, when our bodies crumble back to mother earth and pass themselves among the elements. So it will be with this earth. It will crumble, or in other words, the elements will be separated asunder, and the world will pass away from his presence. What next? Another great change to be wrought. The same elements, constituting the earth, and the atmosphere will be brought together again, in such a manner and way, that the new earth will look like unto a sea of glass, and those who are worthy of the celestial glory will inhabit it forever. What will be the condition of the people who dwell upon that glorious celestial world? They will have the presence of God the Father with them. They will be permitted to dwell where he is. He will light up that world; they will have no need of the rays of the sun, as we now have, neither of the moon, nor stars, so far as light is concerned, for the Lord God will be their light and their glory from that time henceforth and forever.”⁶³ At some point, as we read below, the Lord will remove the earth from its present orb and multiple suns will provide God’s light upon the world. While we do not understand the exact sequence and nature of all of these changes, they will indeed be glorious. President Orson Hyde suggests that the earth will be removed from its present location to one wherein light from multiple suns will shine upon it: “The earth will have to be removed from its place, and reel to and fro like a drunkard. The fact is, it has got to leave the old track in which it has roamed in time passed, and beat a new track; and saith the Lord, ‘come up here.’ What is He going to do with it? Why, take it where the sun will shine upon it continually, and there shall be no more night there; and the hand of God will wipe away the tears from all faces. ‘Come up here, O earth! For I want the Saints who have passed through much tribulation to be glorified with you, and then I will give the earth to the meek. For I will take the curse from it, and rebuke the destroyer for your sakes, and bring all things in subjection to you, and you shall dwell in everlasting light.’ Now it is half day and half night, but I tell you it is not going to be half and half, but there will be no night there. We have but one sun to shine upon us, but when the earth is taken out of this orbit, it

⁶³ Elder Orson Pratt, “The Millennium—The Final Change.” Mount Pleasant, 12 November 1879. JD 21:204-205a.

will come in contact with the rays of other suns that illuminate other spheres; their rays will dazzle our earth, and make the glory of God rest upon it, so that there will be no more night there.”⁶⁴ Regarding the celestialized nature of the future earth, Birks says (although he himself does not subscribe to the idea): “From these verses it has been inferred (Stier) that a time is meant ‘when there will be no more turning into the shadow, when the whole planetary system, including the earth, will be changed, and the earth itself become a sun, &c.” ¶ *For the LORD shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.* The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “For the Lord will be to thee an everlasting light; and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “For the Lord shall be unto thee for an everlasting light &c.” The idea of *everlasting light* [לְאֹרֶךְ עוֹלָם] is repeated in ISAIAH 60:19 and 20. Shalom Paul further contrasts these to “everlasting joy”—in ISAIAH 60:15 we have the *joy of many generations* [or *joy of generation and generation*, מְשׁוֹשׁ דִּיּוֹרָא וְדִיּוֹרָא], which is but a synonym of עוֹלָם. This same word [עוֹלָם] was used in conjunction with *excellency* a few words earlier in the ISAIAH 60:15 passage, and so a synonym was called for. Luther does well in alluding to: “*The LORD is my light*”⁶⁵ and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” (Psalm 27:1, emphasis added). ¶ Elder Orson Pratt said: “We read in Isaiah of a time when a certain people called Zion should be clothed upon with the glory of God, and their city be lighted up with a cloud by day and the light of a flaming fire by night, and they should be so highly favored that, so far as light was concerned, they should not need the light of the sun by day, nor the moon by night, for the Lord their God would be their everlasting light, and the days of their mourning would be ended.”⁶⁶

21 Thy people also [shall be] all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.

Thy people also [shall be] all righteous: The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And thy people shall be all righteous.” The Peshitta (ܣ) renders it, “All of your righteous people.”

⁶⁴ President Orson Hyde, “The Earth.” General Conference, Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 6 October 1853. JD 1:130.

⁶⁵ Luther says “The Lord is my light,” in ISAIAH 60:21, but it fits better here.

⁶⁶ Elder Orson Pratt, “Final Triumph of Light and Truth.” 13th Ward Assembly Rooms, 24 November 1872. JD 15:238b. Also see notes by Elder Orson Pratt under ISAIAH 60:14.

The Douay-Rheims (V) has *just for righteous*. ¶ Birks says that these words have not been fulfilled as of yet and rather, “It belongs, then, to restored Israel, when the branches have been grafted once more into their own olive-tree.” At the beginning of the Millennium, only the righteous will be resurrected. ¶ *They shall inherit the land for ever* [לְעוֹלָם]. The LXX (G) also reads, “They shall inherit the land forever.” ¶ It is interesting that the Savior, speaking to the inhabitants of the Americas, reiterated the promises made in *Rain in Due Season*, speaking to them about the Abrahamic Covenant, the great promise of His presence among the people,⁶⁷ and the inheritance of the American Continent to include the New Jerusalem: “And behold, this people will I establish in this land, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob; and it shall be a *New Jerusalem*. And the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of this people; *yea, even I will be in the midst of you*” (3 Nephi 20:22). ¶ President Brigham Young admonished: “As the Prophet has said—‘Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.’ We are longing for this state of things, then why not begin to work for it today? Why not commence the work today by ceasing to do evil, by ceasing to give strength to the hand which would pierce us through with many sorrows? Why not begin today by sustaining those who will sustain the kingdom of God? This is my text for the Latter-day Saints, and I wish it to be constantly held before them until they exemplify it in their lives, by becoming of one heart and of one mind in all things in righteousness and holiness before the Lord.”⁶⁸ ¶ *The branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified*. The Targum (T) has, “The plant of my delight, the work of my might, that I may *assuredly* be glorified.” The LXX (G) reads, “Preserving the plant, the works of their hands, for glory.” The Peshitta (S) has, “The branch of my planting, the work of my hands shall be glorified.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, for the second clause, “The work of my hand to glorify me.” ¶ Keith says: “The expression ‘the branch of my planting,’ implies also the security of Israel, for then every plant that the Father hath not planted will be rooted up⁶⁹.”

22 A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation; I the LORD will hasten it in his my time.

⁶⁷ “And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people”—Leviticus 26:12, emphasis added.

⁶⁸ President Brigham Young, “Liberty of the Saints.” Old Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 12 January 1868. JD 12:155b-156a.

⁶⁹ Matthew 15:13. Also see Elder Orson Pratt, “Zion.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 10 March 1872, JD 14:353.

A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation. The Targum (T) has, “He that is little amongst them shall become a thousand, and he that is weak *shall become* a strong nation.” The LXX (G) reads, “The fewest in number shall become thousands, and he who is smallest, a great nation.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “The least shall become a thousand, and a little one a most strong nation.” ¶ The Savior, in Doctrine and Covenants, speaks that these things are necessary for our preparation to meet the bridegroom and partake of His glory: “And for this cause, that men might be made partakers of the glories which were to be revealed, the Lord sent forth the fulness of his gospel, his everlasting covenant, reasoning in plainness and simplicity—To prepare the weak for those things which are coming on the earth, and for the Lord’s errand in the day when the weak shall confound the wise, and the little one become a strong nation, and two shall put their tens of thousands to flight.⁷⁰ And by the weak things of the earth the Lord shall thrash the nations by the power of his Spirit” (D&C 133:57-59). Brother Thomas B. Marsh, upon returning to the Church from his apostate condition, testified: “God is at the head of this kingdom, and he has sustained it. I was along in the start of it, and then Joseph [Smith] was the little one; but, as the Scriptures say, ‘The little one shall become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation;’ and Joseph lived to become a thousand, and this people are fast becoming a strong nation.”⁷¹ President Wilford Woodruff taught: “There is no power organized beneath the heavens that can stay the hand of Almighty God. He has set His hand to carry out His purposes. The world hate this people, because the Lord has called them forth out of the world, the same as He called His disciples of old. This is the position we occupy today, as *His people*. Though our numbers are small, yet ‘a little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation:’ and the Lord will hasten it in His time. A little one has already become more than a thousand, or a hundred thousand, and in spite of all opposition this small one will become a great nation, and God will hasten it in His

⁷⁰ An allusion to *Rain in Due Season* where we are told that if Israel will be righteous, few will have the power of many, and furthermore, that the Lord will multiply His people (Leviticus 26:8-9).

⁷¹ Brother Thomas B. Marsh spoke for a few moments, at the request of President Brigham Young, “Return of Thomas B. Marsh to the Church.” Bowery, Great Salt Lake City, 6 September 1857. JD 5:208b. I strongly suggest reading both Brother Marsh’s comments as well as those of the Prophet Brigham Young. I was really moved by the power of these talks. President Young lovingly reproved Brother Marsh for the latter said he would never fall away again. The Prophet explained that none can so brag, especially someone who had already fallen away once. We can all profitably take these things to heart.

time, because God is our friend.”⁷² Elder Erastus Snow shared: “Many years have elapsed since this message began to be communicated to the sons of men; and we have become, comparatively speaking, a great people. A little one has indeed become a thousand. We, who a few years ago were only numbered by units and tens, now are numbered by thousands and tens of thousands, yea hundreds of thousands. And the Priesthood is correspondingly increasing in numbers and in ability to labor, and acquiring means to carry on the work of preaching the Gospel and of gathering Israel.”⁷³ Elder Wilford Woodruff invited: “If the elders of Israel had the vision of their minds opened to see Zion in her beauty and glory, they would have no time to sin or do evil; but they would rise up in the strength of the Lord God of Israel and accomplish all that he requires at their hands. Zion is yet in her weakness, but the little one shall become thousands, and the small one a great nation.”⁷⁴ ¶ *I the LORD will hasten it in my time.* The JST makes it clear that it is the Lord who is speaking through the Prophet Isaiah. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “I the Lord will bring it to pass in its time.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “I the Lord in due time will gather them.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “I the Lord will suddenly do this thing in its time.” Rabbinic thought is full of the hope of a Messiah, not just a Messianic age: “Rabbi Alexandri said, Rabbi Joshua ben Levi pointed out a contradiction, it is written, in its time [will the Messiah come], whilst it is also written, I [the Lord] will hasten it! — if they are worthy, I will hasten it: if not, [he will come] at the due time. R. Alexandri said: R. Joshua opposed⁷⁵ two verses: it is written, And behold, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven whilst [elsewhere] it is written, [behold, thy king cometh unto thee ...] lowly, and riding upon an ass! — if they are meritorious, [he will come] with the clouds of heaven; if not, lowly and riding upon an ass. King Shapur [I] said to Samuel, ‘Ye maintain that the Messiah will come upon an ass: I will rather send him a white horse of mine.’ He replied, ‘Have you a hundred-hued steed?’” (Seder Nezikin, Sanhedrin 98a, Talmud,

Soncino). ¶ The Doctrine and Covenants has: “Behold, I will hasten my work in its time” (D&C 88:73). These days of tribulation, says the Lord, will be shortened: “And except those days should be shortened, there should none of their flesh be saved; but for the elect’s sake, according to the covenant, those days shall be shortened” (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:20; also see Matthew 24:22). ¶ In 1872, Elder Wilford Woodruff said: “What principle has sustained the Elders of Israel for the last forty years in their travels? They have gone forth without purse or scrip, preached without money or price; they have swam rivers, waded swamps, and traveled hundreds of thousands of miles on foot to bear record of this work to the nations of the earth ... and here they are today, from all those nations, gathered in the valleys of the mountains. And this is but the beginning; it is like a mustard seed, it is very small; but the little one is to become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation. The Lord will hasten it in his own time. Zion shall be called a ‘city Sought out’ (ISAIAH 62:12). The Lord is watching over us.”⁷⁶ ¶ President John Taylor urged: “The work of God is growing and increasing, and it will continue to do so until the words of the prophet will be fulfilled who said, ‘A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time,’ but He expects every man in his place to magnify his calling and to honor his God ... And it is for every man and every woman to do his and her part.”⁷⁷

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⁷² President Wilford Woodruff, “No Power Can Stay the Hand of Almighty.” Assembly Hall, Salt Lake City, 6 January 1884. JD 25:8a. Emphasis added.

⁷³ Elder Erastus Snow, “Present Revelation.” General Conference, 5 October 1883. JD 25:36a. Also see Elder Orson Pratt, “The Divine Authority of the Holy Priesthood.” General Conference, Salt Lake City, 10 October 1880. JD 22:35b.

⁷⁴ Elder Wilford Woodruff, “Final Triumph of His Kingdom.” Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 22 October 1865. JD 11:247b. Also see Elder Wilford Woodruff, “Infidelity of the Christian World.” 6 April 1876. JD 18:191b. Also see Elder Wilford Woodruff, “The Signs of the Coming of the Son of Man.” 13th Ward Assembly Rooms, Salt Lake City, 12 January 1873. JD 15:279b.

⁷⁵ Contrasted, rather. I include the Rabbinic view to point out that the Rabbis did believe in a Messiah to come, not just a Messianic age. Also note the lack of understanding over the First and Second Advent.

⁷⁶ Elder Wilford Woodruff, “The Fulfilling of Prophecy.” Tabernacle, 6 April 1872. JD 15:11a. Emphasis added.

⁷⁷ President John Taylor, “Growth and Progress of God’s Work.” Logan Conference, 6 August 1882. JD 23:221a.

Isaiah 61

Christ's divinity is put forth. In the meridian of times He comes to expiate for our sins and to heal us in every way. In the last days there will be judgment. The Savior plants His garden and it gives forth fruit. We may compare this to an olive vineyard with the fruitful trees being the trees of righteousness. Israel will be gathered from every corner of the earth and in the latter days become *a kingdom of priests and an holy nation*. It is robbery to act in the name of Christ without authority of the Priesthood of God. The Lord's disciples will be able to be distinguished from among the people and in due time will be clothed with celestial robes.

vv. 1–3. Jesus Christ testifies of His divinity. He is called to bind up the brokenhearted and to open the prison doors. The language is that of the jubilee. The Savior is the gardener and His disciples the trees that will grow up to righteousness.

1 ¶ THE Spirit of the Lord GOD [is] upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to [them that are] bound;

Cheyne says: "Precisely the same statement is made respecting the Servant in ISAIAH 42:1." There it also refers to the Messiah. Birks explains: "These opening words were chosen out by our Lord at Nazareth for the solemn introduction of His public ministry." ¶ In one of my favorite scriptures in the New Testament, the Savior quotes Isaiah, or the words that He gave Isaiah, and applies them to Himself: "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,¹ because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.' And he closed the book,² and he gave it again to the minister, and sat

¹ In the Masoretic text (מס) we have רִיחַ אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה עָלַי, Spirit of Lord Jehovah upon me, for Christ speaking through Divine Investiture. The literal Hebrew translation is "The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is on Me" (LITV). It is the Jewish tradition, however, to read it as *Lord God*.

² As Jenour points out, more likely, "rolled up, the book."

down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, 'This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears'" (Luke 4:16–21). Note that it was the custom of the Jews at the time to read the scriptures standing up and then to sit down to interpret what had been read. The Savior here testified that in Him, the very Son of God, these Scriptures were fulfilled. ¶ *THE Spirit of the Lord GOD [is] upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek*. The Targum (ܬ) has, for the first half, "The prophet said, the spirit of prophecy from the presence of the Lord God is upon me." The LXX (ε) reads, "THE SPIRIT of the Lord is upon me, for the business for which he anointed me. He hath sent me to publish glad tidings to the poor." The Douay-Rheims (ϑ) has, "Because the Lord hath anointed me: he hath sent me to preach to the meek." ¶ Birks says, "That Messiah himself speaks in these words rests on His own Divine authority." Gills, speaking of the Rabbis says: "According to the Targum (ܬ), these are the words of the prophet concerning himself; and so say Ibn Ezra and Kimhi; but the latter elsewhere says (Sepher Shorash. rad. מִשְׁחָ) they are the words of the Messiah, who should say, 'because the Lord hath anointed me.'" So here, also, the Masoretic text (מס) has מָשַׁח, the root for Messiah, Anointed One, מְשִׁיחַ.³ ¶ At a time when Christ's divinity is being questioned more than ever, I appreciate the testimonies of all who valiantly declare these Scriptures as pointing to Jesus Christ of the New Covenant and Jehovah of the Old, even the Son of God the Eternal Father. ¶ *The spirit of the Lord is upon me*. That is, the Holy Ghost: "For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him" (John 3:34). ¶ *He hath sent me to bind up [לְהַבְשִׁי] the brokenhearted*. The Targum (ܬ) has "strengthen" for *bind up*. The LXX (ε) reads, "To heal them who are broken hearted." The Douay-Rheims (ϑ)

³ The kings of Israel were also anointed and the term מְשִׁיחַ used for them. But here in ISAIAH 61:1, the reference is to Jesus Christ, the Anointed One, the Holy Messiah.

has, “To heal the contrite of heart.” ¶ Rawlinson has: “‘Binding up’ is an ordinary expression in Isaiah’s writings for ‘healing’ (see ISAIAH 1:6; 3:7; 30:26).” The sufferings that Christ endured for us through His expiation help us heal in terms of our sins, our physical pains and our broken hearts—or emotional challenges. This is similar to the “*comfort* [who] *all that mourn*” are in need off (ISAIAH 61:2). Oswalt sweetly speaks of “Those who are so broken by life⁴ that they have no more heart to try; those who are so bound up in their various addictions that liberty and release are a cruel mirage; those who think that they will never again experience the favor of the Lord ... those who think that their lives hold nothing more than ashes, sackcloth, and the fainting heaviness of despair.” And then Oswalt beautifully explains the tenderness with which the Lord will personally attend to the “oozing wounds that were the result of sin” and that needed binding up [חֲבָשָׁה, ISAIAH 1:6]. Shalom Paul speaks that such healing is usually carried out by Deity and points us to Psalm 147. “Praise ye the LORD: for *it is* good to sing praises unto our God; for *it is* pleasant; *and* praise is comely. The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel. He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds” (Psalm 147:1–3). Indeed, only the Lord can heal us through His atoning sacrifice. It is the Lord, even the Holy One of Israel who heals us, who is Emanuel. ¶ *To proclaim liberty to the captives*. The LXX (6) reads, “To proclaim a deliverance to captives.” Birks says: “The work of our Lord was to raise up all who were crushed by the bitter effects of their own sin.” Here we have an allusion to the year of jubilee. Orelli says about לְדָרוֹר, *liberty*: “*To proclaim freedom* ... is taken after Leviticus 25:10, from the arrangements of the jubilee year, when freedom was proclaimed to all slaves.” In Leviticus we have *and proclaim liberty in the land*, וְקָרְאתֶם לְדָרוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ. And then, “it shall be a *jubile* [יּוֹבֵל] unto you” (Leviticus 25:10). See especially ISAIAH 24:22; 42:7 and 1 Peter 3:19, regarding the preaching of the Gospel in the Spirit World. This liberty, then, would include those who have passed on into the Spirit World as well as all of us who live on earth and are blessed with God’s tender mercies in our efforts to leave Babylon behind. ¶ President Russell M. Nelson spoke about the role members play in helping liberate the captives by working on family history and temple work.⁵ Elder Wilford Woodruff likewise taught: “We are required to

build Temples in which to attend to the ordinances of the house of the Lord, that the prison doors may be opened, and the prisoners go free.”⁶ Apostle Franklin D. Richards explained: “After His resurrection He called His Apostles together and commissioned them, saying, ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.’ That was another feature of the work wherein He sends the Gospel ... to all the world. We see, then, that the great work of the brethren was to carry the Gospel to the whole human family first. But the Savior told them that if He went away, they should do greater works than He had done, because He went to the Father. What did He do? After He was crucified He went and preached to the spirits in prison, even to that great multitude that were destroyed through disobedience before the flood and by the flood. He unlocked the prison doors to those that were bound. While upon the earth the Savior and His brethren of the Twelve labored to impart the Gospel to those that were living ... The Gospel had to be preached to mortals first, and next to those in the spirit world.”⁷ Robert L. Millet and Joseph Fielding McConkie point us to a scripture in which Christ speaks about visiting the spirits of the departed in the Spirit World⁸: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice” (John 5:25–28). ¶ *And the opening of the prison* [פְּקֻחַ קִוְיָה]⁹ to [them that are] bound; The Targum (7) has “And to the prisoners! Appear in light!” The LXX (6) reads, “And a recovery of sight to the blind.” The Douay-Rheims (8) has, “And to preach a release to the captives, and deliverance to them that are shut up.” President Joseph Fielding Smith explained: “There was no work done for the dead until after the Savior turned the key when he visited the spirits in prison ... These references [after quoting ISAIAH 61:1–2] to the opening of the prison and the proclaiming of liberty to the captives evidently have reference to the dead who had been confined in darkness not knowing their fate ... That is to say, the time had come for the preaching of the gospel and the

⁴ Oswalt says speaking of the poor, but fits perfectly with the broken hearted.

⁵ Elder Russell M. Nelson, “The Sabbath Is a Delight.” April 2015 General Conference. Also see April 1991 General Conference, “Generations Linked in Love.”

⁶ Elder Wilford Woodruff, “Parable of the Ten Virgins.” New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 12 September 1875. 18:115a.

⁷ Apostle Franklin D. Richards, “Preaching to the Spirits in Prison.” New Stake Tabernacle, Provo, 30 August 1885. JD 26:301.

⁸ Robert L. Millet and Joseph Fielding McConkie (2004), *The Life Beyond*, p.48–1.

⁹ Some exegetes render it as a single word, פְּקֻחָהּ.

redemption of both the living and the dead.”¹⁰ President George Q. Cannon explained: “[Jesus] was not only commanded to preach good tidings unto the meek, and to bind up the broken hearted, but He was sent to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that were bound. Thus was a part of His mission foretold by the Prophet Isaiah a long time before His birth. He Himself confirmed the correctness of the prediction by reading it in the ears of the people; and when He left the earth, after having established His Gospel upon it, after having commenced the work of salvation here, after having ordained men to the authority of the everlasting Priesthood which He held, the Priesthood of Melchizedek, after having done this and was slain by wicked men, suffered for the sins of humanity in the flesh, He then went, in the words that I have read in your hearing from this epistle of Peter, and preached to the spirits in prison which sometime were disobedient when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah (1 Peter 3:19–20). He went and proclaimed liberty to the captive; He went to open the prison doors to them that were bound. He alone could do this. No Prophet that preceded Him had the authority, for none of the Prophets that had preceded Him had this mission assigned them. It was His duty as the Son of God, as the Redeemer of the world, after, as I have said, committing the Gospel to men in the flesh, after ordaining men to preach that Gospel and administer its ordinances in the power and authority of the everlasting Priesthood, to preach to those spirits in prison. It did not take a great while to commence the work; for He was crucified on Friday, and was resurrected on Sunday; but in the interim, while His body laid in the tomb, His Spirit, as is correctly stated in one catechism—I believe that of the Episcopalians—‘descended into hell,’ and, according to the mission that had been assigned Him, according to the revelation that God gave to Enoch before the floods descended upon the wicked world, according to the predictions of Isaiah, and according to the power and authority which He exercised as the Son of God He went and opened the prison doors to them that were bound, preached to them the everlasting Gospel, once more, and gave unto them the privilege of receiving it in the spirit even as though they were in the flesh. Therefore says Peter, ‘By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing (1 Peter 3:19–20). Then he goes on and he says ... : ‘For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according

to God in the spirit.’”¹¹ A little over three decades later, through the Prophet Joseph F. Smith, the Lord would correct some of the early notions we held regarding this matter: “And as I wondered, my eyes were opened, and my understanding quickened, and I perceived that the Lord went not in person among the wicked and the disobedient who had rejected the truth, to teach them; But behold, from among the righteous, he organized his forces and appointed messengers, clothed with power and authority, and commissioned them to go forth and carry the light of the gospel to them that were in darkness, even to all the spirits of men; and thus was the gospel preached to the dead. And the chosen messengers went forth to declare the acceptable day of the Lord and proclaim liberty to the captives who were bound, even unto all who would repent of their sins and receive the gospel. Thus was the gospel preached to those who had died in their sins, without a knowledge of the truth, or in transgression, having rejected the prophets. These were taught faith in God, repentance from sin, vicarious baptism for the remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, And all other principles of the gospel that were necessary ... Thus was it made known that our Redeemer spent his time during his sojourn in the world of spirits, instructing and preparing the faithful spirits of the prophets who had testified of him in the flesh; That they might carry the message of redemption unto all the dead, unto whom he could not go personally, because of their rebellion and transgression, that they through the ministration of his servants might also hear his words” (D&C 138:29–34a, 36–37). Thus we are taught: “Precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little” (ISAIAH 28:10b). This is the way we have been taught as a Church and this is the way we have been taught as individuals. And when it comes to the vicarious work for the dead, I believe that this is one of the most glorious principles we hold and cherish as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It truly shows our Lord’s tender mercies toward each of His children—including those who never heard the name of Jesus Christ in their lifetimes. ¶ Brothers Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet wrote: “The Prophet Joseph Smith, as a part of his inspired translation of the King James Bible, provided the clarifying touch of divine inspiration in the first epistle of Peter: ‘For Christ also once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, that he might bring us to God.

¹⁰ President Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*.

¹¹ President George Q. Cannon, “Christ Preached to the Spirits in Prison between the Times of His Crucifixion and Resurrection.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 9 November 1884. JD 26:81b–82. Also see President George Q. Cannon, “Salvation for the Dead.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 25 May 1884. JD 173b–174a.

For which cause also, he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; some of whom were disobedient in the days of Noah... . Because of this, is the gospel preached to them who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live in the spirit according to the will of God.’ (JST, 1 Peter 3:18–20; 4:6.) In a sermon on 12 May 1844, Joseph Smith taught: ‘... The sectarians have no charity for me, but I have for them. I intend to send men to prison to preach to them.’ (*The Words of Joseph Smith*, pp. 370, 371; spelling and punctuation modernized).¹²

2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD. The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “To proclaim an acceptable year of the Lord.” The *year of jubilee* in ancient Israel was a year of forgiveness from debt and a year of liberty. ISBE has, in part: “שָׁנַת הַיּוֹבֵל, ‘year of jubilee’ (Leviticus 25:13), or simply הַיּוֹבֵל, ‘the jubilee’ (Leviticus 25:28; compare Numbers 36:4). The Hebrew word יוֹבֵל stands for קֶרֶן הַיּוֹבֵל, meaning the horn of a ram [horn of the ram—GB]. Now, such a horn can be made into a trumpet, and thus the word יוֹבֵל came to be used as a synonym of trumpet. According to Leviticus 25:9 a loud trumpet should proclaim *liberty* throughout the country on the 10th day of the 7th month (*the Day of Atonement*), after the lapse of 7 sabbaths of years = 49 years. In this manner, every 50th year was to be announced as a jubilee year. All real property should automatically revert to its original owner (Leviticus 25:10; compare 25:13), and those who, compelled by poverty, had sold themselves as slaves to their brothers, should regain their liberty (Leviticus 25:10; compare 25:39). In addition to this, the Jubilee Year was to be observed after the manner of the sabbatic year, i.e. there should be neither sowing nor reaping nor pruning of vines, and everybody was expected to live on what the fields and the vineyards produced ‘of themselves,’ and no attempt should be made at storing up the products of the land (Leviticus 25:11 f). Thus there are three distinct factors constituting the essential features of the Jubilee Year: personal liberty, restitution of property, and what we might call the simple life” (emphasis added). There is a strong connection between liberty and the joy of the year of jubilee. The Savior, in speaking of the *acceptable year of the Lord*, seems to be making allusion to the year of jubilee, and proclaiming—not

just with horns, the יוֹבֵל or the שׁוֹפָר—liberty and salvation to the captives and prisoners from spiritual bondage. Each and every one of us is in need of that salvation which was brought about by Christ’s atoning sacrifice. Cowles explains: “So Jesus blew the gospel trumpet, proclaiming redemption through all the land, so that whosoever would might come out of bondage into liberty.” The Angel Moroni is most often represented blowing the trumpet. Each one of us as member missionaries also blows this trumpet of invitation for all to come unto Christ. ¶ Keith notes that the Scriptures speak of a *year*, in terms of the jubilee, but a *day* in terms of vengeance. The latter will be kept relatively short—the LORD will hasten it—in relation to our opportunity to repent and come unto Christ. ¶ After quoting Luke 4:17–21, Elder Theodore M. Burton said: “It is amazing to see what happened in the minds of his listeners when Jesus Christ proclaimed this marvelous doctrine and told the people that this work of salvation was *his* assigned task. [Quotes Luke 4:28–30]. Thus Jesus Christ was rejected by the people because he told them what saving work he would do for the captives then confined to a spiritual prison and for those who had been bruised in their souls through iniquity. Instead of rejoicing in this liberation, the people hated Jesus for being so presumptuous as to tell them that he had been anointed to open the prison doors. Even his very life was threatened. Nevertheless, he continued to preach this doctrine even more clearly, in the hopes that people would understand him and the importance of the work he had been called to do.”¹³ President Daniel H. Wells noted: “The plan of salvation is ample to save to the uttermost. God, in his mercy, designed it to save his children, because he delights to give good gifts to his children far more than an earthly parent does. The Almighty has sent forth his servants to plead with the children of men, to declare the acceptable year of the Lord, and to call upon them to repent lest the end come when no man can work.”¹⁴ ¶ *And the day of vengeance of our God.* The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And a day of retribution.” Instead of *vengeance*, the Peshitta (ܣ) has *salvation*. The word נָקָם is most often translated as *vengeance*. If so, it would be vengeance upon the enemies of God’s people. TWOT suggests: “The prophets stressed ‘the day of the Lord’s vengeance’ (ISAIAH 38:8; 61:2; 63:4) as times in history when the Lord sets the record straight.” Perhaps we can say that God punishes us because He loves us and He cares about us. DCH, however, suggests that *victory* might be

¹² McConkie, Joseph Fielding, and Robert L. Millet. *Joseph Smith: The Choice Seer*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1996.

¹³ Elder Theodore M. Burton, “The Spirit and Power of Elijah.” *Conference Report*, October 1970, pp. 33–36.

¹⁴ President Daniel H. Wells, “Character of the Deceased.” 14th Ward Assembly Rooms, Salt Lake City, 23 February 1873. JD 15:353b–354a.

a good translation at times (see Psalm 58:11). The Peshitta (S) translates it as *salvation*. This fits with the context of the jubilee and the rejoicing associated with it. It also fits perfectly with both the comments associated with salvation of Elder Theodore M. Burton and President Daniel H. Wells, which we quoted above. ¶ On the other hand, Oswalt well points out that these concepts are paired in ISAIAH 63:1–6, where salvation is put side by side with vengeance. There are additional arguments to defend the traditional view of *vengeance*. Govett says: “The commencing verses of this chapter were read by our blessed Saviour in the synagogue at Nazareth as describing the intention of his ministry; after reading which, he added, ‘This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.’ But the Lord’s omission of part of the second verse is highly significant. He read as far as the words which foretold that he came to ‘preach the acceptable year of the Lord,’ but he did *not* read the succeeding clause, ‘And the *day of vengeance* of our God.’ We conclude, therefore, that, as in other prophecies, the first and second advent are blended, so it is here.” So also Keith: “When he had read from the book of the prophet Esaias onward to the clause inclusive, ‘to preach the acceptable year of the Lord,’ he stopped; ‘He closed the book, and gave it again to the minister, and sat down.’ What follows, ‘the day of vengeance of our God,’ was not at that time fulfilled. He no doubt proclaimed it as he did on other occasions, as in Matthew 24:27. He foretold that it would come, but he did not proclaim it, as in the other case, as having then come. The break in his application of the prophecy clearly shows that it refers to two separate periods, and that while the former part received its accomplishment by his proclaiming the word of salvation when on earth, the other was not then fulfilled,—that it will receive its accomplishment at a future day.” ¶ In terms of a day of vengeance, the Lord makes it clear that *He will clean His own house first*: “Behold, vengeance cometh speedily upon the inhabitants of the earth, a day of wrath, a day of burning, a day of desolation, of weeping, of mourning, and of lamentation; and as a whirlwind it shall come upon all the face of the earth, saith the Lord. And *upon my house shall it begin*, and from my house shall it go forth, saith the Lord; First among those among you, saith the Lord, *who have professed to know my name and have not known me*, and have blasphemed against me in the midst of my house, saith the Lord” (D&C 112:24–26, emphasis added). ¶ *To comfort all that mourn*. The LXX (G) reads, “To comfort all who are mourning.” ¶ Rawlinson explains: “All who ‘sorrow after a godly sort’ (2 Corinthians 7:11)—all who mourn their transgressions and shortcomings ... with a hearty desire to be rid of them, and to serve God truly in the future.”

3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion. The Targum (T) adds, after the first clause, “That unto them be given a crown of ashes.” The LXX (G) reads, “That to the mourners in Zion may be given.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “To appoint to the mourners of Zion.”

¶ Wordsworth suggests: “Christ’s promise is not to the proud, and obstinate, and self-righteous, but *to them that mourn in Zion* for their sins. They receive comfort from Him, and they are made His ministers in comforting others. ‘Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted’ (Matthew 5:4).” ¶ Elder Dale G. Renlund reminded us: “President Thomas S. Monson has taught, ‘One of God’s greatest gifts to us is the joy of trying again, for no failure ever need be final.’ [Ensign, May 1987, 68.] Even if we’ve been a conscious, deliberate sinner or have repeatedly faced failure and disappointment, the moment we decide to try again, the Atonement of Christ can help us. And we need to remember that it is not the Holy Ghost that tells us we’re so far gone that we might as well give up. God’s desire that Latter-day Saints keep on trying also extends beyond overcoming sin. Whether we suffer because of troubled relationships, economic challenges, or illnesses or as a consequence of someone else’s sins, the Savior’s infinite Atonement can heal even—and perhaps especially—those who have innocently suffered. He understands perfectly what it is like to suffer innocently as a consequence of another’s transgression. As prophesied, the Savior will ‘bind up the brokenhearted, ... give ... beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, [and] the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.’ No matter what, with His help, God expects Latter-day Saints to keep on trying.”¹⁵ ¶ *To give unto them beauty for ashes*. The LXX (G) reads, “Glory instead of ashes.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “And to give them a crown for ashes.” ¶ Margalioth, as already mentioned in ISAIAH 3, 55, 60, considers the *thesis and antithesis* of this verse, using the words *instead of* / *and instead of*, תַּחַת / תַּחַת, “And it shall come to pass, that INSTEAD OF sweet smell there shall be stink; AND INSTEAD OF a girdle a rent; AND INSTEAD OF well set hair baldness; AND INSTEAD OF a stomacher a girding of

¹⁵ Elder Dale G. Renlund, “Latter-day Saints Keep on Trying.” April 2015 General Conference.

sackcloth; and burning INSTEAD OF beauty” (ISAIAH 3:24) and contrasts them to those in the second half of ISAIAH. Whereas in ISAIAH 3 the comparison was of something good turned into something bad, the same words are inverted so that instead good there would be something better. The AV has *for* in place of **וְלִי** so we make the appropriate substitution: “To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty INSTEAD OF ashes, the oil of joy INSTEAD OF mourning, the garment of praise INSTEAD OF the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified” (ISAIAH 61:3). ¶ Gill says: “In times of mourning, it was usual to put on sackcloth and ashes (Esther 4:1), instead of this, Christ gives his mourners the beautiful garments of salvation, and the robe of his righteousness.” Almost all of the exegetes pause to mention the paronomasia here (Whitehouse calls it an “alliterative play of words”) between **פָּאֵר** and **אָפֵר**, *beauty* and *ashes*, “i.e., a nuptial tiara on the head,¹⁶ instead of *ashes* upon it” (Wordsworth). Rawlinson beautifully has: “A crown of glory in lieu of the ashes of repentance which it was customary to sprinkle upon the head.” Shalom Paul notes: “A transposition of the letters **פָּאֵר** – **אָפֵר** accentuates their reversal of fortune. Instead of the ‘ashes’ (**אָפֵר**) of mourning, the Lord shall place a turban (**פָּאֵר**) on their heads.” Ezekiel, as Shalom Paul notes, has: “Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the *tire of thine* [**פָּאֵרְךָ**, *thy turban*] head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not *thy* lips, and eat not the bread of men” (Ezekiel 24:17). ¶ *The oil of joy for mourning*. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Oil of joy to the mourners.” ¶ Gill has: “The Spirit without measure, with which Christ was anointed, is called ‘the oil of gladness’ (Psalm 45:7) and of the same nature, though not of the same measure, is the grace which saints have from Christ; the effect of which is joy and gladness, even joy unspeakable, and full of glory; which is had in believing in Christ.” Whitehouse explains: “The ‘oil of joy,’ or the oil which is expressive of gladness, is a reference to the Oriental custom of anointing the person with oil on festival days or weddings or other special times of rejoicing (Amos 6:6; Psalm 23:5; 45:8; Luke 7:46).” See also notes on ISAIAH 60:10, as associated with Leviticus 8. ¶ *The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness*. The Targum (ⲡ) has, “The spirit of praise for their spirit which is faint.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Robes of praise for the spirit of heaviness.” Instead of *praise*, the Peshitta (ܣ) has *beauty*. The Douay-Rheims

(ⲛ) has *grief* instead of *heaviness*. ¶ Barnes gives Apocryphal Judith as an example of change in clothing: “These expressions are figurative, and are taken from the custom which prevailed more in Oriental countries than elsewhere—and which is founded in nature—of expressing the emotions of the mind by the manner of apparel. These customs are stated in the book of Judith. She ‘pulled off the sackcloth which she had on, and pulled off the garments of her widowhood, and washed her body all over with water, and anointed herself with precious ointment, and braided the hair of her head, and put on a tire upon it (Greek, *μίτρε* *mitre*), and put on her garments of gladness wherewith she was clad during the life of Manasses her husband. And she took sandals upon her feet, and put about her her bracelets, and her chains, and her rings, and her ear-rings, and all her ornaments, and decked herself bravely to allure the eyes of all men that should see her.” ¶ *Praise for heaviness* is the *spirit of thanksgiving* toward God the Eternal Father and His beloved Son, Jesus Christ. We praise the Son for His atoning sacrifice that lifts from us the heaviness of sin. The pain and heaviness of disobedience is much worse than of any other type of pain. So it is that when the Lord lifts this burden from us we are left to exclaim our gratitude and sing praises unto Him. ¶ Elder Neal A. Maxwell spoke of the importance of giving honest, sincere praise, “Isaiah spoke of providing the ‘garment of praise.’ (ISAIAH 61:3.) Of course, there are times in rendering humanitarian service when we need to give an actual, physical cloak, but, most often, those with whom most of us work need material clothing less than the ‘garment of praise.’ (‘Successful Leadership in Organizations, Communities and Families.’)¹⁷ Elder Maxwell also said: “In a world more starved for love than food, how precious is the gracious individual who overlooks our weaknesses and mercifully clothes us instead in the much-needed ‘garment of praise.’”¹⁸ I have done quite a bit of work in organizations regarding putting back *praise* in *performance appraisals*. As a result, I have seen many lives change for the better.¹⁹ The giving of sincere praise is a way we show our gratitude. ¶ *That they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified*. The Targum (ⲡ) has, “They shall be called (Chaldee, ‘they shall call them’) princes of truth, the people of the Lord, that He may assuredly be glorified.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “That they may be called generations of righteousness, a plant

¹⁶ Regarding the tiara, festal turban or headdress, Whitehouse sends us to Exodus 39:28; and Ezekiel 44:18.

¹⁷ Maxwell, Cory H., ed. *The Neal A. Maxwell Quote Book*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1997.

¹⁸ Elder Neal A. Maxwell, *One More Strain of Praise*, p.57, 62.

¹⁹ See Negotiated Performance Appraisal (NPA) in my book, *Party-Directed Mediation*. The PDF of the book is available at no cost from the University of California. Google *Party-Directed Mediation*. or in Spanish, *Mediación Interpersonal*.

of the Lord for glory.” The Lamsa Peshitta (S) has, “They shall be called men of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, which is glorious (or *the Glorious*, BPE).” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And they shall be called in it the mighty ones of justice, the planting of the Lord to glorify him.” ¶ Also, see notes on ISAIAH 60:21b, *the branch of my planting*, and ISAIAH 61:11, below.

¶ וְקָרָא לָהֶם אֵילֵי הַצִּדִּיק so [CJB, LITV, MKJV, NASB, Rotherham; others mostly have *that* or *and*] *they might be called trees of righteousness*. Oswalt explains that the ו [most often translated as *and*] here is

“functioning as a *waw* apodosis expressing result.” The word *that*, says Oswalt, makes an even stronger connection than *so*. Keith suggests: “The expression ‘trees of righteousness,’ appears to signify trees bearing the fruits of righteousness.” ¶ Elder Levi Edgar Young said: “What will be the characteristics of a religion of Jesus Christ as humanity returns to the old way—the way of Christ our Savior? The followers will hold to the power of the priesthood of God, to authority, and liberty, to the doctrine of individual salvation, the spirit of truth that binds people into a Christian society. The unity of the Church of the living God will be envisaged by a society, for which Christendom waits. It will be the religion of Jesus Christ, and not a religion about Jesus Christ. Thus we come to the supreme test of religion—*revelation*. This was the fundamental teaching of the prophets of the Old Testament ... Our Savior came to save. He sought out the lost souls who had wandered far away. Sin was in the world then as it is today. He came to redeem the lost by the principle of repentance and holy baptism by one who has the power of God. If the Christian world has forgotten this, then it has lost its divine power. ‘All great truths,’ it has been said, ‘are simple truths.’ If the followers of Jesus will begin to teach the ways of the gospel of Christ in that humility which come of the genuinely pure heart and the high regard for the intellect, then the divinity of the gospel will take new root in the souls of men. It will be Christianity again.”²⁰ President Brigham Young similarly said, “The religion of Jesus Christ gives light for darkness. [He then quoted ISAIAH 61:1–3].”²¹ What does *trees of righteousness* stand for, precisely? It is clearly associated with the *planting of the Lord*, and gives the impression of *human seeds* or *mortals* who have matured into full righteousness, exaltation and eternal life. In Doctrine and Covenants we read: “But learn that he who doeth the works of righteousness shall

receive his reward, even peace in this world and eternal life in the world to come” (D&C 59:23).

vv. 4–9. The disciples will play a vital role in preaching the Gospel to the world. Israel will be gathered from every quarter. In the last days truly, Israel shall become unto the Lord “a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation” (Exodus 19:6b). It is the Gardener who sanctifies the disciples. Judah shall eventually receive a double blessing. The Lord abhors priestcraft. The light of Christ shall be readily seen in His disciples.

4 ¶ And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.

And they shall build the old wastes. The LXX (G) reads, “And the wastes of old times shall be rebuilt.” Instead of *wastes*, the Peshitta (S) has *ruins*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And they shall build the places that have been waste from of old.” ¶ Keith says that this “predicts as distinctly as any language could, the rebuilding of the yet desolate cities of Judea.” Jennings says: “Apply the prophecy to the literal nation of Israel, and how simple it all is. Its cities shall be rebuilt; its wastes covered with fertile beauty, and its desolations throbbing with life. Foreigners shall do the rough servile work, while Israel’s own people shall be known as having peculiar access to God, and so a nation of priests.” Oswalt explains that while Jerusalem has been rebuilt, “Assyria and Babylon are piles of dust,” and that both of these conditions are fulfillment of prophecy. There seems to be a connection, also, with ISAIAH 58:12b, “The repairer of the breach” (ISAIAH 58:12). Apostasy brought a physical destruction, desolation, agricultural ruin, as well as spiritual darkness. Conversion brings spiritual joy which is often accompanied by the construction of beautiful temples and other edifices. ¶ *They shall raise up the former desolations.* The LXX (G) reads, “And former desolations shall be repaired.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And shall raise up ancient ruins.” ¶ Birks has: “The threatening of the Law [especially *Rain in Due Season*—GB] had been, ‘I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries into desolation... and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste’ (Leviticus 26:31, 33). So too Isaiah’s own commission began, in the last year of Uzziah. ‘Until the cities be wasted without inhabitants... and the land be utterly desolate’ (ISAIAH 6:11). The warning, which thus begins Isaiah’s message, is graciously reversed by this promise near its close.” This is precisely the type of reversal that Margalioth has been teaching us about,

²⁰ Elder Levi Edgar Young, “The Test of Christianity.” *Conference Report*, October 1944, pp. 83–85.

²¹ President Brigham Young, “Contrast between the Religion of Jesus Christ As Enjoyed By the Saints and that of Professed Christianity.” *Bowery*, 6 July 1862. JD 9:318a.

pointing to the unity of Isaiah. ¶ Elder Orson Pratt explained: “It is very evident from these predictions of the Prophet Isaiah, that he, by that spirit which opens the future, was able to see the calamities that would come upon the house of Israel, and not only upon the people, but also upon the Promised Land, the land of Canaan, now called Palestine. A curse was predicted upon that land, that instead of bringing forth those things that were necessary to sustain a people, it should bring forth briars and thorns. We are also told that this desolation²² should remain for a long period, until the Spirit should be poured out from on high, until, in the purposes of the Most High, he should pour out his Spirit, and that would produce a great change upon that land, but until that time it was to be desolate. All the houses of joy in the Jewish city were to be desolate, and, as it is recorded in other passages in Isaiah, they were to be the desolations of many generations. Not the desolation of seventy years, as happened to Israel in their Babylonish captivity, which only comprised about one generation, but the desolations were to be for many generations, during which that land was to lie uncultivated. The latter rains were to be withheld, and the land was to become dry and parched up, bringing forth thorns and briars, and this was to continue until the Lord poured out his Spirit from on high.”²³ ¶ *And they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.* The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And wasted cities renewed which had lain in ruins for ages.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “and shall repair the desolate cities, that were destroyed for generation and generation.” On another occasion Elder Orson Pratt said: “This is what the Prophet says about it—‘And their desolate cities shall be built up and be inhabited by the Saints of the Most High.’ God will bring about this work; and as to our being overcome in these valleys of the mountains, it will not be, if this people do as they are told—if they are willing to do right in all things.”²⁴

5 And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien [shall be] your plowmen and your vinedressers.

And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks. The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And strangers shall come and feed thy flocks.” The Talmud tradition (Seder Zera’im, Berachoth 35b) suggests that strangers shall perform this work for the righteous so that they can dedicate

themselves to the study of Torah. Alexander well proposes: “The simplest explanation of the verse is that which understands it as descriptive not of subjugation but of intimate conjunction, as if he had said, those who are now strangers and foreigners shall yet be sharers in your daily occupations, and entrusted with your dearest interests.” To me, this is the only explanation that makes sense, especially when we read: “And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. **Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;** And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*” (Ephesians 2:17–20, emphasis added). ¶ Elder George Q. Cannon was concerned about inequalities among the Saints: “When we are united, so that we shall not consume the wealth that God will give us upon our lusts, upon creating class distinctions, raising one class above another, one class living in luxury and another class groveling in poverty; but when we are so organized that there will be no rich and no poor, but all partaking alike of the bounties that God shall give unto us, then, and in my opinion, not till then, can he bestow upon us the wealth that he has promised. It would ruin us today if we had it, and God, as I view his providence, withholds these blessings from us because of the effects they would have upon us as a people. He does not wish to destroy us. But when we are organized aright, then what? Why, then will be fulfilled after a while another saying of Isaiah’s—‘And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers. But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the ministers of our God.’ All these problems of capital and labor²⁵ can be solved by this principle and in no other way, and there will be an incessant and never-ending conflict between capital and labor until they are solved in this manner.”²⁶ Throughout the Old Testament, the Lord has commanded that we love and care for the widow, the orphan and the foreigner. Perhaps what Elder George Q. Cannon is saying here is that until the Saints are ready to treat the stranger as a brother, these scriptures will not be fulfilled. ¶ *And the sons of the*

²² See also Rain in Due Season, Leviticus 26:22, 26, 31–32, 35.

²³ Elder Orson Pratt, “Fulfillment of Prophecy.” New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 30 August 1875. JD 18:144.

²⁴ Elder Orson Pratt, “Redemption of Zion.” Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 24 January 1858. JD 6:205b.

²⁵ My second area of specialty—beside conflict management—has been that of labor productivity. There are solutions that are a benefit for both capital and labor, but for these to function, to be truly sustainable, they must benefit both capital and labor in the long run. Few areas of my work have been more promising in this regard than that of piece-rate pay design. Yet, in almost every case greed enters the picture. See my book, *Labor Management in Agriculture: Cultivating Personnel Productivity*, also available as a free PDF download from the University of California.

²⁶ Elder George Q. Cannon, “The United Order.” Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, in the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 8 October 1874. JD 17:244.

alien [shall be] your plowmen and your vinedressers. The LXX (6) reads, “And foreigners shall be thy ploughmen and vine dressers.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “And the sons of strangers shall be your husbandmen, and the dressers of your vines.” ¶ Shalom Paul notes that these particular employments, plowmen and vineyard workers, are also mentioned together in Joel 1:11; and 2 Chronicles 26:10. Keith suggests: “As the priests, by having their temporal wants ministered to by others, were enabled to give themselves wholly to the service of the Lord, so by the ministering of strangers to them will Israel be enabled the better to place themselves at their Lord’s disposal.” ¶ I see in both the shepherds and the plowmen a reversal of the curses in *Rain in Due Season*. There we saw: “Thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof” (Deuteronomy 28:30b). Vineyard are among the most labor intensive agricultural enterprises, and a vinedresser would be required such tasks as plowing, weeding, pruning, thinning, irrigating, harvesting, and pant propagation. ¶ The reward here spoken off, suggests Jenour, may have nothing to do with flocks and vineyards in terms of animals and grape vines, but rather congregations of believers. Furthermore, “Their ministers, consequently, may be termed figuratively, shepherds, husbandmen, &c... . But *strangers* mean the Gentiles. The sense of the passage therefore is, that *Gentiles* should become ministers of the Church.” Now, if Jenour had had an understanding of the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ (he published his book on Isaiah in 1830, in England), he would realize he was almost correct, for out of the *Gentile nations* would the priests and ministers, or literal descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh, would be charged to begin this great work. They would then be joined by those of every tribe of Israel ending up with Judah.

6 But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: [men] shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.

But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: The LXX (6) reads, “But you shall be called priests of the Lord.” ¶ President N. Eldon Tanner said, “It is a great privilege, blessing, and responsibility to be a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, where the priesthood and authority of God directs and administers the affairs of the Church. By and under this authority all ordinances of the Church are administered and received. It is even a greater privilege, blessing, and responsibility to hold this priesthood and authority, and it is about this divine power that I should like to write

... One of the distinguishing and important features of the Church is its priesthood, defined so beautifully by President Joseph F. Smith: ‘[The priesthood] is nothing more nor less than the power of God delegated to man by which man can act in the earth for the salvation of the human family, in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, and act legitimately; not assuming that authority, nor borrowing it from generations that are dead and gone, but authority that has been given in this day in which we live by ministering angels and spirits from above, direct from the presence of Almighty God’ (*Gospel Doctrine*, 1939 ed., pp. 139–40.) ... The authority of the priesthood cannot be assumed or arrogated to oneself, but must be delegated by God through one having authority. One of the reasons for confusion in the churches today is that man has assumed this authority without proper delegation from the Lord.”²⁷ ¶ [Men] shall call you the *Ministers of our God*: The Targum (7) has, “It shall be said of you *that ye are those* who minister before our God.” The LXX (6) reads, “Ministers of God.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “To you it shall be said: Ye ministers of our God.” ¶ Keith has: “‘Ministers’ [מְשָׁרְתִי] here is another name for priests (as in Ezekiel 44:11 [מְשָׁרְתִים, from the root שָׁרַת]).” Kay points out that the Apostle Paul “spoke of himself as being ‘a minister (λειτουργον) of Jesus Christ to the nations, ministering (ιερουργουντα) the Gospel of God’²⁸ [and that] Israel would at length realize its high vocation as ‘a kingdom of priests’ (Exodus 19:6; 1 Peter 2:5–9).” ¶ President John Taylor declared: “Men shall call you the ministers of our God. And we want to minister for God in time and throughout the eternities that are to come. We have started in, and we will try by the help of God and the light of His Holy Spirit, and the revelations that he will give to us from time to time—we will try and operate and cooperate with the Priesthood in the eternal worlds, either on this earth or in the heavens. We shall operate until the work that God has designed pertaining to this earth shall be accomplished, and the living and the dead saved so far as they are capable of being saved according to eternal laws that exist in the heavens, and according to the decrees of the Almighty. Don’t you think we have something to do? I remember when I was first called to the Apostleship some 46 years ago. I looked at the calling square in the face, and said, ‘Well, this is a life work: this is an operation that will last a lifetime.’ I have got other ideas since then, namely, that

²⁷ President N. Eldon Tanner, “The Priesthood of God.” June 1973 *Ensign*.

²⁸ “That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles [i.e., nations], ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost” (Romans 15:16).

when I get through in this world I expect to officiate in the other. Hence it is an eternal operation, and that is the difference between what I then thought and what I now think. God has revealed unto us great and glorious truths, and He is prepared to reveal more if we will only place ourselves under His guidance and His direction.”²⁹ ¶ *Ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles.* The LXX (⚡) reads, “You shall eat the wealth of nations.” Both Elders George A. Smith³⁰ and Orson Hyde³¹ associated this verse with the importance of storing up grains and a food supply with which the Saints can feed the nations (see notes in ISAIAH 60:14, as well as ISAIAH 60:5–11). The general idea is that the converts will bring much to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in terms of economic or talent contributions. ¶ *And in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.* The Targum (⚡) has, “delight” for *glory*. The LXX (⚡) reads, “And for their riches be admired.” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, “And you shall pride yourselves in their glory.” ¶ Keith suggests this clause: “In the possession of what they gloried in, in the wealth of the Gentiles, ye shall boast.”

7 For your shame [ye shall have] double; and [for] confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them.

For your shame [ye shall have] double; and [for] confusion they shall rejoice in their portion. The Targum (⚡) has, “Instead of your having suffered shame, and confusion (literally, ‘that ye were ashamed’), I will bring unto you double mercies which I have promised you, and the gentiles who glory in their portion shall be confounded.” The Lamsa Peshitta (⚡) has, “Instead of your shame and your confusion, you shall have a double inheritance in their lands.” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, “For your double confusion and shame, they shall praise their part.” ¶ See also ISAIAH 40:1–2. Jenour says that the shame to be suffered was predicted in *Rain in Due Season*, Deuteronomy 28. Henderson has: “The Jews have been the subjects of ignominy among all nations. When restored, the honour conferred upon them by Jehovah, and the estimation in which they shall be held by believing Gentiles, will far overbalance the contempt in which they have been held.

²⁹ President John Taylor, “Blessings in Store for the Faithful.” Dedication of the Temple, in the Tabernacle, Logan, Cache County, 18 May 1884. JD 25:187–188.

³⁰ Elder George A. Smith, “Storing Up Grain.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 9 October 1867. JD 12:142b.

³¹ Elder Orson Hyde. “Storing up Grain.” 14 June 1857 JD 5:16a.

מִשְׁנֵה, *double*, i.e., ample, full.” ¶ *Therefore in their land they shall possess the double:* The LXX (⚡) reads, “Thus shall they again inherit the land.” The Lamsa Peshitta (⚡) has, “And you shall rejoice in their portion; everlasting joy shall be yours.” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, “Therefore shall they receive double in their land.” ¶ Not just the Holy Land associated with Israel, but also the American Continent. ¶ *Everlasting joy shall be unto them.* The LXX (⚡) reads, “And everlasting joy shall be on their head.” ¶ This is the joy that accompanies eternal life or exaltation. It is of eternal duration rather than a fleeting moment. ISAIAH 35:10 has: “And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

8 For I the LORD love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

For I the LORD love judgment. The LXX (⚡) reads, “For I am the Lord who love righteousness.”

¶ Rawlinson here speaks of Divine Investiture (emphasis added): “Either ‘the Servant’ here identifies himself with Jehovah, or he cites a declaration of Jehovah which he has authority to announce. Jehovah will restore the Israelites to their land because he ‘loves judgment’ (equivalent to ‘justice’) and hates injustice.” The Savior wished the widow, the orphan and the foreigner to be treated with love and care and for people to proceed in righteousness in all their affairs with their fellow beings. ¶ *I hate robbery [נָזַל] for burnt offering.* The Targum (⚡) has, “Lying and violence are an abomination in my presence.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “And hate the spoils of injustice.” The Peshitta (⚡) has “I hate robbery and *injustice* (BPE) / *iniquity* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, “And hate robbery in a holocaust.” ¶ Note that several ancient traditions translate “burnt offering” as *injustice* or *iniquity*. The Hebrew is עֲוֹלָה (Gesenius, contracted form of עֲוֹלָה). Cowles suggests: “This verse is logically connected with what immediately precedes. The Lord gives honor to his righteous people (as said there) *because* he loves judgment, right dealing; and also shame to those who oppress wrongfully *because* he hates unjust violence—literally, the tearing away with injustice, i.e., of what belongs to others. The word translated in the English version, ‘burnt-offerings,’ is now held by the best critics to mean *injustice*, *wrong*, the word coming by etymology from a root which means, to be distorted, wrested, and hence wrong; and not, as was anciently

supposed, from the verb which means to go up, *i.e.*, upon the altar, whence the usual word for burnt-offerings.” In addition to the multiple scholars, the context seems to better fit the idea of **injustice**, or one of its synonyms, for עֲוֹלָה. DCH (6:298) translates עֲוֹלָה as “injustice, wrong, evil, dishonesty, deceit.” Gesenius says in ISAIAH 61:8, “עֲוֹלָה:—(I.) contr. for עֲוֹלָה **iniquity**.” So also HAL, specifically for ISAIAH 61:8. Several other Lexicons suggest that עֲוֹלָה can be substituted for עֲוֹלָה. Some translations include: “For I, Jehovah, love justice, I hate robbery with iniquity” (ASV); “That’s because I am the LORD and I love justice. I hate stealing and everything that is wrong” (ERV); and “The LORD says, ‘I love justice and I hate oppression and crime’” (GNB). ¶ Robbing animals to carry out a burnt offering would be much like justifying gambling with the idea that we would pay tithing on the earnings. ¶ We also read: “The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery [גָּזַל], and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully” (Ezekiel 22:29). ¶ Regarding robbery [גָּזַל], Jennings says: “But robbery, [is] the assumption of that to which the pretender has no right.” A specific type of robbery under this definition is *priestcraft*. In the Book of Mormon we read: “Nevertheless, this did not put an end to the spreading of priestcraft through the land; for there were many *who loved the vain things of the world*, and they went forth *preaching false doctrines*; and this they did for the sake of riches and honor” (Alma 1:16). So, it is clear that the preaching of false doctrine is also a form of robbery or priestcraft. Elder Orson Pratt taught: “There are many of the honest in heart deceived by the cunning craftiness of the children of men, by priestcraft which lies at the foundation of all the persecutions endured by Latter-day Saints.”³² (See also *Priestcraft* under LDS Bible Topical Guide.) Is it not interesting that our Savior was accused of such priestcraft or robbery? “[Jesus testified] I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law³³, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into

the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?” (John 10:30–36). Paul said of Christ: “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not *robbery* to be equal with God” (Philippians 2:6, emphasis added). ¶ *And I will direct their work in truth*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And I will render the reward of their work in truth.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And I will give the righteous the fruit of their toil.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, “And I will make their work in truth.” ¶ The Lord directs His work through *revelation*. From the Prophet Joseph Smith we have: “Having a knowledge of God, we begin to know how to approach Him, and how to ask so as to receive an answer. When we understand the character of God, and know how to come to Him, he begins to unfold the heavens to us, and to tell us all about it”;³⁴ and “A person may profit by noticing the first intimation of the spirit of revelation; for instance, when you feel pure intelligence flowing into you, it may give you sudden strokes of ideas, so that by noticing it, you may find it fulfilled the same day or soon; (*i.e.*) those things that were presented unto your minds by the Spirit of God, will come to pass; and thus by learning the Spirit of God and understanding it, you may grow into the principle of revelation, until you become perfect in Christ Jesus.”³⁵ ¶ *And I will make an everlasting covenant with them*. The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And make an everlasting covenant with them.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has *perpetual* instead of *everlasting*. ¶ Birks notes: “The charge against Israel, at the opening of the whole book,³⁶ is criminal profaneness amidst their burnt offerings, ‘iniquity and solemn meeting,’ which God would not endure, a service sacred in name and form, polluted by flagrant wrong. Here, where the promise returns to Israel, after ages of sorrow, this charge is brought against the Gentiles, the nominal Christians, who have been foremost among their despisers and oppressors. Their burnt offerings and acts of worship have been joined with flagrant oppression and persecution of the Jewish people. They have, robbed them of their goods; and even of God’s promises, applying the curses to the Jews, and taking the blessings to themselves. This crime of the Gentiles is here reprov’d, a counterpart to the rebuke of Israel at the opening of the whole prophecy.” ¶ President Wilford Woodruff also accused the Gentiles of robbing the Jews: “Because that curse of God rests upon [the Jews] and will rest upon them until Shiloh comes, until they are regathered to Jerusalem and re-build the city in

³² Elder Orson Pratt, JD 24:30a, “Exhortations from Isaiah.” 26 October 1879.

³³ See Psalm 82:6.

³⁴ Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:303, 308, 312.

³⁵ Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 3:381.

³⁶ See ISAIAH 1.

un-belief.³⁷ You cannot convert a Jew.³⁸ They will never believe in Jesus Christ until he comes to them in Jerusalem, until these fleeing Jews take back their gold and silver to Jerusalem and re-build their city and temple, and they will do this as the Lord lives. Then the gentiles will say, ‘Come let us go up to Jerusalem; let us go up and spoil her. The Jews have taken our gold and silver from the nations of the earth—come let us go up and fight against Jerusalem.’ Then will the prophecies that are before you be fulfilled. The Gospel was preached first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles. The Jews rejected the message: the Gentiles received it, and unto them was given all the gifts and blessings of the Gospel. But Paul³⁹ told them to take heed lest they fell through the same example of unbelief.”⁴⁰ Keith says, “The everlasting covenant is that of which it is said, ‘The days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,’ &c. (Jeremiah 31:31–33).” This new covenant, which is the Abrahamic covenant, is now in full force, with the restoration of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the restitution of the various Priesthood keys.

9 And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they [are] the seed [which] the LORD hath blessed.

³⁷ These comments from President Woodruff in 1881 have come to pass exactly this way. Those who first returned to Israel, for the most part, returned in unbelief. There were various Jewish groups in this respect. The Zionists who promoted the return (led by ‘Theodor Herzl in 1896,’ *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, 12:672) were opposed by some who felt God would visibly create the way for them to return: “It was supposed to be forcing the hand of Providence and to be contrary to the positive teachings of Orthodox Judaism in regard to the coming of the Messiah and the providential work of God in bringing about the restoration” (*The Jewish Encyclopedia*, 12:672). My grandparents, belonging to Reform Judaism, were non-Zionists. In other words, they did not take a stance for or against. With time, many of the anti-Zionists and non-Zionists joined in helping in the formation of the State of Israel. But the point is that it was the non-religious Jews who led the way.

³⁸ I would suggest that President Woodruff was speaking in general terms, that Judah would be the last of the tribes of Israel to join the Gospel. “Anciently [the Gospel] was preached to the Jews first and then to the Gentiles; in the latter times it will be first preached to the Gentiles and then to the Jews—the first shall be last and the last first” (JD 10:220, Wilford Woodruff, June 2, 1863); “The Gentiles were the last to receive the Gospel in ancient times, but on its restoration by the angel in the last days, they are to receive it first, and then the Jews” (JD 18:226, Orson Pratt, August 26, 1876)

³⁹ Romans 11:20–21, and also see Romans 11:23–27.

⁴⁰ JD 22:175, Wilford Woodruff, June 12, 1881.

And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And their sons shall be magnified amongst the nations, and their sons’ sons amongst the kingdoms.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And their seed shall be distinguished among the nations? and their offspring in the midst of peoples.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲥ) makes it sound as if these are two parallel statements, rather than speaking first of the seed and then of the seed’s seed. The BPE (Ⲥ) preserves the same translation as the KJV for the second clause, “and the descendants of their descendants among the nations.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “And they shall know their seed among the Gentiles, and their offspring in the midst of peoples.” ¶ Gill suggests: “Not only the Jews will be converted as a body in the latter day, but there will be a succession of converts among them in later ages, and will be known among Christian Gentiles by their faith and love, and good works and holy conversation; and will be taken notice of and acknowledged by them as brethren, and will be famous among them for religion and godliness.” Keith quotes Zephaniah “I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame” (Zephaniah 3:19). ¶ Alexander speaks of the seeming contradiction between God’s people being gathered, on the one hand, and their being recognized among all the nations they inhabit, on the other: “... the parallelism ... requires the usual one of *being known*, as corresponding better to the phrase *they shall recognise them*. Thus understood, the first clause means that they shall be known among the nations in their true character as a seed or race highly favoured of Jehovah.” In the next clause we shall see there is no contradiction at all. ¶ *All that see them shall acknowledge them, that they [are] the seed [which] the LORD hath blessed.* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Every one who seeth them will know them, that they are a seed whom God hath blessed.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has *know* for *acknowledge*. Alexander continues: “*Issue* means progeny or offspring, as in ISAIAH 48:19. In order to apply this to the restored Jews [better, restored Israel beginning with Ephraim—GB], we must depart from the literal and obvious import of *among* and *in the midst*, and understand them as denoting merely that they shall be heard of; for how can they be said to be among and in the midst of the nations at the very time when they are gathered from them to their own land. And yet the whole connection seems to favour the first meaning, and to shew that they are here described as being scattered through the nations, and there recognised by clear distinctive marks as being God’s peculiar people.” Then Elder Russel M. Nelson answers this dilemma posed by Alexander: “The choice to come unto Christ is not a matter of physical location; it is a matter of individual commitment. People can be ‘brought to the knowledge of the Lord’ without leaving their homelands. True, in the early days of the Church,

conversion often meant emigration as well. But now the gathering takes place in each nation. The Lord has decreed the establishment of Zion in each realm where he has given His Saints their birth and nationality. Scripture foretells that the people ‘shall be gathered home to the lands of their inheritance, and shall be established in all their lands of promise.’⁴¹ Finally, Alexander adds, “The true application of the verse is to the Israel of God in its diffusion among all the nations of the earth, who shall be constrained by what they see of their spirit, character, and conduct, to acknowledge that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed.” ¶ Young asks if we are living in such a way that the Gospel light is reflected in us and points us to 2 Corinthians 3: “Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: *Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart*” (2 Corinthians 3:2–3). ¶ President Harold B. Lee shared: “Jesus [said]: ‘Therefore, hold up your light that it may shine unto the world. Behold I am the light which ye shall hold up—that which ye have seen me do. Behold ye see that I have prayed unto the Father, and ye all have witnessed’ (3 Nephi 18:24). Our task is to ‘hold up’ to the world that which Jesus has done for man: the atonement, the example He set, and the teachings He has given us personally and through His prophets, ancient and modern. The Master also counseled us: ‘Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven’ (Matthew 5:16). In all leadership situations in which we seek to improve human behavior, it is difficult to overestimate the power of example—whether it consists of parents both showing and telling their children about the value of temple marriage or a returned missionary who shines forth as a result of the changes and maturation the gospel has wrought in him. ‘Ye are the light of the world; a city set upon a hill.’ What does that mean? Any Latter-day Saint in Church circles, in military service, in social life, or in the business community is looked upon not just as an individual, but as the visible Church today. Someone has said: ‘Be careful how you act, because you may be the only Standard Church Works some people may ever read.’ The Lord here *warns us* that the standard of living in the Church must be visibly higher than the standard of living in the world” (emphasis added).⁴²

⁴¹ Elder Russel M. Nelson, October 2006 General Conference.

⁴² “Sharing the Gospel,” *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Harold B. Lee*, (2000), 153–63.

vv. 10–11. The Lord’s disciples are dressed in the robes of the Priesthood. Hymns of praise will come forth from the disciples who are made righteous in Christ.

10 ¶ I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh [himself] ✓ with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth [herself] with her jewels.

✓ decketh as a priest

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Jerusalem shall say, I will greatly rejoice in the Word of the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in the salvation of my God.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And they shall rejoice in the Lord with joy. Rejoice in the Lord, my soul.” ¶ Whitehouse, regarding this verse, says: “We seem to hear in this verse the welcome echo of Jeremiah 31:31 ff.” Keith well notes: “The burden [i.e., emphasis] of her song is neither the removal of her temporal curses nor the possession of temporal honours, but her possession of spiritual blessings.” Kimhi, in Rabbi Rosenberg, suggests that יהנה “is used to denote the Divine attribute of mercy;” אלהים, that of justice.” This may well be one of the few places where the Hebrew Bible preserves the distinct identities of the Father and the Son. Truly, it is the role of the Son, יהנה to advocate mercy for us before the Father, אלהים. Nyman suggests: “Israel’s preparation for her marriage to the Lamb in the last days, as described by John the Revelator (see Revelation 19:7–9; 21:2), is also described here by Isaiah.” ¶ *For he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, for the second half, “He hath covered me with the upper garment of righteousness.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For he hath clothed me with the mantle of Salvation, and with an under garment of gladness.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has *justice for righteousness*. ¶ Cheyne says: “*Garments of salvation*] The figure reminds us of ISAIAH 59:17.” It also brings to mind the washings, anointings [oil of joy, ISAIAH 60:3] and dressing in priesthood robes as mentioned in Leviticus 8 (see heading there, “Aaron and his sons are washed, anointed, clothed in their priesthood robes, and consecrated before all Israel.”). Also see the *white robes* given to the righteous in Revelation 6:11; and 7:9. Furthermore, we read: “And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are

these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes” (Revelation 7:13–17). ¶ The Apostles of the Lamb will be among those who wear these white robes: “For the hour is nigh, and that which was spoken by mine apostles must be fulfilled; for as they spoke so shall it come to pass; For I will reveal myself from heaven with power and great glory, with all the hosts thereof, and dwell in righteousness with men on earth a thousand years, and the wicked shall not stand. And again, verily, verily, I say unto you, and it hath gone forth in a firm decree, by the will of the Father, that mine apostles, the Twelve which were with me in my ministry at Jerusalem, shall stand at my right hand at the day of my coming in a pillar of fire, being clothed with robes of righteousness, with crowns upon their heads, in glory even as I am, to judge the whole house of Israel, even as many as have loved me and kept my commandments, and none else” (D&C 29:10–12). ¶ The Kirtland Temple dedicatory prayer, further, includes these words: “And be adorned as a bride for that day when thou shalt unveil the heavens, and cause the mountains to flow down at thy presence, and the valleys to be exalted, the rough places made smooth; that thy glory may fill the earth; That when the trump shall sound for the dead, we shall be caught up in the cloud to meet thee, that we may ever be with the Lord; That our garments may be pure, that we may be clothed upon with robes of righteousness, with palms in our hands, and crowns of glory upon our heads, and reap eternal joy for all our sufferings” (D&C 109:74–76). ¶ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland taught: “Brothers and sisters, I testify that no one of us is less treasured or cherished of God than another. I testify that He loves each of us—insecurities, anxieties, self-image, and all. He doesn’t measure our talents or our looks; He doesn’t measure our professions or our possessions. He cheers on *every* runner, calling out that the race is against sin, *not* against each other. I know that if we will be faithful, there is a perfectly tailored robe of righteousness ready and waiting for *everyone*, ‘robes ... made ... white in the blood of the Lamb.’ May we encourage each other in our effort to win that prize ...”⁴³ ¶ Elder Boyd K.

⁴³ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, “The other prodigal.” April 2002 General Conference.

Packer said, “For he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness’ (ISAIAH 61:10). When we do ordinance work in the temple we wear white clothing. This clothing is symbolic of purity and worthiness and cleanliness. ... dressed in white and you feel a oneness and a sense of equality, for all around you are similarly dressed.”⁴⁴ ¶ *As a bridegroom decketh [himself] with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth [herself] with her jewels.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Like a bridegroom who is happy in his bride-chamber, and like the high priest who decketh *himself* with robes, and like a bride who is adorned with her jewels.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “He hath crowned me as a bridegroom with a crown and adorned me as a bride, with jewels.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲅ) has, “As a bridegroom decked with a crown, and as a bride adorned with her jewels.” ¶ Cowles explains: “The phrase, ‘The bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments,’ alludes in the Hebrew to the splendid turban or head-dress worn by the High Priest.” So also Orelli, who translates: “Like a bridegroom who puts on a priestly coronet, and a bride who clothes herself with her jewels.” Orelli further explains (see also back to ISAIAH 61:3, above): “He comes forward festively adorned, like a bridegroom, wearing a coronet in the manner of a priest, or like a bride in her jewelry. The first means the high priest’s⁴⁵ head-covering formed by winding a long piece of linen round the head, in such a way that it rose high above the head and ran out to a point; it is called מִנְבֶּעֶה or פֶּאֶר. That of the bridegroom, therefore, was similar.” Keith likewise has: “The clause, ‘as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments’ is literally ‘as a bridegroom decketh himself as a priest with ornaments’ (margin ||) in apparent allusion to the magnificent dress of the Jewish high-priest, and particularly to his mitre and crown.” Rawlinson explains: “That bridegrooms ordinarily wore crowns appears from the Mishna.” ¶ Elder Wilford Woodruff said: “The set time has come, and the world is preparing itself for these things. The Church and kingdom of God must adorn itself, and prepare for the coming of the Great Bridegroom.”⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Packer, Boyd K. *The Holy Temple*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1980, pp. 71–72.

⁴⁵ Gesenius, however, suggests that this represents the headband or mitre of a priest rather than that of a high priest: מִנְבֶּעֶה (from the root נָבַע, fem. the mitre of the common priests, so called from its round form; different from מִצְנֶפֶת, the mitre of the high priest, Exodus 28:40; 29:9; 39:28.)

⁴⁶ Elder Wilford Woodruff, “The Work Progressing.” Provo Meetinghouse, 13 October 1877. JD 19:135b.

11 For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

For as the earth bringeth forth her bud. The LXX (6) reads, “And like the earth blooming with flowers.” Compare this verse with “For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it” (ISAIAH 55:10–11). Keith says: “As surely as the earth, at the return of spring, sends forth its shoots, will righteousness and praise yet arise from it.” ¶ *And as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth.* The LXX (6) reads, “And as a garden causeth its seeds to vegetate.” Instead of *things that are sown*, the Peshitta (S) has *seed which is sown* (Lamsa) / *seed* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And as the garden causeth her seed to shoot forth.” ¶ Margalioth compares this verse with ISAIAH 1:30, in terms of a thesis and antithesis: “Each verse is composed of two clauses, of which the first opens with כִּי (for), the second with וְכִנְנָה (and as a garden). No example is to be found anywhere else. Nor does the expression appear elsewhere. גִּנָּה (garden in the feminine) appears in one other place in the Bible (Job 8:16) where the reading is גִּנָּתוֹ.” So it is that we have: “For ye shall be LIKE an oak whose leaf fadeth, AND LIKE A GARDEN which hath no water” (Isaiah 1:30) vs. “FOR AS the earth bringeth forth her bud, AND AS THE GARDEN causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations” (ISAIAH 61:11). Margalioth says, “Note the distress of the people, in the first verse, is compared to a fading growth, while their revival is compared to a flourishing one.” While the KJV has “and like a garden” in ISAIAH 1:30 and “and as the garden” in ISAIAH 61:11, in both instances the Hebrew is “and as a garden,” or וְכִנְנָה. ¶ Birks has: “The Lord God has sent his Anointed on this great errand of mercy, and it shall not be in vain. The phrase ‘spring forth’ (צִמְחָה) alludes to the earliest title of Messiah in this book, the Branch (צֶמַח) of the Lord (ISAIAH 4:2). The promise refers also to ISAIAH 35:1; 55:10–13, and includes all the fruits of the Gospel, from Pentecost onward to days still to come.” ¶ *So the*

Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations. The Targum (T) has, “Thus the Lord God shall reveal the righteousness and the praise of Jerusalem before all the nations.” The LXX (6) reads, “So will the Lord cause righteousness to spring up and joy in the presence of all nations.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “So shall the Lord God make justice to spring forth, and praise before all the nations.”

¶ The AV translates אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה from the Masoretic text (M) as Lord God, instead of the literal Lord Jehovah, following the Jewish tradition. ¶ Giving praise is part of gratitude. It comes forth through prayer, hymns and discipleship. See D&C 59:21. ¶ Rawlinson quotes Zephaniah: “At that time will I bring you *again* [another way of saying gathering—GB], even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD (Zephaniah 3:20). ¶ Note the tight relationship with ISAIAH 61:3b, “*That they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD.*” The Lord is the Gardener. ¶ Keith has: “From the previous and subsequent verses referring to the righteousness of the Jewish nation, that alone may be intended here. It will be before all nations. So bright will be their light that it will attract the attention of the world; the Gentiles will come to it. As, when the curse of barrenness is removed from the land of Judea, the earth will give forth its increase; so, when the curse of spiritual barrenness is removed from the hearts of its people, the fruits of righteousness will appear.” Kay says: “So that the whole world is become Eden:⁴⁷ reclaimed for ever out of the hand of the unrighteous spoiler. In this Year of Jubile the earth is restored to its proper heirs, the righteous seed. For all those weary ages of wrong, compensation shall be made. The Priestly King will re-consecrate shame-stricken men, and they shall now be ‘kings and priests unto God’ (Revelation 1:6).” ¶ The Ten Tribes will also join in praises to the Lord: “And there shall they fall down and be crowned with glory, even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim. And they shall be filled with songs of everlasting joy” (D&C 133:32–33). ¶ These blessings to be enjoyed by Judah (southern tribes), we have also said, are also to be given to Ephraim (northern tribes), so that all of Israel will serve the Lord.

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⁴⁷ From our Articles of Faith—10b we have: “That Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.”

Isaiah 62

The glory of Zion will shine forth like the rays of the sun that break forth after a night of darkness. Desolation will give way to blessings, including those of the temple. A way is prepared for Israel to be gathered back from all the nations under heaven. Once again, we have references to Jerusalem in the Holy Land as well as the New Jerusalem in Zion. Ironside says, “The chapter goes on to tell of the Lord in His grace restoring Israel to Himself and bringing them into all the blessing of the Abrahamic Covenant.” Finally, we discover here an oath formula that better helps us understand an oath formula in the Book of Mormon.

vv. 1–5. The Lord will not hold His peace but will work indefatigably towards the crowing of Zion. The nations shall see the glory of Zion. A new name shall be given by revelation by the Lord. Returning Israel shall be crowned by the children of Ephraim. The marriage feast will take place and Jerusalem and the New Jerusalem shall not be forsaken.

1 ¶ FOR Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp [that] burneth.

FOR Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Till I work salvation for Zion, I will give no rest to the nations, until I bring consolation to Jerusalem, I will give no rest to the kingdoms.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For Sion’s sake I will not be silent, and for the sake of Jerusalem I will not rest.” ¶ As Kay explains, these words are of the Messiah, “He who ‘makes intercession’¹ (ISAIAH 53:12) continually on behalf of His redeemed.” And furthermore, Kay observes: “*Will not rest*] s.w.a.² in Psalm 83:1, of God; in Ruth 3:18, of Boaz; in reference to his ‘performing the part of a kinsman’ (or, redeemer, נָסִיחַ).” The idea is not to rest until the task is accomplished: not to permit “grass to grow under the feet.” Cowles has: “Messiah is ... expressing his untiring zeal and unflagging interest in this promised enlargement of Zion. He will never rest till it be fully accomplished.” Alexander says, “Kimhi follows the Targum in explaining this verse as the language of Jehovah.” Some exegetes feel these are the words of Jehovah while others are just as convinced that they are the words of Messiah. As LDS we realize that Messiah is Jehovah. However, it is through the principle

of *Divine Investiture* that we can more easily comprehend these things as Jehovah speaks the words of Elohim. ¶ *Until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Till her light be revealed as the early dawn.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Until the righteousness thereof break forth as light.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “Till her just one come forth as brightness.” ¶ Wordsworth suggests: “[Zion] has been commanded to enlarge the place of her tent, to lengthen her cords, and strengthen her stakes, so that the spiritual tent of the Church, which had its centre in Zion, should stretch itself forth with universal capaciousness, and enfold all Nations.” Kay points out that this is a “reversal of ISAIAH 59:9.” Barnes says: “*Go forth as brightness*] The word used here is commonly employed to denote the splendor, or the bright shining of the sun, the moon, or of fire (see ISAIAH 60:19; compare ISAIAH 4:5; 2 Samuel 23:4; Proverbs 4:18). The meaning is, that the salvation of people would resemble the clear shining light of the morning, spreading over hill and vale, and illuminating all the world [and reflecting on the next clause:] A blazing torch—giving light all around and shining afar.” In this beautiful spring day, the sun has just now come up from behind the Andes Mountains and the snow-filled volcanoes. I have to hide my eyes from its glorious brightness as its rays fall on Lake Llanquihue and all around. Kimhi, in Rabbis Slotki/Rosenberg has: “As the burning torch can be seen far and wide, so will Zion’s salvation be visible to all.” ¶ *And the salvation thereof as a lamp [that] burneth.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And her salvation shall burn as a lamp.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And my salvation blaze like a torch.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “And her saviour be lighted as a lamp. Luther says: “The prophet describes the rise of the Gospel as torches and rays of the sun...” Gill has in part: “Which gives light, and is seen afar off; her open deliverance from all her enemies ... and her salvation by Jesus Christ, which will be more clearly published in the Gospel ministry in the latter day.” The Gospel of Jesus Christ will shine with purity upon the world, through The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

¹ Also see intercessory prayer, John 17.

² Same way as.

2 And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name.

And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: The LXX (6) reads, “And nations see thy righteousness, and kings this glory of thine.” The Douay-Rheims (2) has, “And the Gentiles shall see thy just one, and all kings thy glorious one.” ¶ President John Taylor declared, “We are here to build up the Church of God, the Zion of God, and the kingdom of God, and to be on hand to do whatever God requires—first to purge ourselves from all iniquity, from covetousness and evil of every kind: to forsake sin of every sort, cultivate the Spirit of God, and help to build up His kingdom; to beautify Zion and have pleasant habitations, and pleasant gardens and orchards, until Zion shall be the most beautiful place there is on the earth. Already Zion is attracting the attention of the people of the world. I have all kinds of people calling on me—Lords, Admirals, Senators, Members of the House of Representatives, Members of the Parliament of England, of the Reichstag of Germany, and the Chamber of Deputies of France—all classes come and they say, ‘You have a most beautiful place here!’ Why, yes. And by and by the kings of the earth will come to gaze upon the glory of Zion, and we are here to build it up under the instruction of God our Heavenly Father. Zion shall yet become the praise and the glory of the whole earth, and, as I have said, kings and princes shall come to gaze upon her glory, and we shall be able to teach their senators wisdom, and their philosophers intelligence; for we shall be all taught of God.”³ ¶ The Savior explained, “And when that day shall come, it shall come to pass *that kings shall shut their mouths*; for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider. For in that day, for my sake shall the Father work a work, which shall be a great and a marvelous work among them; and there shall be among them those who will not believe it, although a man shall declare it unto them” (3 Nephi 21:8–9, ISAIAH 52:15, emphasis added). These word have a direct relationship to our Savior Jesus Christ, in association with ISAIAH 53 (also, in terms of Messiah, see ISAIAH 59:19), but they are moreover related to the *marvelous work and wonder* associated with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the restoration of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Truly, the whole world shall see the glory of Zion—which is the reflected glory of Christ. ¶ *And thou*

shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name. The Targum (C) has, “And they shall call thee by a new name, which the Word of the Lord shall declare.” The LXX (6) reads, “When he shall call thee by a new name which the Lord himself will give thee.” Instead of *shall name*, the Peshitta (S) has *shall bestow upon you* (Lamsa) / *shall determine* (BPE).

¶ With few exceptions the exegetes have suggested that the nation of Israel would receive a new name, such as those mentioned in ISAIAH 62:4. Elder M. Russell Ballard taught: “The Saints in New Testament times were called Christians because they professed a belief in Jesus Christ. That name, first used derogatorily by their detractors, is now a name of distinction; and we are honored to be called a Christian church.” ¶ Several versions use the expression *the Lord will bestow* rather than *the Lord shall name*. Shalom Paul has: “*And you shall be called by a new name that the Lord Himself shall bestow*” You shall be given a ‘new name’

(שֵׁם חָדָשׁ; the expression appears only here) ... and this name shall be *bestowed* on you by the Lord Himself ... For the expression שֵׁם (שֵׁם) (‘to bestow a name’), see Numbers 1:17; Ezra 8:20; cf. also Leviticus 24:11, 16 (twice).” ¶ A new name is also to be bestowed on individuals and is a gift from the Lord. In the Doctrine and Covenants we read: “Then the white stone mentioned in Revelation 2:17, will become a Urim and Thummim to each individual who receives one, whereby things pertaining to a higher order of kingdoms will be made known; And a white stone is given to each of those who come into the celestial kingdom, whereon is a new name written, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it. The new name is the key word” (D&C 130:10 – 11).” See also ISAIAH 65:15 {especially LXX (6)}. ¶ Elder Orson Hyde said: “After reflecting a little this morning, a passage of Scripture occurred to my mind—the words of John the Revelator, or the promise made to him. It says, ‘Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name.’”⁵ President Brigham Young also quoted John and tied these words to the ordinances to be received by our departed through temple work: “When we return to build up the waste places of Zion [ISAIAH 61:4—GB], then will the Scripture be fulfilled— ‘Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down

³ President John Taylor, “Zion Already Attracting Attention.” Bowery, Deseret, 18 June 1883. JD 24:201. Also see JD 26:111a.

⁴ By, by a/the name, as in Numbers 1:17, בְּשֵׁמוֹת.

⁵ Elder Orson Hyde, JD 1:122, 6 October 1853.

out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.’ The servants of God will officiate for the dead in the temples of God which will be built. The Gospel is now preached to the spirits in prison, and when the time comes for the servants of God to officiate for them, the names of those who have received the Gospel in the spirit will be revealed by the angels of God and the spirits of just men made perfect; also the places of their birth, the age in which they lived, and everything regarding them that is necessary to be recorded on earth, and they will then be saved so as to find admittance into the presence of God, with their relatives who have officiated for them. The wicked will be cleansed and purified as by fire; some of them will be saved as by fire. Some will be given over to the buffeting of Satan, that their spirits may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Others will receive their bodies, but cannot be saved in the kingdoms and mansions that are in the presence of God. All the children of men will receive a glory in the mansions of God according to their capacities, and rewards according to their acts in the flesh. Brethren and friends, do you naturally despise such a doctrine as this, or does it find a response of welcome in your bosoms? My soul says, Hallelujah, every moment I think of the ample provisions God has made for his sons and daughters. They will not welter in hell to an endless eternity, but they will rise higher and higher, and continue to increase in intelligence and love of truth as they advance. There will be an eternal progress in the knowledge of God.”⁶ Elder Charles C. Rich explained: “As Latter-day Saints, it is important that we understand the principles of salvation, that we may be enabled to comprehend and obtain all the keys, principles, and blessings pertaining thereto. It was a long time after the Prophet Joseph Smith had received the keys of the kingdom of God, and after Hyrum and others had received many blessings, that the Lord gave Joseph a revelation, to show him and others how they could ask for and receive certain blessings. We read in the revelations of St. John, that the Saints are to receive a white stone, ‘and in the stone a new name, which no man knoweth save him that receiveth it.’ Joseph tells us that this new name is a key-word, which can only be obtained through the endowments. This is one of the keys and blessings that will be bestowed upon the Saints in these last days, for which we should be very thankful.”⁷

3 Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.

⁶ President Brigham Young, JD 9:317, 13 July 1862.

⁷ Elder Charles C. Rich, JD 19:251–252, 10 February 1878.

Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD. The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “Ye shall be a crown of glory before the Lord.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Then thou shalt be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord.”

¶ Henderson explains: “It has been thought by some that there is a want of congruity in representing the crown as in the hand, instead of its being upon the head; but it must be obvious, that with no propriety whatever could the church be spoken of as placed on the head of Jehovah. The language is designed to teach the high estimation in which Jerusalem shall be held by the Most High, and her perfect security under his protection.”

¶ Nyman (see also Victor Ludlow) well says: “In D&C 133:32 the ‘servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim’ – that is, the Latter-day Saints—are designated as those who will crown the lost tribes with glory when they return from the north countries.” ¶ *And a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And a diadem of glory before thy God.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.”

¶ As Henderson explains, “כִּנֹּרֶת is properly a turban or tiara wound round the head; and, as worn by Eastern monarchs, studded with the most valuable jewels.” Wordsworth suggests: “The mitre is called royal, because Christ is Priest and King (Hebrews 5:6; 7:17). Zion is said to be ‘a crown in the hand of the Lord.’ She is not worn on His head, as crowns are by earthly sovereigns. She is not His glory, but He is hers; and she is in *His hand*, because He will ever maintain her. The Church is crowned (says *S. Jerome*) with a multitude of believers; and she has a diadem, adorned with jewels, in the graces of her Saints and Martyrs, who shine like gems, which the Lord has made; whence St. Paul calls his beloved converts his ‘joy and crown’ (Philippians 4:1) ... [and returning to the gardener motif picking up flowers] And she is in the hand of God; for Christ Himself says concerning those who believe in Him, that ‘no one is able to pluck them out of His hand’ (John 10:28–29. *S. Cyril*).” Keith explains: “The diadem was a chaplet studded with jewels, &c., which, in early times, encircled the heads of monarchs—as is seen from ancient medallions—being used in place of the more modern crown. The same metaphor occurs in Zechariah 9:16.”

4 Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Delightful **Hephzibah**,[✓] and thy land Union **Beulah**;[✓] for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.

✓ THAT IS, My delight is in her

✓ ✓ or, THAT IS, Married

Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken [עֲזֻבָּה]. The LXX (6) reads, “And thou shalt no more be called, Forsaken.” ¶ In Israel’s history we see how the Lord divided the nation in two and then permitted her to be carried away captive. We read: “Because that they have forsaken me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways, to do *that which is right* in mine eyes, and *to keep* my statutes and my judgments, as *did* David his father” (1 Kings 11:33), the Lord removed the ten tribes, also known as Ephraim, from the nation of Israel. Throughout the scriptures the Lord repeatedly reproaches Israel for having *forsaken* Him (e.g., *Deuteronomy* 28:20; 29:25⁸; Judges 10:13; 1 Samuel 8:8; 1 Kings 11:33; Jeremiah 1:16; 2:13). As a result, Israel would feel *forsaken* of the Lord (it is interesting that when *we* forsake the Lord we feel forsaken of Him even though He has us continually present before His heart): “Therefore thou hast forsaken thy people the house of Jacob” (ISAIAH 2:6a). We similarly have: “The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise: she is forsaken upon her land [note next clause, *thy land ... desolate*]; *there is none to raise her up*” (Amos 5:2). Now, all of this would change. They day would come when Israel and Jerusalem would no longer feel forsaken of the Savior. The Lord, in the Millennium will rule from His two main capitals, Jerusalem in the Holy Land and the New Jerusalem in Zion. ¶ *Neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate* [שְׁמִינָה]: The LXX (6) reads, “Nor shall thy land any more be called, The desert.” ¶ In *Rain in Due Season* we have: “And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be *desolate*, and your cities waste” (Leviticus 26:33, emphasis added, also see Leviticus 26:22, 34–34, 43). We also read: “Your country *is* desolate, your cities *are* burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and *it is* desolate, as overthrown by strangers” (ISAIAH 1:7, also see ISAIAH 6:11). This would change: “Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages” (ISAIAH 49:8; also see ISAIAH 49:19, 21; 54:1, 3). ¶ *But thou shalt be called Delightful* [חֶפְזִי בָהּ]. / *For the LORD delighteth in thee*. The Targum (C) has, “But thou shalt be called *בְּרַעְיוֹתֵי בָהּ*, i.e., those that do my will shall be in her.” The LXX (6) reads, “But thy name shall be called My delight.” Instead of *Hephzibah*, the Peshitta (S) uses the

translation in the margin ||, *my delight*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “but thou shalt be called My pleasure in her / Because the Lord hath been well pleased with thee.” ISBE has for *Hephzibah*⁹: “חֶפְזִי-בָהּ, ‘my delight is in her’) ... The new name of Zion (ISAIAH 62:4); Septuagint translates [Θέλημα ἐμόν, *Thelema emon*], ‘my delight.’” Almost all, like the Prophet Joseph Smith, translate the given names from Hebrew into English. Henderson has, “As the names here specified are merely symbolical, and will never be employed as proper names, I have deemed it right to give them in a translated form, rather than retain them.” Henderson’s own translation was: “Thou shalt no more be called, Forsaken; Neither shall thy land be any more termed, Desolate; But thou shalt be called, My-delight-is-in-her; And thy land, The Married Woman: For Jehovah shall delight in thee, And thy land shall be married.” Alexander questions Henderson’s assertion that none of these were used as given names and adds: “It is probable, however, that they were all familiar to the Jews as female names in real life. This we know to have been the case with two of them: the mother of Jehoshaphat was named Azubah (1 Kings 22:42), and the mother of Manasseh Hephzibah (2 Kings 21:1).” Alexander goes on to say that there should have been consistency, here, either all four in Hebrew; or all in English. Whitehouse says: “The Revised Version appropriately substitutes the meanings of the proper names. Hephzibah, ‘my delight is in her,’ and Beulah, ‘married.’” Except for Alexander, whose preference was to render them all in Hebrew, almost all the exegetes favor the translation of all the names, as was done by the Prophet Joseph Smith. ¶ *And thy land Union* [בְּעִילָהּ]; / *and thy land shall be married*. The Targum (C) has, “And thy land Inhabited: for the Lord shall delight in thee (Chaldee, ‘the pleasure from before the Lord shall be in thee’), and thy land shall be inhabited (i.e., ‘to marry,’ or ‘to possess one’s self of a wife’).” The LXX (6) reads, “And that of thy country, The inhabited land. Because the Lord is well pleased with thee therefore thy land shall be thickly inhabited.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And thy land inhabited / and thy land shall be inhabited.” ¶ ISBE for Beulah has:

⁹ Birks points out: “חֶפְזִי-בָהּ was the name of Hezekiah’s wife, the mother of Manasseh (2 Kings 21:1). And since her son was only twelve at his accession, her marriage was probably after Hezekiah’s recovery from sickness, that figurative resurrection of the king of Israel, when he went up after three days to the house of God. Isaiah would probably be present at these royal espousals, when the watch-words of joy were *Hephzi-bah* and *Beulah*. We have thus a delicate, indirect sign of the date and authorship of these chapters [i.e., favoring the unity of Isaiah—GB]. A very beautiful picture is borrowed from this recent marriage of Hezekiah, and the name and honour of the actual queen, or queen-mother, in the old age of Isaiah, to foreshadow the espousal of Zion, in the last days, to the risen and glorified Messiah, the true and exalted King of Israel.”

⁸ *Rain in Due Season*.

“בְּעוֹלָה [bèulah] “married”): A name symbolically applied to Israel: ‘Thy land (shall be called) Beulah ... thy land shall be married ... so shall thy sons marry thee’ (ISAIAH 62:4 f). In this figure, frequently used since Hosea, the prophet wishes to express the future prosperity of Israel. The land once desolate shall again be populated.” Wordsworth has: “The best exposition of these words [about the land] is to be derived from God’s promises to Abraham ... God said to Abraham, ‘I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth’ (Genesis 13:16), and as the stars of heaven (Genesis 15:5); and ‘I will multiply thee exceedingly;’ and ‘My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. And I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant ... And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession’ (Genesis 17:1–8).” Cowles has: “The conception of marriage gave more prominence to this idea of possession than accords fully with our modern views. The sense here is that a young man takes a virgin as *his own* with the thought of *possessing* made prominent, as well as that of loving and cherishing ...” All of this makes the Prophet Joseph Smith’s inspired translation all the more glorious, as the word chosen here is *union*, which is much more of an equal partnership in marriage than that of a possession. So also Robert Hawker in his 1808 commentary, “Beulah means *union* and *marriage*” (emphasis added). Indeed, to unite is to become one flesh and to become one in purpose. In the Lord’s intercessory prayer we learn about the importance of being one “That they may be one, as we *are*” (John 17:11b). The unity which exists in the Godhead is the type of unity that is expected in our marriages and also among the Lord’s disciples. Furthermore we have: “I say unto you, be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine” (D&C 38:27b). Is that not a glorious principle for discipleship as well as for the marriage covenant? Hosea was known as *the prophet of love*. ¶ Elder Parley P. Pratt spoke of the uniting of the land masses, “[In ISAIAH 13:13,14 we read,] ‘The earth shall move out of her place, and be like a chased roe which no man taketh up.’ Also, ISAIAH 62:4, ‘Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibath, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.’ In the first instance, we have the earth on a move like a chased roe; and in the second place, we have it married. And from the whole, and various Scriptures, we learn, that the continents and islands shall be united in one, as they were on the morn of creation, and the sea shall retire and assemble in its own place, where it was before, and all these scenes

shall take place during the mighty convulsion of nature, about the time of the coming of the Lord.”¹⁰

5 For [as] a young man marrieth a virgin, [so] shall thy sons God marry thee; and [as] the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, [so] shall thy God rejoice over thee.

✓ with the joy of the bridegroom

For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy God marry thee. The Targum (T) has, “For as a young man dwelleth with a virgin, thus thy sons shall dwell in thee.” The LXX (G) reads, “And as a youth cohabiting with a virgin bride, so shall thy sons inhabit it.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “For the young man shall dwell with the virgin, and thy children shall dwell in thee.” The Talmud tradition (Seder Mo’ed, Mo’ed Katan 2a) gives these words the meaning of being settled: “It is written: For as a man be the husband [yib’al¹¹] of a maiden, so shall thy sons be as husbands unto thee and we render [in Aramaic], Behold as a young man settles down with a maiden, thy sons shall become settled in the midst of thee” (Talmud, Soncino). ¶ Without the JST, we would have to desperately search for some clever solution to the puzzle, “thy sons marry thee,” יִבְעִלוּךְ בָּנֶיךָ. But gladly, we do have the JST, for which I am most grateful. Interestingly, the BBE follows the JST with perfect correspondence: “For as a young man takes a virgin for his wife, so will *your maker be married to you*” (emphasis added). BDB interestingly uses the words *builder* as well as *begetter*, the latter being that of our God whose children we are: “Arabic ابْنُ (ibnun); Assyrian bin(u), LyonSargon 9, 1. 57; especially in bin-bin, grandson COTGloss., cf. DI infr.; Aramaic בִּר, בָּר (bar), pl. חֲבֵי. בְּנִין (bnin); cf. Palm., especially VogNo. 21. 31. 36 a al.; possibly orig. connected with בָּנָה *build*, so Thes, cf. Assyrian bânu, *begetter* (DIPr 104 & cf. BaZMG 1887, 638 ff.); but all traces of this √ lost in Heb. form.” So it is that YLT offers: “For a young man doth marry a virgin, Thy *Builders* do marry thee” (emphasis added). Lowth here offers—and is supported by Horsley: “*thy restorer*” בְּנִיךָ. Henderson has, in part: “Instead of בְּנִיךָ, *thy sons*, Lowth, Koppe, Michaelis, Döderlein, v. d. Palm, Tingstadius, Möller, and others, point בְּנִיךָ *thy builders*, and consider the plural to be used for the

¹⁰ Pratt, Parley P. *A Voice of Warning and Instruction to All People Or, an Introduction to the Faith and Doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. Also quoted in Taylor, John. *The Government of God*. Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1852.

¹¹ יִבְעִלוּךְ

singular, as עֵשֶׂי, ISAIAH 54:5—Jehovah being meant in both instances.” The Prophet Joseph Smith, then, has the support of the world’s top Hebraists in this instance. Rawlinson has: “The people, regarded as a female (‘the virgin daughter of Zion,’ ISAIAH 37:22) is also married to Jehovah, and recognizes him as her Bridegroom (comp. ISAIAH 54:5). As Bridegroom, God calls his bride ‘Hephzi-bah’—‘my delight is in her.’” ¶ *And as the bridegroom rejoiceth [שׂוֹשׁ] over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice [שׂוֹשׁ] over thee.* The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And as a bridegroom will rejoice in his bride, so will the Lord rejoice over thee.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “And the bridegroom shall rejoice over the bride, and thy God shall rejoice over thee.” ¶ Young has: “The figure is designed to express the utmost of rejoicing. *Rejoicing* is an inner accusative; and *with the rejoicing of a bridegroom, etc.*” Some have suggested it is the joy of newlyweds before the honeymoon has ended. Truly, the rejoicing of newlyweds is almost unspeakable and indescribable. But honeymoons do not have to end.¹² It can be an enduring joy, like that of a temple marriage that has been sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise; one where a man’s wife never ceases to be his bride and eternal companion, the tender and dear wife of his youth. So is the rejoicing of the Lord over His people. ¶ As Kay points us, this is a direct allusion to *Rain in Due Season*: “And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the LORD will again rejoice [שׂוֹשׁ] over thee for good, as he rejoiced [שׂוֹשׁ] over thy fathers” (Deuteronomy 30:9). Indeed, the promise is that in the latter days, after the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, the Lord would once again rejoice over His people Israel. In modern Scripture we have the Lord’s angels repeatedly rejoicing over the righteous: “Nevertheless, ye are blessed, for the testimony which ye have borne is recorded in heaven for the angels to look upon; and they rejoice over you, and your sins are forgiven you” (D&C 62:3); “Behold, this is pleasing unto your Lord, and the angels rejoice over you; the alms of your prayers have come up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, and are recorded in the book of the names of the sanctified, even them of the celestial world” (D&C 88:2); and “Behold, I say unto you that your brethren in Zion begin to repent, and the angels rejoice over them” (D&C 90:34).

¹² Download my free book from the University of California, *Party-Directed Mediation: Facilitating Dialogue between Individuals*. Read Chapters two and four on listening skills and learning interpersonal negotiation.

vv. 6–9. The prophets and the Lord’s disciples shall not cease to pray for Zion nor cease to direct people to do rightly before God. The day will come in which the cursings (which at the end are nothing but blessings from a loving Father correcting His children) mentioned in *Rain in Due Season* shall give way to blessings. The children of Israel shall partake of His blessings *in the courts of holiness*, or the temple. The Savior taught: “And now, verily saith the Lord, that these things might be known among you, O inhabitants of the earth, I have sent forth mine angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel, who hath appeared unto some and hath committed it unto man, who shall appear unto many that dwell on the earth. And this gospel shall be preached unto every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. And the servants of God shall go forth, saying with a loud voice: Fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come” (D&C 133:36–38).

6 ¶ I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, [which] shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, ~ keep not silence,

✓ or, are the LORD’s remembrancers

I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Behold, the work of thy righteous fathers, O city of Jerusalem, are right.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Now upon thy walls, Jerusalem, I have set watchmen.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “Upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen.” ¶ Birks suggests: “The figure seems thus to be not, as usually explained, of watchmen placed on the walls when rebuilt, but of watchers or overseers, to whom a charge is given to help on the rebuilding of Zion out of its ruins.” ¶ We may well change the word *ruins* to that of *apostasy*. In other words, the building of Zion after the restored Gospel has sprung forth and the long night of apostasy ended. Wordsworth notes: “Christ, the King of Zion, sets Watchmen, Prophets Apostles, and Evangelists, and all to whom He has committed the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments, to guard the walls of the spiritual City, and to give warning of the approach of the enemy.” Jenour observes: “The watchmen of the Church therefore are its ministers, who are appointed by Jehovah to be the guardians of its safety by preaching the true doctrines of the gospel, and giving warning against false ones. A constant succession of such persons¹³ is here promised by God himself ... the apostle [Paul has:] ‘And he hath given

¹³ Since the restoration of the Gospel, we have had not only a constant succession of authorized Prophets, Seers and Revelators, but also an unbroken one.

some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; for the perfecting of the saints,' &c. (Ephesians 4:2)." ¶ President John Taylor spoke about the importance of *watchmen on the walls*, "Has God not given to every man a portion of His Spirit to profit withal? Yes. Has He not done more than this to the saints who are true and faithful? Has He not given to them the gift of the Holy Ghost? He has, and they know it and realize it. They are brought into communion with each other, and into communion with God and the heavenly hosts. But having this Spirit do we need others to guide us? Yes, all the time. Why? Because of the powers of darkness, the influence of Satan and the weakness of human nature. We need watchmen upon the towers of Zion, who are on the alert to look after the interests of Israel, and see that God's people do not go astray."¹⁴ President Taylor went on to specifically mention home teachers as watchmen. Truly, home teaching is one of the greatest beauties of the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland recently pleaded: "Brethren, the appeal I am making tonight is for you to lift your vision of home teaching. Please, in newer, better ways see yourselves as emissaries of the Lord to His children."¹⁵ ¶ *[Which] shall never hold their peace day nor night*: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "And kept by me all the day and all the night, continually." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "All the day; and all the night, they will not cease continually." The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, "All the day, and all the night, they shall never hold their peace." ¶ Cowles beautifully says: "The special point here is that that [the watchmen or ministers of the Lord] shall never hold their peace, even as the Messiah declares of himself (ISAIAH 62:1), 'I will not hold my peace'; 'I will not rest,' until Zion's righteousness shall go forth as brightness. This is therefore essentially His command to his gospel ministers to imbue their souls with his quenchless spirit of zeal, love and labor, and to prosecute their work as he does his." ¶ *Ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence*. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "The remembrance of thine excellencies is declared before the Lord, it shall not fail you." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "To mention the Lord; for there is none like you." The Peshitta (Ⲫ) adds after *keep not silence*, the clause *nor be still*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, "You that are mindful of the Lord, hold not your peace." ¶ Lowth has: "*O ye that proclaim*] The faithful, and in particular the priests and Levites, are exhorted by the Prophet to beseech God, with unremitted importunity (compare Luke 18:1. &c.), to hasten the redemption of Sion. The image in this

place is taken from the temple service: in which there was appointed a constant watch, day and night, by the Levites: and among them this service seems to have belonged particularly to the singers; see 1 Chronicles 9:33, Now the watches in the East, even to this day, are performed by a loud cry from time to time of the watchmen, to mark the time, and that very frequently, and in order to show that they themselves are constantly attentive to their duty. Hence the watchmen are said by the Prophet, ISAIAH 52:8, *to lift up their voice*; and here they are commanded, *not to keep silence*; and the greatest reproach to them is, *that they are dumb dogs; they cannot bark; dreamers, sluggards, loving to slumber*: ISAIAH 56:10." Wordsworth has: "*Ye that make mention of the Lord*] Ye that make mention of the Lord, and exhort others to remember Him, and who also are 'the Lord's remembrancers,' and implore Him to remember His People. The word has both senses ... These words describe the double work of the Evangelical Priesthood and Ministry, in exhorting the Lord's People to bear in mind His attributes and acts; and also in entreating Him to remember His promises to them in His well-beloved Son, their Divine Head, Who has died to redeem them, and to reconcile them to the Father." ¶ Here we have the idea of *importuning* God in prayer: "And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Luke 11:5–13).

7 And give him no rest, [✓] till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

✓ silence

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "Their remembrance shall not cease from before Him, till He establish and make

¹⁴ President John Taylor, "What is Required of the Saints." Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Semi-Annual Conference, 6 and 7 October 1884. JD 25:308a.

¹⁵ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, "Emissaries to the Church," October 2016 General Conference.

Jerusalem a praise in the earth.” The LXX (6) reads, “When he shall have re-established and made Jerusalem a boast on the earth.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has *silence* as in the margin||. Rashi, in Rabbi Rosenberg, translates the expression: “And give him no rest (or silence)’ [אֵל-דָּמִי לָכֶם] as ‘Let there be **no silence to you**’” ¶ Cowles explains this: “The antithesis between the last clause of ISAIAH 62:6 and the first in ISAIAH 62:7 is not so distinct in our English version as it might have been. Literally, ‘Give no **rest** [דָּמִי] to yourselves and give no **rest** [דָּמִי] to him,’ the same word for ‘**rest**’ [דָּמִי] being used in both clauses. The word means specially the **rest of silence**, and might be read, Let there be no **silence** to you, and allow no **silence** to him.” This verse is a command that we pray for missionary work. Over the years I have seen that we not only pray for the missionaries and missionary work in general, but also that we may have a role in helping missionaries find people to teach. Zion is being established and in due time a temple will be constructed in Jerusalem, even the temple that Ezekiel saw in vision. Oh, how glorious Jerusalem will be at that time, *the praise of the earth*. A similar situation will take place in Zion or the New Jerusalem.

8 The LORD hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, Surely I will no more give ~ thy corn [to be] meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured:

✓ If I give, &c.

The LORD hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength. The LXX (6) reads, “The Lord hath sworn by his glory and by the power of his arm.”

Skinner points out: “*The Lord hath sworn by his right hand &c.*” i.e. so surely as He has the power to help.” The image is that of taking an oath by the lifting of the right arm and hand. In the next clause within this verse we have an idea of the formulation of the oath itself, one of special interest to readers of the Book of Mormon. The bottom line being that which the Lord says will be accomplished will surely be accomplished. ¶ *Surely I will no more give thy corn [to be] meat for thine enemies.* The Hebrew Masoretic text (21) reads, אֵל-דָּמִי לָכֶם, **if give**. That is understood as **if I give**, and here has an elliptical oath associated with it. Most translators instead give the bottom line meaning, such as we have here, *I will not give*, or may even include the oath in a different form by saying *surely I will not give*. We shall examine this point below. The LXX (6) reads,

“I will no more give thy corn and thy food to thine enemies.” ¶ Alexander (so also very similarly, Young), speaking of “the elliptical formula of swearing,” explains: “*If I give (i.e. I will not give) thy corn any more as food to thine enemies, and if the sons of the outland shall drink thy new wine which thou hast laboured in (I am not God).*” Cowles, similarly, suggests: “The form of this oath is in the peculiar Hebrew idiom, but specially emphatic and solemn. Literally it is not, ‘Surely I will no more give,’ etc., but ‘*if* [אֵל-דָּמִי]¹⁶ I shall any more **give**’ etc., then (the implication is) **I am no longer God**. It will be because I have not power to prevent it. The point of the affirmation is that Zion shall be pillaged and devoured by her enemies no more.” While the idea that *God ceases to be God* is given as an elliptical one in our Hebrew Bible, in the Book of Mormon the oath is spelled out, but also not completely. The Hebraic expression in the Book of Mormon is: “... **if so, God would cease to be God**” (Alma 42:13b, also see Alma 42:25; Mormon 9:19—each of these contains either an *if so* or an *if not*). May I suggest that the *if so* in the Book of Mormon is an *oath expression*, similar to *if not*, and is **not** a suggestion that God would ever cease to be God. Rather, it should be understood something to the effect of, “I give it to you as a solemn oath that *before that would ever happen* [i.e., the issue associated with the oath, such as *the destruction of justice*], **God would have to cease to be God—but the one thing we know above all things is that this would not happen, for God will never cease to be God.**” This, then, is another example of a Hebraic expression in the Book of Mormon. The elliptical portion of the expression in the Book of Mormon, that is, what is left out because it is understood, is different than what is left out in the Bible. It is truly fascinating, as the Bible sometimes does fill in what is normally elliptical. ¶ Let us look at some of the comments associated with Hebrews 3:10 as they related to the oath formula: “So I swear in my wrath, ~They shall not enter into my rest.” Where the || reads: “GREEK. *If they shall enter*. See Psalm 95:11 marg. || So Mark 8:12 (GREEK).”¹⁷ In Psalm we have: “Unto whom I swear in my wrath, ~That they should not enter into my rest (|| Heb. *If they enter into my rest*. Numbers 14:23. So || Psalm 89:35.)”¹⁸ Barnes explains: “*So I swear in my wrath*] God is often represented in the Scriptures as ‘swearing’—and usually as swearing by

¹⁶ Besides *if*, there are other possible translations for אֵל-דָּמִי, depending on the context. But it is very true that, as Cowles says, oaths are often elliptical in this way. *If not* [אֵל-דָּמִי], is often translated as *surely*. Keith also agrees with Cowles’ construction.

¹⁷ The Cambridge Paragraph Bible: of the Authorized English Version (1873). (Heb 3:11). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁸ The Cambridge Paragraph Bible (Psalm 95:11).

himself, or *by his own existence*. Of course this in figurative [language], and denotes a strong affirmation, or a settled and determined purpose. An oath with us implies the strongest affirmation, or the expression of the most settled and determined purpose of mind. The meaning here is, that ... he solemnly resolved that they should never enter into the land of Canaan. *They shall not enter into my rest*] Margin ||, As in the original, ‘if they shall enter.’ That is, they shall not enter. The word (אם) ‘if’ has this negative meaning in Hebrew, and this meaning is transferred to the Greek word ‘if;’ compare 1 Samuel 3:17; 2 Samuel 3:35; 2 Kings 6:31.”

Vincent¹⁹ has: “They shall not enter into my rest (εἰ ἐλεύσονται εἰς τὴν κατάπαυσιν μου). Lit. *if they shall enter*, etc. A common Hebraistic formula in oaths. Where God is speaking, as here, the ellipsis is ‘*may I not be Jehovah if they shall enter*.’ Where man is speaking, ‘so may God punish me *if*’; or ‘God do so to me and more *if*.’ Comp. Mark 8:12: LXX (Θ), Genesis 14:23; Deuteronomy 1:35; 1 Kings 1:51; 2:8. Sometimes the ellipsis is filled out, as 1 Samuel 3:17; 2 Samuel 3:35.” Meyer has, “εἰ εἰσελεύσονται εἰς τὴν κατάπαυσιν μου] not enter, shall they, into my rest. εἰ is an exact imitation of the negative Hebrew particle אם in formulas of swearing, and is to be explained from an aposiopesis of the latter clause.”²⁰ Bengel has: “εἰ, *if*] The Apodosis omits something for the sake of euphemism, which has the force of the oath itself.”²¹ Poole has: “*They shall not enter into my rest*] the punishment is expressed in an expostulatory form, which is vehemently asserting the negative of the question; They shall never enter into my rest. *If they enter in, then I am neither true nor God*.”²² Cambridge has: “εἰ ἐλεύσονται, ‘if they shall enter’;” but “They shall not enter” (Hebrews 3:18 μὴ εἰσελεύσεσθαι) is here a correct rendering (AV, RV) of the Hebraism. It is an imitation of the Hebrew אם, and the apodosis is suppressed (aposiopesis, see Winer, p. 627).²³ Whedon has: “*I swear*] Made an affirmation, to be held as *sure and firm as the divine existence*. So Numbers 14:21, ‘As truly as I live;’ and Numbers 14:28–29, ‘As truly as I live.’”²⁴ Once again, God will no more *cease*

to be God than He will *cease to live*, for the latter is a frequent oath on His part. In the following example we have two oath expressions piled together): “*Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD*; Surely ...” (Ezekiel 5:11); or in a more literal translation we would have, “*Therefore, as I live, declares the Lord Jehovah, if not ...*” לָכֵן חַי־אֲנִי נֶאֱמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה אֱמֹל לֹא ... ¶ From all of these citations we conclude that the anantapodoton²⁵—when the apodosis (the then in *if-then* statements, protasis-apodosis) is only implied, or elliptical—is left to the conclusion of the reader. As has been noted above, the apodosis is not always implied, but at times it is given. Such is the case with the Book of Mormon examples above. There, however, an elliptical expression also exists. In this case, that we are dealing with an oath expression, where part of the protasis is given and part is elliptical.²⁶ In regards to ISAIAH 62:8b, the Lord is reassuring the children of Israel that the day would come that they would no longer be receiving the punishment for disobedience mentioned in *Rain in Due Season*. They would, instead, be able to reap the fruits of their labors because the day would come when the children of Jacob would be faithful and true to the Abrahamic covenant. This comforting assurance continues in the next clause. ¶ *And the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured*: The LXX (Θ) reads, “Nor shall the sons of strangers any more drink thy wine, for which thou hast laboured.” This is a clear allusion and contrast to the cursings mentioned in *Rain in Due Season*: “Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her: thou shalt build an house, and thou shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof” (Deuteronomy 28:30, but also see Deuteronomy 28:31, 33, and others). Not anymore, for now Israel would reap the blessings of her righteous endeavors. Shalom Paul has: “The term תִּירוֹשׁ refers to new wine that has yet to complete the fermentation process.” Gesenius has: “תִּירוֹשׁ & תִּירוֹשׁ m. *must, new wine* (so called, because in intoxicating, it takes possession of the brain, from the root יָרַשׁ, compare Syr. ܝܪܫܝܕ id.), Gen. 27:28. אֶרֶץ דִּבְרֵן וְתִירוֹשׁ a *land* abounding in *corn and new wine*, Deuteronomy 33:28; 2 Kings 18:32; ISAIAH 36:17.” As we have explained in ISAIAH 5, 24, 30, and 56, new wine is wine that has gone through the first and main fermentations, but still has not fully completed the second fermentation.

¹⁹ Vincent *Word Studies. Studylight*.

²⁰ Heinrich Meyer's Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (1832). *Studylight*.

²¹ Johann Albrecht Bengel's Gnomon of the New Testament (1897). *Studylight*.

²² Matthew Poole's *English Annotations on the Holy Bible* (1685). *Studylight*.

²³ F.W. Farrar. *Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools and Colleges* (1896). *Studylight*.

²⁴ Whedon, Daniel. *Whedon's Commentary on the Bible* (1874–1909). *Studylight*.

²⁵ Bullinger, E. W. (1898). *Figures of speech used in the Bible*. London; New York: Eyre & Spottiswoode; E. & J. B. Young & Co.

²⁶ “Ellipsis may be found in protases as well as in apodoses” say Joüon, P., & Muraoka, T. (2006) in, *A grammar of biblical Hebrew* (p. 594). Roma: Pontificio Istituto Biblico.

9 But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the LORD; and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of my holiness.

But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the LORD. The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “But they who reap the harvest shall eat and praise the Lord.” Rashi and Ibn Ezra, in Rabbi Rosenberg, explain that the **eating** refers back to the *grain or corn*; and the **drinking** back to the *wine*, mentioned in ISAIAH 62:8. ¶ Once again, this is the very opposite of the curses in *Rain in Due Season*, as we quoted above, Deuteronomy 28:30. Instead, the people of Israel will benefit from the labor of their hands, instead of having it taken by their enemies. ¶ *And praise the LORD.* Feelings of gratitude lead to praise. The Lord frequently asks that we remember in gratitude. Two examples of this were given earlier this chapter. President Brigham Young has, “My soul says, Hallelujah, every moment I think of the ample provisions God has made for his sons and daughters.”²⁷ From Elder Charles C. Rich, we have: “This is one of the keys and blessings that will be bestowed upon the Saints in these last days, for which we should be very thankful.”²⁸ ¶ *And they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of my holiness.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, for the first half, “And they that tread out the wine.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “And they who gather the vintage shall drink wine in my holy courts.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, for the last clause, “Shall drink it in my holy courts.” ¶ Some of the language we have here has reference to the harvesting of fruit, tithing, and the temple, as we find in the Torah. Lowth explains: “This and the following line have reference to the law of Moses: ‘Thou mayest not eat within thy gates the tithe of thy corn, or of thy wine, or of thy oil;—but thou must eat them before the Lord thy God; in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose;’ (Deuteronomy 12:17, 18). ‘And when ye shall come into the land, and shall have planted all manner of trees for food, then ye shall count the fruit thereof as uncircumcised: three years it shall be as uncircumcised unto you; it shall not be eaten of. But in the fourth year all the fruit thereof shall be holy to praise the Lord withal. And in the fifth year ye shall eat the fruit thereof.’ (Leviticus 19:23–25). This clearly explains the force of the expressions, ‘shall praise JEHOVAH,’ and ‘shall drink it in my sacred courts.’” Redak, in Rabbi Rosenberg, explains it of the “second tithe and the vintage of the fourth year, both of which must be eaten in Jerusalem” (see also

Deuteronomy 26:12–15). Young suggests: “According to the law the food was to be consumed before the Lord (i.e., in the sanctuary; cf. Deuteronomy 14:22–27) ... What is meant by these types and symbols is that in the redeemed Zion men will enjoy abundantly the presence of the Lord ...” Perhaps an allusion to *your God – my people*. Gill suggests: “[This is an] allusion is to the priests and Levites eating and drinking holy things, within the compass and bounds of the temple; and may signify the converted Jews, partaking of the Gospel and Gospel ordinances in the house of God, as well as the Gentiles, being all now made priests unto God.”

vv. 10–12. Elder Orson Pratt taught: “Now Isaiah said that when his people should get up into the mountains a highway should be cast up in the desert. ‘Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.’ What! Is it made for the Lord? Yes. What is the Lord going to do with it? He is going to gather his people from all the nations on this highway through the desert. Do you want to know anything more about this highway? Read another chapter in Isaiah; he gives more particulars than what I have mentioned. What I have read in the 40th chapter of Isaiah about the highway in the desert, is only one thing connected with it. In another chapter he says—‘Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people. Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.’ Here is the same thing spoken of again, only it speaks of tunnels, or, in other words, gates—‘Go through, go through the gates.’ I have no idea but what Isaiah, in gazing down upon future generations, saw the time when a long train of carriages would be whirled across a continent, without any apparent animal force or power. He perhaps did not understand the modern terms for tunnel through a rock, and hence he calls them gates. ‘Go through, go through the gates; prepare the way of the people; cast up, cast up a highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people.’ Then comes in this universal proclamation—‘Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed from the ends of the world.’ Now, from the ends of the world, we should naturally suppose that Isaiah, standing in Palestine, and delivering this, would see a work that was to transpire on a very distant land. He could find no better language to describe it, than the expression ‘to the ends of the world.’ Not a work to transpire in Palestine, in his own neighborhood, but, ‘Behold the Lord should proclaim from the ends of the world, to all people, Behold, your salvation cometh.’ That is, the Lord was coming with a strong hand, and this proclamation coming from the Lord was to be sounded to all the inhabitants of the earth, a standard was to be

²⁷ President Brigham Young, JD 9:317, 13 July 1862.

²⁸ Elder Charles C. Rich, JD 19:251–252, 10 February 1878.

raised, and a way prepared by this highway being cast up. There are a great many in this congregation who took part in casting up this highway. We built the most difficult portions of this railroad, through these mountains, some four hundred miles in extent. Did you work with a good cheerful heart, when you were engaged in gathering out the stones, and when you were making these gates that Isaiah speaks of, through which he saw a long train of carriages dart into the mountain, losing sight of them for a time, then seeing them come out again with great speed, from the mountain? How could he describe it any better than by saying—‘Go through, go through the gates?’ But what kind of a people were these to be who should be gathered from the ends of the world by this proclamation? Read the next verse—‘They shall call them the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord.’ Says one—‘Well, you are called anything else but that; instead of being called a holy people, you are represented, by the priests and everybody else, as a very unrighteous people.’ Very well, the Lord will, in his own due time, enable you to distinguish between the righteous and the wicked. ‘Behold, they shall call them the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord; and behold, they shall be called, sought out, a city not forsaken.’”²⁹ Truly, I believe Elder Orson Pratt was inspired with these words. Yes, the prophecies of Isaiah have been fulfilled in these ways. In a not too distant future, we will also have to explain to our descendants that Ezekiel’s prophecy about people holding two books in their hands (Ezekiel 37:15 ff.) had a *literal* fulfillment. It may be hard for some of them to understand as their books may mostly be in some electronic format.

10 ¶ Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people.

Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people. The Targum (T) has, “O prophets, pass through and return through the gates; turn the heart of the people into the right way; bring good tidings of good things, and consolations to the righteous, who remove the thoughts of an evil imagination, which are like a stone of stumbling; lift up a standard for the people.” The LXX (G) reads, “Go through my gates and prepare the way for my people and throw the stones out of the way. Erect a standard for the nations.” ¶ Lowth

underscores this point: “The LXX indeed reads עַמִּי, *my people*.” Or, in Greek, λαῶ μου. Instead of *cast up*, *cast up the highway*, the Peshitta (S) has *make the highway smooth* (Lamsa) / *prepare the way* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Go through, go through the gates, prepare the way for the people, make the road plain, pick out the stones, and lift up the standard to the people.” ¶ Young has: “The reference is ... to the Zion of God, and the picture is that of Zion’s exaltation at the great influx of people.” Young says that the return from the Babylonian exile is but a type. Shalom Paul notes: “The urgency of the return to Zion is emphasized in a series of seven imperatives.” These would be: (1) Go through, (2) go through the gates; (3) prepare ye the way of the people; (4) cast up, (5) cast up the highway; (6) gather out the stones; (7) lift up a standard for the people. Wordsworth writes: “Israel had been commanded to rise up from its captivity, and to go forth from the gates of Babylon, and to return to Zion. But now the Preachers of the Gospel are exhorted to go forth from the gates of Sion, and to cast up a highway, and gather out the stones (which might be stumbling-blocks to travellers on it), and to lift up a standard for the peoples ... and to deliver the dispersed of Israel among all nations from captivity, and to proclaim the glad tidings of the Gospel to the end of the earth.” Whitehouse similarly has: “According to Dillmann the gates of Babylon are meant, and the prophetic words are addressed to the exiles who were still living in Babylonia. The subsequent clauses then follow in natural order. A highway is cast up for the caravan of exiles who have passed out of Babylon to cross over to the homeland.” As LDS we would also think of the world leaving mystical Babylon and coming to the Zion of our God. Although he does not subscribe to the idea himself, Whitehouse says: “... reference is definitely made to the temple in Jerusalem. Accordingly most recent critics assume that the gates are those of the Jerusalem temple into which the returning exiles are to enter.” Kay suggests that they will “Pass on through *the gates* of Zion, which is the city spoken of throughout this chapter.” Skinner, leaning on Duhm, says: “The gates must then be those of Jerusalem or of the Temple.” ¶ Here there is certainly an allusion to Zion, and to the New Jerusalem (as well as Jerusalem in the Holy Land) and the temples therein, wherein we found out that the “gates shall be open continually” (ISAIAH 60:11b) to receive Israel which has been scattered through the nations into her temples or Mount Zion (ISAIAH 18:7) where they can take out their endowments and be presented as a gift to the Lord. ¶ Interestingly, Keith agrees with some of the early apostles and Brethren regarding the meaning of highway: “The description is inapplicable to other forms of road, but most descriptive of this, the railway

²⁹ Elder Orson Pratt, “This is a Gathering Dispensation,” Fifteenth Ward Meeting-house, Salt Lake City, 26 March 1876. JD 18:183–185. Also see JD 17:320, “Second Coming of Christ,” as well as JD 14:69, “The Restoration of the Jews.” Also see JD 15:59–60, also entitled “Second Coming of Christ.”

exemplifying the apparent paradox of a highway without stones.” Elder Orson Pratt, in speaking of the latter-days said: “But says one, ‘what does the Prophet mean when he says, ‘go through the gates?’ I think if I had been Isaiah, and had had the vision of my mind opened to see the railroad and the great trains of cars without any apparent animal life attached to them, going with speed swiftly, if I had seen them dart into the mountain and, after watching a few minutes, had seen them come out on the other side, and then wished to describe what I had seen in words, I do not think I could have found any more applicable than those used by the ancient Prophet ...”³⁰ ¶ *Cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones.* To gather out the stones, according to Rashi in Rabbi Rosenberg, has to do with removing “*evil inclinations*.” Cowles asks and answers: “On this verse the first and most vital question exegetically is, *Who* are the people whose way is to be prepared, and for whom a standard is to be lifted up on high? There can be but one answer; *The Gentile nations*.” And that is because Israel is scattered throughout the *Gentile nations*. ¶ President John Taylor spoke of the great gathering, “Now, then, all of these dispensations had to be restored. Then comes Moses. Why? Because he held the keys of the gathering dispensation. And he conferred upon Joseph Smith the power to gather Israel from the four quarters of the earth, and also the ten tribes. But the latter have not come yet; but people are hunting them up, and they will be found by and by; when the time comes, and the mountains will flow down at their presence, and a highway will be cast up, and they will come to a knowledge of the people. But they could not come without the restoration of the keys I have referred to.”³¹ Elder Wilford Woodruff taught: “The principle of gathering has been preached for the past thirty-seven years. Before this principle was preached by the Elders, a great many of the people had received the spirit of it; and the consequence was, that no sooner had it been taught by the Presidency of the Church, than the people everywhere were ready to receive it. It had been revealed to them by the Holy Ghost, whose office it is to reveal that which is past, present, and that which is to come, and no surer, stronger testimony can be given to anyone than it affords. We have gathered here for the express purpose of establishing Zion, which, according to the Scriptures, must be before the Gospel can be sent to the Jews. Passage after passage might be found in the Bible, referring to our coming here; the casting up of the highway on which the ransomed of the Lord might travel; the building of our city in a low place, which

was to be called Sought out, a city not forsaken; and how the Lord would cause springs of water to spring up, and the desert to blossom like the rose, etc., all of which have had their fulfillment.”³² Elder Orson Pratt taught: “Now I will quote a parallel prophecy, delivered to Joseph Smith, one of the greatest Prophets who has lived on the earth in any generation, save it be our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Some forty-three years ago, in speaking of the lost ten tribes of Israel, the Lord says— ‘They who are in the north countries shall come in remembrance before the Lord; and their prophets shall hear his voice, and shall no longer stay themselves; and they shall smite the rocks, and the ice shall flow down at their presence. And an highway shall be cast up in the midst of the great deep. Their enemies shall become a prey unto them, And in the barren deserts there shall come forth pools of living water; and the parched ground shall no longer be a thirsty land. And they shall bring forth their rich treasures unto the children of Ephraim, my servants. And the boundaries of the everlasting hills shall tremble at their presence.’ To show that they come with power, they come on a highway cast up for them; the ice feels the power of God and flows down, making room for them; and the barren deserts of the north, wherever they may go and need water, will yield forth pools of living water to quench their thirst. As they come to sing in the height of Zion, the everlasting hills, this great Rocky Mountain range, extending from the arctic regions south to the central portions of America, will tremble beneath the power of God at the approach of that people.”³³ Elder Wilford Woodruff spoke about a time when this prophecy had been fulfilled to some extent: “Now when strangers come up to Zion on this great highway, cast up in fulfillment of the revelations of God, what do they see? They see no longer a desert, but a belt, for six hundred miles, of cities, towns, villages, orchards, fields and crops. Who has done this? The Lord God of Israel has inspired his Saints to do it. President Young has been led, guided, counseled and moved upon by the Holy Ghost and by the revelations of Jesus Christ, and that which strangers now behold in this Tabernacle, and throughout this Territory is in fulfillment of that volume of revelation which you can read in the prophecies of Isaiah and others of the Prophets and Patriarchs.”³⁴

¶ *Lift up a standard [🚩] for the people.* Several translate as an *ensign*, such as AMP, ASV, JPS, LEB,

³⁰ Elder Orson Pratt, “The rise of Zion in the last days,” New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 15 June 1873. JD 16:85–86.

³¹ President John Taylor, “The Great Principles of Truth.” Ogden Tabernacle, 21 March 1880. JD 21:253a.

³² Elder Wilford Woodruff, “It Must Be Preached in All the World Before the Savior Comes.” New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 13 August 1876. 18:221a.

³³ Elder Orson Pratt, “The Ten Tribes Come to Zion From the North Countries.” New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 11 April 1875. JD 18:24.

³⁴ Elder Wilford Woodruff, “The Gospel of Christ.” Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 7 October 1874. JD 17:192a.

RV and YLT and it is the same word [בָּנָי] used for *ensign* in the AV in such verses as in ISAIAH 5:26; 11:10, 12; and 18:3. ¶ President John Taylor taught: “We certainly have a work to perform on the earth, and God our Father has selected us for that purpose. He raised up Joseph Smith and other men, and conferred the holy Priesthood upon them and today they are found organized as Elders, High Priests, Seventies, the Twelve, etc., by whom the Lord expects to lift up a standard (ISAIAH 62:10) to the nations, and an ensign to the people (ISAIAH 5:26; 11:12). And notwithstanding the calculations and plans of the world, we are told that when this standard is lifted up, the Gentiles shall seek unto it, ‘and his rest shall be glorious.’”³⁵

11 Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward [is] with him, and his work[✓] before him.

✓ or, recompence

Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For lo! the Lord hath published this to the end of the earth.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “Behold the Lord hath made it to be heard in the ends of the earth.” ¶ In Deuteronomy 30:4 (*Rain in Due Season*) we have: “If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost *parts* of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee.” Also see Revelation 14:6; and Ezekiel 37:21 regarding the Book of Mormon. The Savior said: “AND verily I say unto you, I give unto you a sign, that ye may know the time when these things shall be about to take place—that I shall gather in, from their long dispersion, my people, O house of Israel, and shall establish again among them my Zion ... And when these things come to pass [that the Book of Mormon is brought forth from the Gentile nations to the people of Israel, especially the Lamanites] that thy seed shall begin to know these things—it shall be a sign unto them, that they may know that the work of the Father hath already commenced unto the fulfilling of the covenant which he hath made unto the people who are of the house of Israel” (3 Nephi 21:1, 7). This whole chapter in 3 Nephi is closely associated with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon (e.g., compare 3 Nephi 21:17–18 and Ezekiel 37:23—the elimination of idolatry associated with the coming forth of the Bible and the Book of Mormon). ¶ *Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh.* The Targum (Ⲛ) has,

“Say ye to the congregation of Zion, Behold, thy redeemer shall be revealed.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Say to the daughter of Zion, Behold the Saviour is come for thee.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “Tell the daughter of Zion: Behold thy Saviour cometh.” ¶ Birks suggests a connection with Revelation 22:12 (see also next clause): “And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” Henderson has: “The ‘daughter of Zion’ means here the rightful inhabitants of Jerusalem, i.e. the Jews scattered over the face of the earth.” A similar application to Zion and the New Jerusalem can also be made. ¶ *Behold, his reward [is] with him, and his work before him.* The Targum (Ⲛ) has, “Behold, the reward for them that do His word is with him: and all their works are manifest before Him.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Having his own reward and his work before him.” ¶ Gill observes, “The word [בָּהִי] *behold* is three times used in this verse, to raise attention to what is said, and as pointing out something wonderful, and to express the certainty of it.” ¶ Alexander points out that this clause has been properly tied to ISAIAH 40:10 by Rosenmüller, Gesenius, and Maurer: “Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong *hand*, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward *is* with him, and his work before him.” The greatest reward, we said at that place, is exaltation and eternal life such that God will walk among us and declare that He is our God and we are His people.

12 And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken.

The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And he will call this a holy people, redeemed by the Lord; and thou shalt be called the city sought and not forsaken.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “And they shall call them, The holy people, the redeemed of the Lord. But thou shalt be called: A city sought after, and not forsaken.” ¶ Birks contrasts this new condition with that earlier one: “And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city” (ISAIAH 1:8). Henderson has: “The Jews shall now be a holy people, redeemed from all iniquity, and thronging their ancient capital for religious purposes.” Wordsworth does well in pointing us back to ISAIAH 49:14–16: “But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of *my* hands; thy walls *are* continually before me.” Keith well says:

³⁵ President John Taylor, “Zion Will Triumph.” Grantsville, 29 October 1882. JD 23:333b.

“Sought out’ will really be ... a nation, ten of whose tribes are still undiscovered; and the remaining two, who are ‘as a body nowhere, as a people everywhere,’³⁶ have to be sought out of every land.” Alexander emphasizes the idea of using the names of women to tell a story, as was done in ISAIAH 62:4: “*And thou shalt be called Derushah דְּרוּשָׁה (sought for), Ir-lo-neezebah עִיר לֹא נֶעְזְבָה (City not forsaken).*” Cheyne contrasts this with Jeremiah: “For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the LORD; because they called thee an Outcast, *saying*, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after” (Jeremiah 30:17). ¶ Elder Orson Pratt explained: “Very well, the Lord will, in his own due time, enable you to distinguish between the righteous and the wicked. ‘Behold, they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord: and behold, they shall be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken.’ How different from old Jerusalem! Was that sought out? No; Jerusalem was built up a long time before Israel came out of Egypt, and was there ready for them to take possession of when they entered the Holy Land. Was Jerusalem ever forsaken?³⁷ Yes, forsaken for many generations. But not so with Zion, that should get up into the mountains; they should seek out a location, so much so that the city should be called ‘Sought out;’ and instead of being forsaken, as many people suppose the ‘Mormons’ will be, the Lord God will protect them. According to the words of Daniel, the kingdom shall not be destroyed, neither shall it be given to another people, and it shall stand forever.”³⁸ Elder Orson Pratt expressed these feelings of thankfulness: “I feel thankful as one of the Twelve for the privilege of coming out as one of the pioneers to this glorious valley where we can build up a city to the Lord. For many years I have not read that good old book, but I remember the predictions in it and some that are now very nearly fulfilled by us. Isaiah says, speaking of the City of Zion, it shall be ‘Sought out, a city not

forsaken,’ etc. Many in this congregation know what is meant by the garments of salvation and the robe of righteousness. Righteousness and praise shall spring forth before all the nations of the earth and they will not hold their peace. There are many of you that feel you can cry day and night to the people in the cause of righteousness until it shall triumph. ‘For as a young man marrieth a virgin,’ etc.,—this belongs and refers to us. ‘I will no longer give thy corn to be meat for thine enemy.’ This has not been fulfilled heretofore but will be. The corn that we toil to raise from the earth, it shall not be given to our enemies, they that gather it shall eat it, and they shall drink in the courts of His holiness. This wine is also to be drunk in the courts of the Lord’s house. We have gathered out the stones out of the road and thousands will yet fulfill this prophecy. It has reference to the latter times that were to dawn upon the world in the last dispensation. ‘Thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken.’ If ever there was a place sought out it is this, we have inquired diligently and have found it. This cannot refer to Jerusalem, but to this very place, point and spot that the pioneers have found where a city shall be built unto the Lord, where righteousness will reign and iniquity not be allowed. Isaiah and Joel both spake very plainly on this subject. ‘It shall come to pass in the last days that the house of the Lord shall be established,’ etc. In what part of the earth could it be established more than in this place where this congregation is gathered. In the midst of the spires of the mountains we have found a place large enough to gather a few thousand of the Saints. You may travel Europe, Asia, Africa and America but you cannot find a place much higher where any people can raise crops and sustain themselves. The house of the Lord will be established on the tops of the mountains when we shall have once reared here. The experience of the Saints proves that there was no house of the Lord, and we can say: travel over this earth but you cannot find the house of the Lord. The Lord must give the pattern of the building and order it, and give directions to His servants. The Lord wants His house built precisely to the pattern that He gives and He is bound to speak to and bless and make them His own children in that house and I verily believe I shall see it and see thousands come flocking to the house to learn the way of salvation. And I want to see the time that I shall see thousands raising their voices on this consecrated land. There are many testimonies in the prophets all bearing upon this subject. Joseph, in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants speaks of this very subject and it appears there will be some sinners in Zion who will be afraid and a devouring fire will rest upon every dwelling place in Zion. ‘He that walketh righteously’ etc., ‘He shall dwell on high, bread shall be given him, his water shall be sure.’ Isaiah was on the eastern continent when he spoke this and was speaking of a very distant place ...

³⁶ Seems to be quoting Edward Bickersteth, *The Restoration of the Jews*. “What has been the condition, and what is the present state of the Jews? Where are they? As a body, nowhere; as people, everywhere. The principal abode of the ten tribes, who have probably been less dispersed than the two, is not, even to this day indisputably ascertained. They are yet hidden from our research. No people on earth are more scattered, dispersed, and hitherto rejected, than the two remaining tribes ... Their future history is to be the very contrast of their present state. They are all to be sought out, gathered together, and restored to their own land. God himself will take this work especially under his own care.” (1841, pp. 85–86)

³⁷ Gladly, the honor that shall come upon the New Jerusalem does not take away from the honor that shall come to the Jerusalem in the Holy Land when the Lord reigns upon the earth during the Millennium from both of His main capitals.

³⁸ Elder Orson Pratt, “Restoration of the Gospel.” Fifteenth Ward Meetinghouse, Salt Lake City, 26 March 1876. JD 18:184b. Also see JD 17:320b, “Second Coming of Christ.” Also see JD 15:60, also entitled, “Second Coming of Christ.”

The wilderness shall become as a fruitful field and a fruitful field as a forest. We know the time Will come that the great Jehovah will cause springs of water to gush out of the desert lands and we shall see the lands survive that the gentiles have defiled. Isaiah speaks of the heritage of Jacob being in a high place. This is about four thousand feet above the level of the sea and the high mountains will still catch the hail and we shall be in a low place. We will not feel discouraged but will feel full of vigor and circumscribe all things to the very heavens, for this is what we desire above all things. Let us endeavor to covenant in our hearts, that we will serve the Lord; that we will keep His commandments and

obey His counsel. I wish that all of us should be faithful and as President Young said the other evening, every man is expected to do his duty. The Lord will be with us still; He will shield, guard and defend us by day and be our refuge by night, and our salvation. I feel to say in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, you shall be blest if you keep the commandments of God. Amen.”³⁹

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³⁹ *William Clayton's Journal*, 1846–1847. Salt Lake City, Utah: The Deseret News, 1921, pp. 331–334.

Isaiah 63

The Lord redeems His people through His atoning sacrifice and defends Jerusalem in the end of days. His garments are stained with blood. The Savior overcame death through His atoning sacrifice and subsequent resurrection. Even if the first six verses are eschatologically oriented, the allusions to the atonement are clear. The Lord's vengeance is never like that of men. Man is glad to see others who have injured him suffer. This is not the case with the Lord. He pleads with us to repent lest we also have to suffer as He did. We need to learn empathy towards others as our Redeemer has it for us. The Savior is our exemplar.

*Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored,
He has loosed the fateful lightening of His terrible swift sword
His truth is marching on.*
— Battle Hymn of the Republic

vv. 1–6. Elder John Taylor shared: “[Isaiah] spoke of [the Son of God] as coming in power, glory and dominion, and as having his wrath and indignation kindled against the nations of the earth. ‘Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat¹ I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.’ Jesus accomplished what he was sent to do, and, feeling satisfied of this, when he was about to leave the earth he said he had finished the work his Father gave him to do. But there was another work, another event that was to transpire in the latter days, when he should not be led as a lamb to the slaughter or be like a sheep before the shearers; when he would not act in that state of humiliation and quiescence, but when he will go forth as a man of war and tread down the people in his anger and trample them in his fury, when blood should be on his garments and the day of vengeance in his heart, when he would rule the nations with an iron rod and break them to pieces like a potter's vessel.”² In this same talk Elder John Taylor added: “It might look curious to some for God to talk of treading the people in his anger; but as we have to do with eternity as well as with time, and as it is necessary the earth should be

purged and righteousness should take the place of corruption, which will some time have an end here, we can then conclude that the Judge of all the earth will do right. We should seek to magnify our calling and honor our God, being co-workers with God in the things he has engaged to do. The Lord has begun to vex the nations, beginning with our own nation; he is vexing it and will vex other nations, and his judgments will go forth and all the wicked nations of the world will feel the avenging hand of God, and he will continue to overthrow nation after nation until He whose right it is will take the government into his own hand, and he will continue to increase and progress until every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them shall be heard to say, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, and might, and majesty, and dominion be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever. Shall we be found among that number who will thus magnify the name of God, crying, ‘Hallelujah, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth?’”³ ¶ Abarbanel, in Rabbis Slotki-Rosenberg, explains that “The Hero is none other than the God of Israel.” Govett argues: “The whole scene so exactly corresponds with Revelation 19 ... The hero of ISAIAH 63 comes ‘glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength.’ In the Apocalypse, ‘I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and he that sat on him was called Faithful and True, and *righteousness* (‘I that speak in *righteousness*,’ Isaiah) he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns.’ In Isaiah he is called ‘*the Speaker*, or Word of Righteousness;’ in the Apocalypse, ‘his name is called the *Word of God*.’ Do the wondering chorus in Isaiah ask him, ‘wherefore he is *red* in his apparel?’ St. John

¹ Cowles explains: “Winefat is the old Saxon for ‘vat’; here, the tub or trough in which grapes were trodden.”

² Elder John Taylor, “The Second Coming of Jesus.” Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 22 February 1863. JD 10:115b.

³ Elder John Taylor, “The Second Coming of Jesus.” Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 22 February 1863. JD 10:120.

may reply, that ‘he was clothed in a vesture *dipped in blood*.’ Does Isaiah’s Speaker tell us, ‘I have *trodden the wine-press alone*?’ St. John declares, ‘*He treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God*.’ If Isaiah adds that ‘he will tread down the nations in anger, and trample them in his fury,’ St. John, that ‘out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should *smite the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron*,’ and break them in pieces like a potter’s vessel,’ as the second Psalm witnesses. Then Isaiah’s Speaker yet farther announces, ‘their blood shall be sprinkled on my garments,’ how exactly does it accord with St. John’s description noticed above! To the same period does the latter part of Revelation 14 refer, and it makes use of the same figure, setting in a terrific point of view the desolation and destruction of man that shall then take place. ‘And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle (‘one like unto the *Son of Man, having on his head a golden crown*,’ Revelation 14:14), saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the *great wine-press of the wrath of God*. And the wine-press was trodden without the city⁴ (Jerusalem, as has been shown above), and *blood came out of the wine-press, even unto the horses’ bridles*, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.’ The same scene of vengeance does the ‘song of Moses’ foretell. ‘If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, *and my sword shall devour flesh*, (and that) *with the blood of the slain and of the captives*, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy. Rejoice, O ye nations, (with) his people⁵: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, *and to his people*’ (Deuteronomy 32:41-43).” Wordsworth similarly has: “The subject of this prophecy may be described in the words of the

⁴ Jay A. Parry and Donald W. Parry, in *Understanding the Book of Revelation* (p. 194), leaning on Mounce (*Book of Revelation*, p. 281), do well in noting that Gethsemane and Golgotha—both being the scene of the atonement—were outside the city walls. So also the Valley of Jehoshaphat, the center of the latter-day events surrounding the Second coming of Christ.

⁵ That is, let all the nations join His people in rejoicing. Govett commends the LXX (ⲉ) in this Deuteronomic passage. In it, angels join in the worship of God. Brenton LXX (ⲉ) has: “Rejoice, ye heavens, with him, and let all the angels of God worship him; rejoice ye Gentiles [*nations*, Thompson LXX (ⲉ)], with his people, and let all the sons of God strengthen themselves in him; for he will avenge the blood of his sons, and he will render vengeance, and recompense justice to his enemies, and will reward them that hate him; and the Lord shall purge the land of his people.”

Apocalypse, at the opening of the first seal: ‘I saw, and behold a white horse: and He that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto Him: and He went forth *conquering, and to conquer*’ (Revelation 6:2) ... In Revelation 19:11, the same Warrior reappears on the white horse of victory; and ‘He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and *make war*. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns... . *And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood*: and His Name is called The Word of God ... and He *treadeth the winepress* of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS’ (Revelation 19:11–16). Cp. Revelation 14:19, ‘The great winepress of the wrath of God.’” Wordsworth also notes: “That this is a description of Christ coming to His People as a Conqueror from His own Passion and Resurrection, was the uniform judgment of the ancient Expositors (as *Tertullian*, c. *Marcion*, iv. 40; *Origen*, Tract 9, in Joann. ix. ; *S. Cyprian*, *S. Augustine*, *S. Jerome*, and *S. Cyril* here.” ¶ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland applied some of these same scriptures in ISAIAH 63 to the atoning sacrifice of our Savior: “I speak of the loneliest journey ever made and the unending blessings it brought to all in the human family. I speak of the Savior’s solitary task of shouldering alone the burden of our salvation. Rightly He would say: ‘I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me. ... I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold [me].’”⁶

1 ¶ WHO [is] this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this [that is] glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

✓ decked

WHO [is] this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? The Targum (ⲡ) has, “Who hath spoken these things? He who shall bring the blow upon Persia (the Royal Polyglot reads, ‘Edom’), the might vengeance upon Bozrah.” The LXX (ⲉ) reads, “Who is this who is coming from Edom? What redness of mantles from Bosor!” Instead of *dyed*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *crimson*. ¶ In the Doctrine and Covenants we read: “And it shall be said: Who is this that cometh down from God in heaven with dyed garments; yea, from the regions which are not known, clothed in his glorious apparel, traveling in the greatness of his

⁶ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, “None Were with Him,” April 2009 General Conference.

strength? And he shall say: I am he who spake in righteousness, mighty to save” (D&C 133:46–47). Without the atonement, no other type of saving would be of much import. In the Apocalypse we read: “And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” (Revelation 19:15). ¶ Birks explains: “Edom [אֶדוֹם], the red [אֶדוֹם], is the people and land of him who sold his birthright, and in heart shed his brother’s blood.” Gesenius has also: “אֶדוֹם: *the descendants of Edom*, i.e. the nation of the Edomites or Idumæans; and also the country [Idumæa]. The nation is called more fully [Sons of Edom] בְּנֵי אֶדוֹם.” Idumea⁷ also stand for *the world*: “And also the Lord shall have power over his saints, and shall reign in their midst, and shall come down in judgment upon Idumea, or the world” (D&C 1:36). Kimhi, in Rabbis Slotki-Rosenberg, explains that the Edomites are the descendants of Esau and that **Edom** represents the “lands of tyranny and oppression” towards Israel. So also Stier in Keith: “This Edom is plainly a typical, prophetic, mystic name for the hostile, haughty, heathen world in general, to be judged, and certainly the same with Babel in the horizon of the prophet. From the first type until now it is used with various allusions (the red, the earthly, Adam [אָדָם]⁸), the natural humanity, in contrast with Israel, the people of God. The chief point of resemblance is the state of mind, profane, contemptuous, despising salvation.” Regarding **Bozrah**, or rather **Botzra**, we read: “בֹּצְרָה ‘sheepfold’; [Βοσόρρα, Bosorrha], [Βοσόρ, Bosor]”: The capital of Edom, a city of great antiquity (Genesis 36:33; 1 Chronicles 1:44; ISAIAH 34:6; 63:1; Jeremiah 49:13; Amos 1:12). It may be identical with Buzeirah, which lies about 7 miles Southwest of Tufileh, on the main road to Petra” (ISBE). ¶ Jerusalem is to Judah (or even Israel) as Bozrah is to Edom and in Scripture capitals are often used as synonyms for the nation. Wordsworth explains: “Christ at His Passion and Resurrection came from Edom and Bozrah because He then overthrew His bloodthirsty, malignant, and treacherous enemies ... and He came from Bozrah because He spoiled the *strong man*, Satan, in his *fortress* (Matthew 12:29; Luke 11:21, 22), and made that Bozrah to be a winepress of judgment. ‘Now is the judgment of this world’ (He said): ‘now shall the prince of this world be cast out’—now he is *judged* (see John 12:31; 16:11). He then bruised his head (Genesis 3:15),

and led captivity captive (Psalm 68:18; Ephesians 4: 8), and spoiled principalities and powers, triumphing over them by His Cross (Colossians 2:15); and by His death He destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and delivered them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Hebrews 2:14, 15). ¶ Rawlinson testifies: “Who is it? *The reply is immediate*—I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save; i.e. I, whose every word is ‘holy, just, and true,’ who alone am able to ‘save to the uttermost all that come to me’ (Hebrews 7:25). The answer unmistakably indicates that the figure which has appeared to the prophet is that of Jehovah.” Kay has: “We are now warned that the redemption of God’s people involved judgment on their foes; who are described under the symbolic names of ‘Edom’ and ‘Bozrah.’” Kay continues: “*Who is this that cometh*] Cp. Song of Solomon 3:6. Can it be He for whom Zion was so anxiously looking out (ISAIAH 62:11; cp. ISAIAH 59:20)? It must; for in ISAIAH 63:4 He says, ‘My redeemed’; cp. ISAIAH 62:12. — *With dyed* [תָּמִיךְ] *garments from Bezrah*] the ‘place of vintage,’ ISAIAH 34:6.” Oswalt says: “As Cheyne notes, the coins of Bozrah during the Roman period had the image of a wine press stamped on them.” We also read: “The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, *and* with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea” (ISAIAH 34:6). ¶ In our family vineyard we used a small motor to replace the feet stomping during the *vendimia* or vintage. Even so, the workers who pushed the grapes onto the hole where the motor functioned got splashed completely with the grape juice—red, or rather purple vs. white depending on the grape varieties involved in the wine production. *Vino tinto*, or red wine in Spanish, comes from the word *tinto* or *dyed*. ¶ There is an allusion to purple kingly robes, also. Gesenius for תָּמִיךְ has: “*to be of a bright* (i.e. a splendid) *colour*, such as dazzles the eyes; especially used of a bright red. Part. pass. תָּמִיךְ splendid, of the scarlet mantle of a ruler, ISAIAH 63:1.” There is an allusion, we said, to a king wearing his majestic robes. But this is no ordinary King, but rather the Redeemer of mankind: “And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and *he treadeth the winepress* of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS” (Revelation 19:15–16, emphasis added). ¶ Kay continues: “*Glorious in his apparel*] (cp. Psalm 104:1): for He is clad in robes of Salvation and Righteousness, ISAIAH 61:10.” A number of exegetes suggest that the Savior was wearing apparel of exquisite white or royal purple *but* that this

⁷ See also Psalm 137:7; Ezekiel 25:11–14; 35: 36:5, Obadiah 1:1–16.

⁸ Adam, in Hebrew, means *man*.

was stained with blood. I would agree that the original apparel in this illustration was white—for the Savior’s garments are spotless white, a symbol of His purity and sinlessness. But may I submit that it was the blood of the atonement that made His apparel glorious?⁹ There is an irony here for kings wear royal purple made with the most expensive cloth—but our Savior and Redeemer was stained with His blood caused by His suffering. The Savior pleads with us: “Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool” (ISAIAH 1:16–18). As we turn our lives to Christ to become His disciples, our own garments may become glorious: “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (Revelation 7:14). It is not His glorious garments that were soiled with the blood of the atonement, but rather, his robes were made glorious through the blood of the atonement. ¶ Elder Neal A. Maxwell said, “When He comes again, unlike His coming to the signifying meekness of the manger, He will come in overwhelming majesty and power. In at least one appearance He will come in red apparel to remind us that He shed His blood for us (see D&C 133:48; ISAIAH 63:1). Among the astounding accompanying events, stars will fall from the heavens, as Christ will declare, ‘I have trodden the winepress alone ... and none were with me’ (D&C 133:50). What will we and those who witness these marvelous events speak of, then and later? Not the solar display with falling stars! Instead, we will speak of Jesus’ ‘loving-kindness.’ For how long will we so exclaim? ‘Forever and ever’ (D&C 133:52). The more we come to know of Jesus and the Atonement, the more we shall praise and adore Him ‘forever and ever.’ Meanwhile, however, He has asked us to become more like Him in attributes and qualities. We cannot be ‘valiant in the testimony of Jesus’ (D&C 76:79) unless we really strive to become more like Him.”¹⁰ ¶ *This [that is] glorious in his apparel, travelling [צֶהָדָה] in the greatness of his strength?* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “To execute vengeance of judgment of His people, as He hath sworn unto them by His Word.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “He so magnificent in apparel? He marcheth with majesty!” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “This beautiful

one in his robe, walking in the greatness of his strength.” ¶ Kay has: “*Travelling*] Or, ‘bending,’ as one who stoops forward in energetic marching (see on ISAIAH 51:14¹¹).” Wade has: “The latter, if retained, must mean *bending to and fro*, i.e. *swaggering*.” Perhaps this is similar to the expression *I set my face like a flint* (ISAIAH 50:7), full of unstoppable determination. TDOT gives as an acceptance of צֶהָדָה to “solemnly stride.” ¶ Can we not also see an allusion to the bending over in pain and agony of the atonement contrasted to the present glory? Wordsworth (emphasis added) similarly has: “*Glorious in his apparel*] Beautiful and splendid in His raiment. This was fulfilled in Christ’s Passion and Resurrection... *Travelling*] The word thus rendered occurs in this form only in ISAIAH 51:14, and Jeremiah 2:20; 48:12, and *appears to mean bending down* (Gesenius 714; Fuerst, 1200); and it seems to refer to Christ’s act in stooping so low as He did in His Passion, in order to rise so high as He did in His Resurrection and Ascension. See Phil. ii. 6—11; and cp. Stier, p. 745.” ¶ *I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “He hath said, Behold, I shall reveal myself as I have spoken in righteousness, great is my power to save.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “I proclaim righteousness and the judgment of salvation.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “I, that speak justice, and am a defender to save.” Elder Anthony D. Perkins powerfully testified: “I bear witness of Jesus Christ, who is ‘mighty to save’ us from our inadequacies, imperfections, and sins.”¹² ¶ Jennings compares this verse with much of what goes on in Psalms 22–24 and goes on to say: “‘Who is this King of Glory?’ to which this answer comes: ‘The Lord, strong and mighty; the Lord mighty in battle.’ This awakens a universal shout: ‘Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in.’ But the question is repeated, as if the announcement were too stupendous to be taken in quickly: ‘Who [Ⲯ] is this King of Glory?’ to which we hear the final word: ‘The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory.’” Here the Lord says that He is who, that He is the One who is mighty to save. Indeed, He is the Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory.

2 Wherefore [art thou] red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?

⁹ Donald W. Parry and Jay A. Parry well suggest that the blood on the garments includes (1) that which the Savior poured out for us in His pain; (2) the blood of the sins of the repentant; and (3) the blood of the sins of the rebellious (*Understanding the Book of Revelation*).

¹⁰ Maxwell, Neal A. *That Ye May Believe*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1992, pp. 210–211.

¹¹ In LITV we have: “*Bowed down* [צֶהָדָה], he hurries to be freed, that he not die in the pit, nor that he lack his bread.”

¹² Elder Anthony D. Perkins, “The Great and Wonderful Love.” October 2006 General Conference.

Wherefore [art thou] red in thine apparel. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Wherefore are the mountains red from the blood of the slain?” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Why are thy garments red and thy clothing, as from a trodden winevat?” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “Why then is thy apparel red.” ¶ In Doctrine and Covenants we read: “And the Lord shall be red in his apparel, and his garments like him that treadeth in the wine-vat. And so great shall be the glory of his presence that the sun shall hide his face in shame, and the moon shall withhold its light, and the stars shall be hurled from their places” (D&C 133:48–49). Faussett suggests: “The prophet asks why His garments are ‘dyed’ and ‘red.’” Nägelsbach has: “The Prophet further inquiries: *Why is it red in thine apparel?*” The לִי intimates that the redness is not something inherent in the raiment, but something that has come to it from without.” So also Delitzsch who says: “The seer asks, ‘Why is there red (אָדום) to thine apparel?’ The Lamed (ל), which might be omitted (wherefore is thy garment red?), implies that the red was not its original colour, but something added.” ¶ *And thy garments like him that treadeth in the winevat?* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Yea, the valleys shall flow as the wine from the winepress.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “I am full of a country trodden down; and of the nations there is not a man with me.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “And thy garments like theirs that tread in the winepress?” ¶ In Judah’s patriarchal blessing we find in part: “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass’s colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments *in wine* [בַּיַּיִן], *and* his clothes *in the blood of grapes* [וּבְדָם עֲנָבִים]” (Genesis 49:10–11, see also Mark 11:2–7, John 12:15). Wordsworth, who quotes some of these same scriptures, says about the atonement: “Christ’s Passion was the cause of His victory.”

3 I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people [there was] none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.

I have trodden the winepress alone. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Behold, as the grapes (בָּעֵיט) is not only ‘the grape,’ but any other fruit that is pressed in a press) are trodden in the vat, thus He shall increase the slaughter in the camps of the nations.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “I have trodden them down in my wrath, and crumbled

them like dust and shed their blood on the earth.” ¶ In Doctrine and Covenants we read: “And his voice shall be heard: I have trodden the wine-press alone, and have brought judgment upon all people; and none were with me; And I have trampled them in my fury, and I did tread upon them in mine anger, and their blood have I sprinkled upon my garments, and stained all my raiment.” (D&C 133:50–51a). ¶ Rawlinson observes: “The whole is a prophecy of the future; but the dramatic form of the narrative requires that the verbs should be in the past.” Henderson says: “פָּרַח occurs only here and Haggaï 2:16. It comes from פָּרַח, *to break, break in pieces*. Hence it signifies the place where the grapes are broken by treading, נִצַּח, an unusual term, employed here and ISAIAH 63:6, to denote *blood*. It properly signifies the *juice* or liquor [נִצְחָם, but here, the juice of grapes put for sprinkled blood—GB] which is *spirted* from the grape.” Wordsworth says of the atonement: “*I have trodden the winepress alone*] Let no one else, therefore, claim a share in the work of salvation; and let no one assign to any creature a part in that glorious victory, which is due to Christ, and to Christ alone ... Christ was clothed with scarlet in mockery at His Passion; He was then made to be red in His own blood.” ¶ Symbolic of the Lord’s redemption for us we have: “And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he [the High Priest] goeth in to make an atonement in the holy *place*, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel” (Leviticus 16:17). In the New Testament we read: “But into the second [veil, or Holy of Holies] *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people” (Hebrews 9:7). ¶ Henry explains: “He [Christ] and he only, is *par negotio—fit*¹³ for the work and worthy of the honour: he is appointed by the Father to do it, who sanctified him, and sent him into the world for this purpose, that God might in him reconcile the world to himself. He undertook it, and for our sakes sanctified himself, and set himself apart for it, John 17:19. The high priest’s frequently bathing himself on this day, and performing the service of it in fine linen clean and white, signified the holiness of the Lord Jesus, his perfect freedom from all sin, and his being beautified and adorned with all grace. No man was to be with the high priest when he made atonement (Leviticus 16:17); for our Lord Jesus *was to tread the wine-press alone*, and of the people there must be *none with him* (ISAIAH 63:3); therefore, when he entered upon his sufferings, *all his disciples forsook him and fled*, for it any of them had been taken and put to death with him it would have

¹³ Equal to the task.

looked as if they had assisted in making the atonement.” ¶ Christ had to bear the full weight of the atoning sacrifice. He had to experience the pain of the withdrawal of the Spirit and of the Presence of the Father. Christ suffered for all of our sins, our pain, our anguish and without a doubt—the most difficult of all—the withdrawal of His Father and of the Spirit. It was necessary for Him to experience this pain, as well as all other pains. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland worshipfully said: “I speak of the loneliest journey ever made and the unending blessings it brought to all in the human family. I speak of the Savior’s solitary task of shouldering alone the burden of our salvation. Rightly He would say: ‘I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me ... I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold [me]’... Now I speak very carefully, even reverently, of what may have been the most difficult moment in all of this solitary journey to Atonement. I speak of those final moments for which Jesus must have been prepared intellectually and physically but which He may not have fully anticipated emotionally and spiritually—that concluding descent into the paralyzing despair of divine withdrawal when He cries in *ultimate* loneliness, ‘My God, my God, why hast *thou* forsaken me?’ The loss of mortal support He had anticipated, but apparently He had not comprehended this. Had He not said to His disciples, ‘Behold, the hour ... is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me’ and ‘The Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him’? With all the conviction of my soul I testify that He *did* please His Father perfectly and that a perfect Father did *not* forsake His Son in that hour. Indeed, it is my personal belief that in all of Christ’s mortal ministry the Father may never have been closer to His Son than in these agonizing final moments of suffering. Nevertheless, that the supreme sacrifice of His Son might be as complete as it was voluntary and solitary, the Father briefly withdrew from Jesus the comfort of His Spirit, the support of His personal presence. It was required, indeed it was central to the significance of the Atonement, that this perfect Son who had never spoken ill nor done wrong nor touched an unclean thing had to know how the rest of humankind—us, all of us—would feel when we did commit such sins. For His Atonement to be infinite and eternal, He had to feel what it was like to die not only physically but spiritually, to sense what it was like to have the divine Spirit withdraw, leaving one feeling totally, abjectly, hopelessly alone ... because Jesus walked such a long, lonely path utterly alone, *we* do not have to do so.”¹⁴ ¶ In the words of the Savior

Himself we read: “I command you to repent, and keep the commandments which you have received by the hand of my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., in my name; And it is by my almighty power that you have received them; Therefore I command you to repent—repent, lest I smite you by the rod of my mouth, and by my wrath, and by my anger, and your sufferings be sore—how sore you know not, how exquisite you know not, yea, how hard to bear you know not. For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I; Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men. Wherefore, I command you again to repent, lest I humble you with my almighty power; and that you confess your sins, lest you suffer these punishments of which I have spoken, of which in the smallest, yea, even in the least degree *you have tasted at the time I withdrew my Spirit*” (D&C 19:13–20, emphasis added). The Savior specifically mentions the withdrawal of His Spirit as one of the most painful experiences of the Atonement and pleads with us to avoid this future pain by turning to Him.¹⁵ ¶ Jennings, speaking of judgment, says: “Joel (Joel 3:12) tells us that that last judgment takes place in the ‘valley of Jehoshaphat’ (a name that itself means ‘The judgment of Jehovah’), which lay to the east of Jerusalem, separating the city from the Mount of Olives ... In accord with this Zechariah (Zechariah 14) tells us that His Feet shall stand at that day on the Mount of Olives, which is also on the eastern side of the valley of Jehoshaphat.” ¶ *And of the people [there was] none with me*: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “They shall have no strength before me.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, “And of the Gentiles there is not a man with me.” ¶ As we have pointed out, *géntibus* in the Vulgate (Ⲕ) can mean *nations or Gentiles* as in the Hebrew גִּיּוֹת, as well as *people* (Ⲕ). Here it should read *nations*, implying that *no one* was with Christ, not just that *no Gentile* was with Christ, in Gethsemane. In the Spanish translation (1855) of the Vulgate (Ⲕ) by Rmo. P. Phelipe Scio de S.

General Conference.

¹⁵ We further read: “Hearken and hear, O ye inhabitants of the earth. Listen, ye elders of my church together, and hear the voice of the Lord; for he calleth upon all men, and he commandeth all men everywhere to repent. For behold, the Lord God hath sent forth the angel crying through the midst of heaven, saying: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight, for the hour of his coming is nigh ... Wherefore, prepare ye for the coming of the Bridegroom; go ye, go ye out to meet him ... And he shall utter his voice out of Zion, and he shall speak from Jerusalem, and his voice shall be heard among all people” (D&C 133:16–17, 19, 21).

¹⁴ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, “None Were with Him.” April 2009

Miguel, for instance, the translation is much better, “El lagar pisé yo solo, y de las *naciones* no hay hombre alguno conmigo” (*emphasis added*, “I tread on the winepress alone, and of the *nations* there is no man at all with me.” Not only do these words have reference to the expiatory sacrifice of our Savior in Gethsemane and the cross, but they also point to the time when the nations will surround Jerusalem—the Lord alone will defend His people Judah. The Savior prophesied: “And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh” (Luke 21:20). ¶ Of the war of Gog and Magog we also read: “Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog ... And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes ... And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, *that* my fury shall come up in my face. For in my jealousy *and* in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel ... and all the men that *are* upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD: every man’s sword shall be against his brother. And I will plead against him¹⁶ with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that *are* with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I *am* the LORD” (Ezekiel 38:14–23). Also see Zechariah 14:1–5. Alexander has: “... these words are added to convey the idea that all the nations were on the adverse side, none on that of the conqueror ... By all the nations we are of course to understand all but God’s people.” From all of these scriptures it is clear that it is the Lord Himself, even the Mighty One of Israel, who will alone defend Jerusalem. ¶ *For I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Yea, I will slay them in my anger, and tread them down in my fury.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “I have trampled on them in my indignation, and have trodden them down in my wrath.” ¶ Rawlinson, regarding the end of days, has: “As ‘the peoples’ would not help God, but took the side of his enemies, they too were placed in the winepress, and crushed under his feet.” Keith has: “The same idea of awful destruction is expressed when it is said also in reference to the same period, ‘The wine-press was trodden without the city,

and blood came out even to the horses’ bridles’ (Revelation 14:20).” Wordsworth has: “*For I will tread them in mine anger*] Rather, and I trod them (Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic, Vitranga, Rosenmüller, Stier, Delitzsch). Christ’s victory began at His First Advent, and is to be consummated at the Second Advent ... the victory over all earthly powers, and over Satan and Death, is regarded by the Prophet as already accomplished. In like manner the Psalmist contemplates Calvary as the battle-field of Satan and the world against Christ. The sufferings of Golgotha lead to the triumphs of Armageddon (Revelation 16:16). ‘Why do the heathen so furiously rage together’ (he asks), ‘and why do the people’ (lit. the peoples) ‘imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed.’ ‘Thou shalt bruise them with a rod of iron: and break them in pieces like a potter’s vessel’ (Psalm 2:1, 2, 9; Acts 4:25, 26).” ¶ *And their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And I will break the strength of their mighty ones before me, and all their wise men will I consume (literally, ‘I will swallow up’).” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has *apparel* instead of *raiment*. ¶ Kay sees in the Hebrew אֶנְאִלְתִּי, *stain*, here in ISAIAH 63:3 and the word *redeem*, גָּאֻלְתִּי, in ISAIAH 63:4. The former also means to pollute or defile, besides staining (Gesenius). Certainly, we can say that the Savior took upon Himself and suffered our stains—which in contrast with His purity must have made it all the more painful. Wordsworth has: “*Their blood shall he sprinkled—I will stain*] Rather, as in the preceding clause, their blood has been sprinkled; or, their life-blood¹⁷ (Heb. נִצָּח, glory, vigour, life; see Psalm 7:5; Lamentations 3:18; that which they proudly gloried in); *and I have stained.*”

4 For the day of vengeance [is] in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “For the day of vengeance is before me, and the year of the salvation of my people hath come.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “For the day of retribution came upon them and the year of redemption is at hand.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, for the second clause, “The year of my redemption is come.” ¶ In Doctrine and Covenants we read: “For this was the day of vengeance which was in my heart.” (D&C 133:51b). Cowles has: “The phrases, ‘The day of vengeance’ and the ‘year of the redeemed,’ occur above, ISAIAH 61:4.”

¹⁶ Compare with D&C 88:89–90.

¹⁷ As we said above, *grape juice* put here as a representative of blood.

Rawlinson says: “The ‘day of vengeance’ ushers in the ‘year of redemption.’” Keith explains: “This ‘day of vengeance’ was announced before (ISAIAH 61:2). It was to follow the acceptable year, the long season of Divine grace, and usher in the full gift of beauty, joy, and praise, to the mourners in Zion.” We can think of at least two fulfillments. It would be after the restoration of the Gospel that the disasters would befall the earth in faster frequency as the Lord would begin to speak with the voice of earthquakes and other natural disasters. The second—which fits even better with the context of ISAIAH 63—seems to suggest the end of days giving way to the commencement of the Millennium—truly a time of jubilee. Furthermore, we can think of the Millennium as also corresponding to a season of jubilee followed by a final day of vengeance and the second war of Gog and Magog. ¶ Elder John Taylor warned: “When [Christ] comes again he comes to take vengeance on the ungodly and to bring deliverance unto his Saints; ‘For the day of vengeance,’ it is said, ‘is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.’ It behooves us to be made well aware which class we belong to, that if we are not already among the redeemed we may immediately join that society ...”¹⁸ Regarding *vengeance* we also read from the words of the Savior Himself while He visited the Americas: “For it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my Beloved Son, them will I cut off from among my people, O house of Israel; And I will execute vengeance and fury upon them, even as upon the heathen, such as they have not heard” (3 Nephi 21:20–21). Thus we come to understand that *vengeance* is synonymous with *being cut off* from the presence of God. It is the very opposite of having the Lord walk in the midst of His people to be their God. Furthermore, in connection with the effects of the atonement, the Lord teaches: “And it shall come to pass, because of the wickedness of the world, that I will take vengeance upon the wicked, for they will not repent; for the cup of mine indignation is full; for behold, my blood shall not cleanse them if they hear me not” (D&C 29:17). The Savior explains, then, that His blood *will not cleanse* the rebellious. I hold it as a personal opinion, however, that every person who will inherit any degree of glory will have to lean on the atonement to do so. That such individuals will have to experience the exquisite pain that the Savior speaks about, I have no doubt, but even then, it will not be enough without the atoning sacrifice of our Lord and Redeemer, to inherit any of the degrees of glory without the atoning sacrifice. ¶ Elder Wilford Woodruff taught: “We may rest assured that the Lord will reward those who seek to destroy the lives of his people and to

overthrow his kingdom. Vengeance is in the hands of the Almighty. ‘I will fight your battles,’ saith the Lord. We do not seek any man’s hurt, however much of an enemy he may be to us, we leave him in the hands of God...”¹⁹ Then Elder Spencer W. Kimball taught: “Man must not seek vengeance nor retaliate against those who have damaged him. Bitterness injures the one who carries it more than the one against whom it is directed.”²⁰

5 And I looked, and [there was] none to help; and I wondered that [there was] none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me.

And I looked, and [there was] none to help. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And it is revealed before me, that there is no man whose works are good.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “When I looked and there was no helper.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “I looked about, and there was none to help.” ¶ Keith has: “This verse is the same as ISAIAH 59:16,²¹ with a change of person only. Messiah, the Lord’s Anointed, claims here for His own work what is there ascribed to Jehovah. The words ‘I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save,’ unfold that earlier message, ‘I, even I, am Jehovah, and beside me there is no Saviour’ (ISAIAH 43:11).” ¶ *And I wondered that [there was] none to uphold:* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And it is known to me, that there is no man who will stand up and pray in behalf of them.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “And observed that none upheld.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “I sought, and there was none to give aid.” ¶ Rawlinson has: “God is represented as looking for and expecting what might reasonably have been expected, and even as surprised when he does not find it (comp. ISAIAH 59:16). Out of all the many nations it was reasonable to suppose that some would have chosen the better part and have been on the Lord’s side. But the fact was otherwise.” This seems to point to the end of days, when it would be the Lord’s arm and strength alone that would come to the rescue of His people in Jerusalem, when the nations would surround her. ¶ *Therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Yea, I will redeem them by the arm of my strength, and by the Word of my delight I will help them.” The

¹⁸ Elder John Taylor, “The Second Coming of Jesus.” Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 22 February 1863. JD 10:116a.

¹⁹ Elder Wilford Woodruff, JD 17:193b.

²⁰ Elder Spencer W. Kimball, “Except Ye Repent...” October 1949 General Conference.

²¹ “And he saw that *there was* no man, and wondered that *there was* no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him” (ISAIAH 59:16).

LXX (6) reads, “Then mine own arm delivered them. Mine indignation indeed was roused.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “And my own arm hath saved for me, and my indignation itself hath helped me.” Rawlinson says: “*Mine own arm brought salvation unto me*] or, *mine own arm helped me* (comp. ISAIAH 59:16). Nothing more is needed. If God arises, his enemies at once ‘are scattered’ (Psalm 68:1). ‘His own right hand, and his holy arm, get him the victory’ (Psalm 98:1).” Oswalt has: “God will achieve the redemption of his people, and we may experience his arm as the ‘righteousness’ of God on our behalf, or we may experience it as his wrath. The choice is ours.”

6 And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.

And I will *tread down* [תִּדְבֹּק] the people in mine anger. The Targum (7) has, “And I will slay the nations in my anger.” The LXX (6) reads, “And I trampled them down in mine anger.” The Lamsa Peshitta (5) follows the Masoretic text (11) and gives the plural, *peoples* (עַמִּים). The Douay-Rheims (9) has *wrath* rather than *anger*. ¶ Rawlinson explains: “*I will tread down ... make drunk ... bring down*] rather, *I trod down ... made drunk ... brought down*. The destruction was to be utter, overwhelming, absolute—one from which there could be no recovery (comp. Revelation 19:11–21, where the simile of the wine-press, and the ‘vesture dipped in blood,’ seem introduced with a special reference to this passage).” Wordsworth likewise has: “*I will tread down the people*] Rather, *I trod down nations* (Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic, Vitranga, Delitzsch).” Barnes says: “The allusion here is to a warrior who tramples on his foes and treads them in the dust.” ¶ And *make them drunk in my fury*. The Targum (7) has, “And I will tread them down in my fury.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has, “And have made them drunk in my indignation.” ¶ Wade explains: “Those who have been rendered prostrate and helpless are compared to drunkards, as in ISAIAH 29:9, 51:21.” So also Barnes, “The image of making them stagger and fall like a drunken man, is ... poetic ... and is in entire accordance with the usual manner of writing by the sacred penman.” ¶ Shalom Paul has: “Many medieval Hebrew manuscripts have [אֶשְׁכְּרֵם] (‘I smashed them’) instead of MT [אֶשְׁכְּרֵם] (‘I made them drunk’). Note, then, the resultant parallelism between בֹּטַס (‘to trample’²²) and

²² Or, *tread down* (AV).

שִׁבֵּר (‘to break’), as in ISAIAH 14:25.” Alexander similarly has: “For [אֶשְׁכְּרֵם] *I make them drunk*, most of the modern writers since Cappellus read [אֶשְׁכְּרֵם] *I crush them*; which is not only confirmed by many manuscripts and some editions, as well as by the Targum, but is recommended by its suiting the connection better” (emphasis added). ¶ And *I will bring down their strength to the earth*. The Targum (7) has, “And I will cast the slain of their mighty ones into the lowest *parts* of the earth.” The LXX (6) reads, “And shed their blood on the earth.” ¶ The ASV renders it: “And I poured out their lifeblood on the earth.” This and other translations that use the word *blood* or *juice* [e.g., CEV, CJB, ESV, JPS, LITV, NASB, NBLH, Rotherham, RV, RV60, and WEB] rather than *strength* make for a clearer message. Cowles explains: “*I will bring down their juice (grape-juice) to the earth*] The word translated in the English version, ‘strength,’ is the same which appears in ISAIAH 63:3 [נִצָּחִים], translated there, their ‘blood,’ but meaning in both cases, their *juice* [נִצָּחִים], they bring thought of as grapes trodden under the feet.” Gill suggests “... their strong kingdoms, fortified cities, and mighty men, their wealth and riches, of which they boasted, and in which they trusted ... The eighteenth chapter of the Revelation²³ is a commentary on these words.” Barnes has: “This finishes the vision of the mighty conqueror returning from Edom.”

vv. 7–14. Rawlinson proposes: “GOD PRAISED FOR HIS MERCIES. The address opens with pure and simple thanksgiving of the most general kind, God being praised for his loving-kindness, compassion, and sympathy with his people (ISAIAH 63:7–9). An historical survey is then commenced, and Israel’s shortcomings contrasted with God’s mercies, but with a predominantly thankful and even jubilant tone (ISAIAH 63:10–14).” Lowth suggests: “The remaining part of this chapter, with the whole chapter following, contains a penitential confession and supplication of the Israelites in their present state of dispersion, in which they have so long marvellously subsisted, and still continue to subsist, as a people; cast out of their country; without any proper form of civil polity, or religious worship; their temple destroyed, their city desolated and lost to them; and their whole nation scattered over the face of the earth; apparently deserted

²³ Revelation 18 is the “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen” (Revelation 18:2b), chapter. Also of particular interest is: “For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies” (Revelation 18:3).

and cast off by the God of their fathers, as no longer his peculiar people. They begin with acknowledging God's great mercies and favours to their nation, and the ungrateful returns made to them on their part; that by their disobedience they had forfeited the protection of God, and had caused him to become their adversary. And now the Prophet represents them, induced by the memory of the great things that God had done for them, as addressing their humble supplication for the renewal of his mercies: They beseech him to regard them in consideration of his former loving-kindness ... [and] entreat his forgiveness; and deplore their present miserable condition under which they have so long suffered." Alexander has: "The prevalent opinion among Christian interpreters is that we have here the beginning of a prophecy relating to the future restoration of Israel."

7 ¶ I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, [and] the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses.

I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD. The Targum (T) begins with, "The prophet said." The LXX (G) reads, "I recollected the loving kindness of the Lord." The Douay-Rheims (D) has, "I will remember the tender mercies of the Lord." ¶ Shalom Paul points to a similar scripture about remembering or mentioning [זָכַר]: "I will remember the works of the LORD: surely I will remember thy wonders of old" (Psalm 77:11). In Doctrine and Covenants we read: "And now the year of my redeemed is come; and they shall mention the loving kindness of their Lord, and all that he has bestowed upon them according to his goodness, and according to his loving kindness, forever and ever" (D&C 133:52). The lovingkindness of the Lord [חַסְדֵי יְהוָה] is here extolled. I am filled with feelings of gratitude for the Lord's lovingkindness as well as for His tender mercies. I feel enveloped by His love and peace.²⁴ ¶ Elder Neal A. Maxwell explains,

²⁴ When our oldest son, David Marsing Billikopf served a mission in Uruguay, it was very hard for Linda & me to walk away at the conclusion of a general assembly at the MTC. The missionaries walked out one door; the parents through another. Those two years in which David served in Uruguay seemed particularly long. He began to suffer from ulcerative colitis during that time (although he had experienced some symptoms earlier), nearly 20 years ago. At first it was thought he suffered from lactose intolerance. It would take well

"Confessing God's hand thus calls for an array of appreciation in response to all that our loving Father has given, does give, and will yet give mankind. There is a tendency to acknowledge only 'big blessings' without acknowledging the multiplicity of 'small blessings.' Isaiah would doubtless include these latter in his acknowledging of the 'multitude of [God's] loving kindnesses' (ISAIAH 63:7; see also D&C 133:52). Really, even when we are reasonably dutiful, compared to such a flow of divine generosity and benefactions 'of what have we to boast?' (Mosiah 2:23–24). King Benjamin so stressed: 'I say unto you, my brethren, that if you should render all the thanks and praise which your whole soul has power to possess, to that God who has created you, and has kept and preserved you, ... if ye should serve him with all your whole souls yet ye would be unprofitable servants' (Mosiah 2:20–21)."²⁵ ¶ [And] the praises of the LORD, according to all that

over a decade before he was diagnosed with primary sclerosing cholangitis (PSC). David has suffered so much over the recent years that Grant, his youngest child, though the hospital was "daddy's house." As the ailment progressed he was put on a list to receive a liver transplant. About a year and a half ago he received that miracle liver. That was a wonder in more than one way. David received the new liver a day before he was scheduled for an MRI. It is typical that doctors will invite a second transplant candidate to the hospital in case they find a tumor during the transplant process. If during the procedure they find a tumor, the patient is stitched back up and basically sent home to die and the liver is given to the alternate patient. It was not until the next day, while they more carefully examined the liver that had been removed, that they discovered a cholangiocarcinoma tumor of 5 cm. This would not have been missed by the MRI. At any rate, the doctors and medical staff were amazed at the speed of the recovery from surgery. This 'mistake' on the part of the doctors gave David over a year before a new tumor was discovered, in October 2016, four months ago. After this last growth was detected, Linda & I traveled to Virginia to see David and the family and experience some special memories together. During that trip I accompanied David to one of his checkups. He suggested we take several flights of stairs over the elevator. My son was hardly winded while I almost did not make it. Truly, despite the many hospital stays, David was given a great gift of life and health. It is with great lovingkindnesses and tender mercies that the Lord extended David's life. One night as I was contemplating the fact that David would be seeing my deceased ancestors the thought came to me that he would be doing much more than that. Tears of joy and gratitude flowed down my cheeks as I realized he would be preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to my ancestors—both Jewish and Chilean—and many others at the other side of the veil. David is the first Melchizedek priesthood holder on my side of the family to embark on a mission into the Spirit world. When some of my friends hear about David they say they will pray for a miracle. While I appreciate the kind sentiments, I tell them we have already had our miracle. Back in November 2016 David was given about six months. We do not know exactly how long he has left, but we do know, and are filled with complete peace, that the day will come when we will be able to embrace him at the other side of the veil—and that there will be a day of resurrection. (Recorded 19 January 2017). POST DATA. David passed away yesterday, 6 February 2017, two hours after Linda & I arrived from Chile to his home in Virginia. It was truly a miracle that we were able to get all the necessary flights and connections to make it on time. We experienced so many tender mercies along the way.

²⁵ Maxwell, Neal A. *That Ye May Believe*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1992.

the LORD hath bestowed on us. The LXX (⚡) reads, “The mercies of the Lord in all those things which he retributeth for us.” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, “The praise of the Lord for all the things that the Lord hath bestowed upon us.” ¶ Oswalt beautifully says: “When Gentile readers (from Marcion onward) look at the OT and see a God of wrath, the OT writers say to us in astonishment, ‘Oh no, it’s not surprising that God should have gotten angry with us. What is surprising is that he ever cared about us at all, and that he then continued to love us and care for us when we senselessly rejected him’ ... He is a God of unfailing kindness, grace, mercy, and love ... For the Hebrew, one truly remembers what God has said and done only when one lives a life that is in accordance with what God has said and done. Not to do so is to have ‘forgotten’ God, regardless of what one may say.” Barnes has: “They are represented as suffering under the infliction of long and continued ills; as cast out and driven to a distant land; as deprived of their former privileges, and as having been long subjected to great evils. Their temple is destroyed; their city desolate; and their whole nation afflicted and oppressed ... Lowth supposes that it refers to the Jews as scattered over all lands, and driven away from the country of their fathers.” ¶ *And the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies.* The LXX (⚡) reads, “The Lord is a good judge to the house of Israel. He dealeth with us according to his tender mercy.” Instead of *bestowed on them*, the Peshitta (⚡) has *bestowed on us* (Lamsa) / *bestowed on me* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, “And for the multitude of his good things to the house of Israel, which he hath given them according to his kindness.” ¶ We see that there is a chiasmic structure wherein the Lord’s *tender mercies* [רַחֲמֵי] are enveloped on both sides by His lovingkindness [רַחֲמָנִי]. Faussett has: “The plurals and the repetitions imply that language is inadequate to express the full extent of God’s goodness.” As I reflect on the lovingkindness and tender mercies of the Lord toward Israel, I am filled with peace and joy. I am so grateful for the restoration of His Church upon the earth with prophets and apostles, with the Priesthood, and with revelation. And I am so grateful for the gathering of Israel from every nation and corner of this world—as well as the work being carried out in the spirit world. ¶ *And according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses.* The LXX (⚡) reads, “And according to the abundance of his saving goodness.” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has *mercies* instead of *lovingkindnesses*. ¶ Once again, רַחֲמָנִי is mentioned. Elder Neal A. Maxwell says, “He is a Lord of ‘loving-kindness’ (ISAIAH 63:7; D&C 133:52); ‘I ... delight to honor those who serve me’ (D&C 76:5); ‘The fulness of the earth is

yours’ (D&C 59:16); ‘There is enough and to spare’ (D&C 104:17); ‘Any ... who have seen any or the least of these hath seen God moving in his majesty and power’ (D&C 88:47); ‘It pleaseth God that he hath given all these things unto man’ (D&C 59:20); ‘I have stretched forth mine hand almost all the day long’ (Jacob 5:47; see also 2 Nephi 28:32); ‘Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard ... the things which God hath prepared for them that love him’ (1 Corinthians 2:9). The repentant and fully faithful shall receive ‘all that [the] Father hath’ (D&C 84:38). Finally, the faithful will be ‘clasped’ in the waiting and ‘open arms’ of Jesus! (Mormon 5:11; 6:17.)”²⁶

8 For he said, Surely they [are] my people, children [that] will not lie: so he was their Saviour.

The Targum (⚡) has, for the last clause, “And His Word became their salvation.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “And said, ‘Is not this my people? Children should not rebel.’ And he became their Saviour.” Instead of *was* their Saviour, the Peshitta (⚡) has, *became* their Saviour. The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has *deny* rather than *lie*. ¶ Israel was chosen by the Lord to be a separate or a righteous people. This verse seems to have at least two meanings: (1) how the Lord in the beginning chose Israel, but also (2) how in the last days He also took scattered Israel back into his bosom and chose her once again. ¶ Pett suggests: “In the past Yahweh had looked at His people, choosing them out and assuring Himself that because He had chosen them as His people they would not deal falsely, for were they not His own people (Exodus 6:7), yes, His children.” Jenour suggests: “*Surely they are children that will not deceive, or, prove false*” This, however, must not be understood in a strictly literal sense, as if God was deceived in the Jews [Israel, not just Judah alone—GB]. He knew that they would prove rebellious, and turn away from him (Deuteronomy 32).” ¶ Alexander has: “The verse in Hebrew simply states two facts, without intimating any causal relation between them. He chose them *and* he saved them.” The Lord knew ahead of time that Israel would fall and fall frequently. Why did the Lord choose Israel? We read: “The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers ...” (Deuteronomy 7:7–8a). The answer seems to be two-fold, one because Israel was *not* mighty or strong—and the Lord works with the weak to accomplish His

²⁶ Maxwell, Neal A. *That Ye May Believe*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1992.

purposes—and also, because of His relationship with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. ¶ Shalom Paul has: “The adverb **אֲדָ** is emphatic, as in Genesis 29:14 ... For the verb **שָׁקַר** as reneging on the commitments of a covenant, see Genesis 21:23: ‘Therefore swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely (**תִּשְׁקַר**) with me or with my kith and kin, but will deal with me ... as loyally as I have dealt with you.’” *That will lie not* [**לֹא יִשְׁקַרְוּ**], then, could very well be a remembrance of a like covenant of integrity by the children of Israel to be true and faithful and lie not. ¶ Alexander suggests: “*And he said, Only they are my people*] To the general acknowledgment of God’s goodness to his people, there is now added a specification of his favours, beginning with the great distinguishing favour by which they became what they were. This verse is commonly explained as an expression of unfounded confidence and hope on God’s part, surely they are my people, children that will not lie ... the explanation just referred to rests almost entirely on the sense attached to **אֲדָ** as a mere particle of asseveration. Now, in every other case where Isaiah uses it, the restrictive sense of *only*²⁷ is not admissible merely, but necessary to the full force of the sentence ... Another advantage of the strict translation is, that it makes the Prophet go back to the beginning of their course, and instead of setting out from the hopes which God expressed after the choice of Israel, record the choice itself. Thus understood, the first clause is a solemn declaration of his having chosen Israel, to the exclusion of all other nations. *Only they* (and no others) *are my people* ... **אֲדָ** must here be taken ... to qualify **עַמִּי**.” ¶ I wonder if the expression *surely* [**אֲדָ**] does not apply to latter-day Israel who would be faithful to the Lord and live by the Gospel truths. In the expression, **אֲדָ עַמִּי הֵמָּה**, *surely they are my people*, the Lord is owning Israel as His, and a sure sign of the Abrahamic covenant (see *Rain in Due Season*). This would be particularly true of the time after the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. ¶ Of the second clause, Rawlinson suggests: “*Children that will not lie*] or, *deal falsely*, as the same word is translated in Psalm 44:17. The meaning is, that surely they will be faithful to God, and not fall away from him into idolatry or irreligion.” ¶ But also, truly the Lord has said: “The weak things of the world shall come forth and break down the mighty and strong ones” (D&C 1:19a); “That the fulness of my gospel might be proclaimed by the weak and the simple unto the ends of the world, and before kings and rulers” (D&C 1:23); and, “Wherefore, I call upon the weak things of the world, those who are unlearned and

despised, to thrash the nations by the power of my Spirit; And their arm shall be my arm, and I will be their shield and their buckler; and I will gird up their loins, and they shall fight manfully for me; ... and by the fire of mine indignation will I preserve them” (D&C 35:13–14). *So he was their savior*. ¶ Shalom Paul says, “God thus fulfilled His part of the covenant.”

Rawlinson has: “The Apostle Paul, writing to Timothy, uses this figure for God, but expresses it more comprehensively and suggestively. ‘The living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe’ (1 Timothy 4:10).”

9 In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence [**וַיִּמְלֵאֵם פָּנָיו**] *saved them*. Horsley, regarding the Masoretic text (**מ**) says: “Our translators have followed the Keri **לֹא**, instead of the Ketib **לֹא**.²⁸”

The Ketib **כְּתִיב** represents the unpointed text that existed *before* the Masoretic text (**מ**) came forth. The **מ** was published in 1524 but work on it began centuries earlier. The Ketib **כְּתִיב** stands for *what is written* in contrast to the Keri **קְרִי**, *what is to be read*, according to the Jewish scholars who produced the Masoretic text (**מ**). The Ketib is followed by the Peshitta (**ܫ**) and the Vulgate (**ϐ**) as well as a few modern translators: “In all their distress *he*²⁹ *wasn't* distressed” (ISV); “In all their distress, there was *no* distress” (LEB); “In all their affliction, *He* was *not* a foe” (LITV); and “In all their distress *He* is *no* adversary” (YLT). The *vast majority* of translations (such as NASB, Webster, WEBB, TLV, JUB, and Leeser) follow the Keri **לֹא**—as does the KJV and more importantly, the Doctrine and Covenants, “In all their afflictions he was afflicted” (D&C 133:53a). ¶ The Targum (**ܬ**) has, “Whenever they sinned against Him, that He might have brought upon them distress, He did not distress them; but an angel was sent from Him.” The LXX (**Ϛ**) notably reads, “From all their distress. It was

²⁸ No, **לֹא**.

²⁹ So if the *he* **לוֹ** (**קְרִי**) is exchanged with the *no* **לֹא** (**כְּתִיב**) where does the *he* come from in the **כְּתִיב**? It is spelled out in its most typical form, **הוּא**, later on in the sentence, and it is also attached to several of the words, beginning with **פָּנָיו**, *his presence*, or more literally, *his face*.

²⁷ **אֲדָ**, see Gesenius 2nd acceptance, “adv. of limitation, *only*.”

not an ambassador nor a messenger; but he himself saved them.” For the first clause, the Peshitta (S) has “In all their troubles he did not afflict them” (Lamsa) / “He did not afflict them in any of his afflictions” (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (D) has “In all their affliction he was not troubled.” ¶ In Doctrine and Covenants, once again, we read: “In all their afflictions he was afflicted. And the angel of his presence saved them; and in his love, and in his pity, he redeemed them, and bore them, and carried them all the days of old” (D&C 133:53). *Angel of His presence* may also be translated literally as *messenger of His [own] face*, akin to *Messenger of the Covenant*, or *Messenger of Salvation*, all titles belonging to Jesus Christ (although Angel Moroni was a *messenger* sent forth from the *presence* of God, Joseph Smith History—1:33). ¶ May I suggest that *the Angel of His Presence* is no other than the Holy One of Israel in His premortal state, even Jehovah, as He ministered personally to the children of men? Alexander has: “The combination of these passages [Genesis 28:13, 31:11, 48:16, Exodus 3:2; 14:19; 23:20–23; 33:12; Joshua 5:14, Judges 13:6, Hosea 12:5, Zechariah 3:1, Malachi 3:1, Psalm 34:8] determines the sense of *the angel of his presence*, as denoting the angel whose presence was the presence of Jehovah.” ¶ So also the LXX (G), as noted above, that makes it clear that this is God, and not an ambassador of any sort. When we quote it in the context of both the previous and following verses, that is, ISAIAH 53:8–10, the message from the LXX (G) is even clearer (please especially note the expression *my people*). Let us look at two translations: The Lexham English Septuagint {(G), LES} has: “And he said, ‘Are they not my people? Children, they will never rebel.’ And he became their salvation from all their affliction. Not an elder or a messenger but he himself has saved them, because he loved them and spared them. He himself ransomed them and took them up and exalted them [all the days of old. But they rebelled and provoked his Holy Spirit, and he was turned to enmity against them; he himself made war with them.” Brenton LXX (G) has: “And he said, Is it not my people? the children surely will not be rebellious: and he became to them deliverance out of all their affliction: not an ambassador, nor a messenger, but himself saved them, because he loved them and spared them: he himself redeemed them, and took them up, and lifted them up all the days of old. But they disobeyed, and provoked his Holy Spirit: so he turned to be an enemy, he himself contended against them.” Other than some interesting points in the NET critical apparatus, such as *reject me* instead of *deal falsely*, or *rebel* the NET LXX (G) and Thompson LXX (G) are essentially the same as the two quoted above. ¶ A related expression to the *angel of his presence* is found in the Book of Mormon. We find the *Spirit of the Lord*, who appears to be the premortal Savior in Nephi’s glorious

vision of the condescension of our Redeemer—else why did He disappear when Christ child was born and a different personage, an angel, comes to continue the conversation? “And he [the Spirit of the Lord] said unto me: What desirest thou? And I said unto him: To know the interpretation thereof—for I spake unto him as a man speaketh; for I beheld that he was in the form of a man; yet nevertheless, I knew that it was the Spirit of the Lord; and he spake unto me as a man speaketh with another. And it came to pass that he said unto me: Look! And I looked as if to look upon him, and I saw him not; for he had gone from before my presence. And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the great city of Jerusalem, and also other cities. And I beheld the city of Nazareth; and in the city of Nazareth I beheld a virgin, and she was exceedingly fair and white. And it came to pass that I saw the heavens open; and an angel came down and stood before me; and he said unto me: Nephi, what beholdest thou? And I said unto him: A virgin, most beautiful and fair above all other virgins. And he said unto me: Knowest thou the condescension of God?” (1 Nephi 11:10–16). The conversation continues with Nephi’s response: “And I said unto him: I know that he loveth his children; nevertheless, I do not know the meaning of all things. And he said unto me: Behold, the virgin whom thou seest is the mother of the Son of God, after the manner of the flesh. And it came to pass that I beheld that she was carried away in the Spirit; and after she had been carried away in the Spirit for the space of a time the angel spake unto me, saying: Look! And I looked and beheld the virgin again, bearing a child in her arms” (1 Nephi 11:17–20). ¶ In Abraham in the Pearl of Great Price we read: “And as they lifted up their hands upon me, that they might offer me up and take away my life, behold, I lifted up my voice unto the Lord my God, and the Lord hearkened and heard, and he filled me with the vision of the Almighty, and *the angel of his presence* stood by me, and immediately unloosed my bands; And his voice was unto me: Abraham, Abraham, behold, my name is Jehovah, and I have heard thee, and have come down to deliver thee, and to take thee away from thy father’s house, and from all thy kinsfolk, into a strange land which thou knowest not of” (Abraham 1:15–16, emphasis added). So it is that here the Angel of His Presence speaks and says, “My name is Jehovah.” ¶ Horsley has: “I much doubt whether the ‘*angel of the presence*’ ever signifies any other than Jehovah Himself.” Cowles says: “This same angel is identified with the presence of Jehovah and with Jehovah himself, Exodus 33:12–23, and 34:5–9; and also at the bush, Exodus 3:2, 4–6. It is quite to our purpose to note that the term ‘angel’ and the phrase, ‘The angel of the Lord,’ are often applied to God as coming down and manifesting himself ... to his people. Thus Jacob had wondrous visions of God and Bethel (Genesis 28:12–17), and though that personage was not

called an angel in that passage, yet at a later period he said; ‘The angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, I am the God of Bethel where thou anointedst the pillar,’ etc. (Genesis 31:11, 13). In the same manner the Personage who appeared to Moses at the bush is called ‘the angel of the Lord’; and yet he said, ‘I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob’; who also gave his name, ‘I am that I am’ (Exodus 3:2³⁰, 6, 14).” ¶ *In all their affliction ...* Although this certainly involves empathy—where the Savior feels all of the pains experienced by His beloved people—it also extends beyond feelings of empathy to the expiatory suffering undergone for each one of us during the atonement. Cheyne similarly has: “He was distressed] i.e., he himself sympathised with them. Comp. Judges 10:16, ‘His (Jehovah’s) soul was impatient for the misery of Israel.” Jenour has: “‘We have not a High Priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities,’ &c. (Hebrews 4:15) Let us remember this declaration is of general application. And how encouraging is the thought which it suggests? Jehovah takes part in the afflictions of his people.” So also Alexander: “... as the English Version renders it, ‘in all their affliction he was afflicted.’ This explanation, with the text on which it is founded, and which is exhibited by a number of manuscripts and editions, is approved by Luther, Vitranga, Clericus, Hitzig, Ewald, Umbreit, Hendewerk, and Knobel. It is favoured, not only by the strong and affecting sense which it yields, but by the analogy of Judges 10:16.” Furthermore, the *Angel of His Presence* continually intercedes for Israel. ¶ Not only did the Savior minister to His people personally, but also He sent numerous prophets of which He only mentions a few in the next two verses of the Doctrine and Covenants section we have been quoting: “Yea, and Enoch also, and they who were with him; the prophets who were before him; and Noah also, and they who were before him; and Moses also, and they who were before him; And from Moses to Elijah, and from Elijah to John, who were with Christ in his resurrection, and the holy apostles, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, shall be in the presence of the Lamb” (D&C 133:54–55). ¶ Lowth well explains, however, that at times the Lord did not go Himself but sent emissaries: “The presence of JEHOVAH (Exodus 33:14, 15) and the angel (Exodus 23:20, 21) is JEHOVAH himself ... [but] After their idolatrous worshipping of the golden calf, ‘when God had said to Moses, I will send an angel before thee—I will not go up in the midst of thee—the people mourned’ (Exodus 33:2–4). God afterwards comforts Moses by saying, ‘My presence (that is, I myself in person, and not by an angel) will go with thee’ (Exodus 33:14).” Lowth goes on to point out that while the Masoretic text (MT) in Exodus 33:14 has:

“My presence shall go *with thee*,” the LXX (G) renders it: “I myself will go before thee.”³¹ This idea pointed out by Lowth that the Lord will not always go to certain places in person is corroborated also with what we know about the Savior’s visit to the Spirit World. There, He commissioned others to go and preach to the spirits in prison. ¶ To summarize, it is clear that the Savior takes a very active and personal—even *fatherly*—interest in man’s affairs. In human families a fatherly or motherly role is often taken by the oldest son or daughter. ¶ Elder Neal A. Maxwell taught, “No one can read this supernal revelatory account without feeling the divine tenderness of God’s sharing in human suffering. In view of this, praise be to God for His long-suffering and patience! Our Father and our Redeemer are perfect in both their mercy and their justice—and divine empathy bridges those two virtues. ‘In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old’ (ISAIAH 63:9).”³² ¶ *In his love and in his pity he redeemed them.* The Targum (T) has, “Who in His mercy redeemed them.” The LXX (G) reads, “Through his love and his indulgence to them, he himself redeemed them.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has *mercy* instead of *pity*. ¶ Rawlinson speaks of the redemption from Egyptian bondage: “The ‘redemption’ of this passage is probably that from the bondage of Egypt (Exodus 6:6; 15:13; Deuteronomy 7:8, etc.), which belonged to ‘the days of old’—not the spiritual redemption from the bondage of sin, which was reserved for the time of the Messiah. Having ‘redeemed’ them, i.e. delivered them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and thereby, as it were, purchased them to be his own, he bare them—‘carried them on eagles’ wings’ (Exodus 19:4), and brought them safely through the wilderness to Palestine (comp. Deuteronomy 32:10–12).” Of course, such redemption was only a type for that associated with the atonement. The Savior’s greatest sign of love and tender mercies toward us is represented in His expiatory sacrifice, wherein He died that we might live. ¶ *And he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.* The Targum (T) has, “And in His compassion, behold (the Royal Polyglot reads אֲנִי, ‘he’), He delivered them; and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old.” The LXX (G) reads, “And took them up, and exalted them all the days of old.” ¶ The words of this verse show the great love and tenderness with which the Savior ministered to the children of men and most especially to the children of Israel before His first advent. It is said that *He carried*

³¹ Brenton’s 1851 translation of the LXX (G).

³² Maxwell, Neal A. *A Wonderful Flood of Light*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1990.

³⁰ JST: “And the presence of the Lord.”

them, even as a shepherd carries His sheep. In ISAIAH 40:11: “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry *them* in his bosom, *and* shall gently lead those that are with young.” Those things He will yet do, but those things He has already done from the beginning, even from the days of old. Wordsworth has: “*He bare them, and carried them*] As a father bears and carries his children. See Numbers 11:12; Deuteronomy 1:31; and below, on Acts 13:18; above, ISAIAH 46:3.” Rabbis Slotki-Rosenberg explain: “*Bare them*] Or, ‘took them up,’ as a parent raises a child and carries him.” Perhaps also, when a parent picks up a tired child and carries her. So also Barnes: “As a shepherd carries the lambs of the flock, or as a nurse carries her children; or still more probably, as an eagle bears her young on her wings Deuteronomy 32:11–12. The idea is, that he conducted them through all their trials in the wilderness, and led them in safety to the promised land.”

10 But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, [and] he fought against them.

But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “But they rebelled against the word of His holy prophets, and blasphemed (or, ‘they provoked *the prophets* to anger’).” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “But they rebelled and provoked his holy spirit.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, “But they provoked to wrath, and afflicted the spirit of his Holy One.” ¶ Despite the fact that Israel was called to be a separate and a holy people before the Lord, she did rebel against Him and walked after other gods. Rawlinson explains: “*But they rebelled*] The rebellions of Israel against God commenced in the wilderness. They rebelled at Sinai, when they set up the golden calf; at Meribah (Numbers 20:24); at Shittim, when they consorted with the daughters of Moab (Numbers 25:6). Under the Judges, their conduct was one long rebellion (Judges 2:11; 3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1; 8:33; 10:6; 13:1). They rebelled in Samuel’s time by asking for a king (1 Samuel 8:5, 19, 20). The ten tribes rebelled under Jeroboam, and set up the idolatry of the calves at Dan and Bethel. Worse idolatries followed, and in two centuries and a half had reached such a height, that God was provoked to ‘remove Israel out of his sight’ (2 Kings 17:23). Judah remained, but ‘rebelled’ under Manasseh, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah, ‘transgressing very much after all the abominations of the heathen, and polluting the very house of the Lord at Jerusalem’ (2 Chronicles 36:14). These rebellions against God *vexed his Holy Spirit*—‘provoked him,’ ‘grieved him,’ ‘moved the Holy One in Israel’ (Psalm 78:40, 41; 106:43).” Wordsworth point out: “*They—vexed his holy Spirit*] A

remarkable testimony to the person and office of the Holy Spirit. Cp. Nehemiah 9:20, 30, and Numbers 11:25; and St. Stephen’s words before the Jewish Sanhedrim, ‘Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye’ (Acts 7:51).” ¶ *Therefore he was turned to be their enemy, [and] he fought against them.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And His Word became (Chaldee, ‘was turned’) their enemy, and He waged war against them.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “So he became their enemy. He fought against them.” ¶ That is, the Lord for a period of time ceased to walk among His people to be their God. Yet the Lord was filled with compassion [ISAIAH 63:15] toward His people and rescued them out of bondage in Egypt [ISAIAH 63:11 ff.] and after. ¶ One way that this rebellion takes place is through the hardening of the heart towards the things of God and most especially the Spirit. Cowles points us to the Psalms: “And they sinned yet more against him by provoking the most High in the wilderness ... How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, *and* grieve him in the desert!” (Psalm 78:17, 40). ¶ Rawlinson has: “*Therefore he was turned to be their enemy*] (comp. Jeremiah 30:14; Lamentations 2:4, 5). Judah had ‘filled up the measure of her iniquities,’ had gone on ‘until there was no remedy’ (2 Chronicles 36:16). God’s indignation was therefore poured out upon her without let or stint. ‘He cut off in his fierce anger all the horn of Israel: he drew back his right hand from before the enemy; he burned against Jacob like a flaming fire, which devoureth round about. He bent his bow like an enemy; he stood with his right hand as an adversary, and slew all that were pleasant in the tabernacle of the daughter of Zion; he poured out his fury like fire. The Lord was as an enemy’ (Lamentations 2:3–5). He fought against them; rather, he himself fought against them. God himself, though they were ‘his people,’ yet fought against them and for the Chaldeans in that final struggle. He ‘gave the city into the hand of the King of Babylon’ (Jeremiah 34:2).” Wade more generally has: “*Fought against them*] i.e. through the agency of foreign nations (cf. Judges 3:8, 4:2, etc., 2 Kings 17:20, ISAIAH 10:5, 6, Jer. 21:5).”

11 Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, [and] his people, [saying], Where [is] he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd ~ of his flock? where [is] he that put his holy Spirit within him?

✓ or, shepherds

Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, [and] his people. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And He had compassion for the glory of His name, because of the remembrance of His goodness of old, the mighty works which He did

by the hands of Moses for His people.” The LXX (6) reads, “Though he remembered the days of old.” Instead of *Moses*, [and] *his people*, the Peshitta (S) has *Moses his servant*. ¶ Here we have an allusion to the exodus wherein the Lord, through the instrumentality of Moses, took Israel from the land of Egypt where they were captives. Rawlinson observes that it is unclear who the person who remembered the days of Moses is. The reference is that of the Exodus with Moses leading the people out of Egypt. Wordsworth interestingly suggests: “*Then he remembered*” As the Psalmist says: “When he *slew them*’ (Israel), ‘then they sought Him: and they returned and inquired early after God. And they *remembered* that God was their Rock, and that the High God was their Redeemer’ (Psalm 78:34–35). So here the Prophet says, when ‘God fought against them, then he (i.e. the people) remembered.’” Or, when *he*, i.e., the people of Israel remembered. Alexander has, in part, “The modern writers, since Vitrina, are agreed that the first clause describes the repentance of the people, and that the second gives their very words, contrasting their actual condition with their former privileges and enjoyments.” Oswalt suggests: “Because the questions that follow seem to come from Israel, Israel is the most probable subject here.” Leeser has: “Then remembered his people the ancient days of Moses.” The Soncino translation has: “Then His people remembered the days of old, the days of Moses.” So also CJB: “But then his people remembered the days of old, the days of Moshe.” Geneva renders it: “Then he remembred the olde time of Moses and his people.” (See also HCSB, ISV, JPS, JUB, LEB, NASB, AMP.) Shalom Paul suggests that the Masoretic text (מ) pointing should have reflected the *plural* (זָכַרְוּ, and *they remembered*, meaning the people or nation of Israel) rather than the *singular* (זָכַר, and *he remembered*, seeming to refer to the Lord). For example, ERV, “Then they remembered” (also see GNB, ISV). This is similar³³ to “*And they remembered* [זָכַרְוּ] that God *was* their rock, and the high God their redeemer” (Psalm 78:35). ¶ [Saying]. *Where [is] he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock?* The Targum (T) has, “Lest the Gentiles should say, Where is He that brought them up out of the sea?” The Peshitta (S) has something like, “Who he had come up out of the sea to be the shepherd of his flock.” ¶ Wordsworth has: “*With the shepherd*” Literally, the *shepherds*³⁴, Moses and Aaron (Psalm 77:20; 80:1).” Kimhi, in Slotki-Rosenberg, also suggests the “allusion

is to Moses and Aaron.” Shalom Paul further points out that beside Moses and Aaron ... “[there were] others (e.g., Abravanel) as referring to the prophets. On the other hand, there are those who explain אֵל as introducing the subject rather than the object: ‘the shepherd of His flock’ refers to God, who elsewhere is named ‘Israel’s Shepherd’ (רֹעֶה יִשְׂרָאֵל) (Psalm 80:2).” ¶ *Where [is] he that put his holy Spirit within him?* The Targum (T) has, “Where is He that made the word of His holy prophets to dwell amongst them?” The LXX (6) reads, “Where is He that led them through the wilderness, as a shepherd his flock?” The LXX (6) reads, “Where is he who caused the shepherd of his flock to come up out of the sea? Where is he, who put his holy spirit in them?” The BPE (S) has, “And as he put his holy Spirit within him.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Where is he that put in the midst of them the spirit of his Holy One?” ¶ Rawlinson has: “God gave to the people in the wilderness ‘his good Spirit to instruct them’ (Nehemiah 9:20), and guide them (Haggai 2:4, 5), and govern them (Numbers 11:17).” Gill explains: “... the Spirit of God was not only upon Moses, but upon the seventy elders, and upon all the people at Sinai, as Kimhi observes; and indeed the Holy Spirit was given to the body of the people to instruct and teach them, according to Nehemiah 9:20 — now these questions are put, not by way of jeer, but by way of complaint, for want of the divine presence as formerly; and by way of inquiry where the Lord was; and by way of expostulation with him, that he would show himself again, as in the days of old.”

12 That led [them] by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name?

That led [them] by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm. The Targum (T) has, for the second clause, “The arm of His glory.” The LXX (6) reads, “That glorious arm of his which led Moses by the right hand?” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “He that brought out Moses by the right hand, by the arm of his majesty.” ¶ Rawlinson notes: “*That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm*” rather, *that caused his glorious arm to attend at Moses’ right hand*—ready (as Dr. Weir says) to grasp him if he should stumble.”

Cheyne considers *His glorious arm*, זְרוֹעַ תְּפָאָתוֹ, an expression equivalent to that of the *Angel of His Presence*, above. Gill explains: “That is, through the Red sea, as the next clause shows: this was done by the right hand of Moses, and the rod in it, to which Kimhi thinks respect is had; who, by divine order, lifted up his

³³ But with a *plene* spelling.

³⁴ Masoretes point in ISAIAH 63:11 as רֹעִי (plural) and in Psalm 23:1 as רֹעִי (singular). Also see *margin* ¶. *Critical Apparatus* for BHS has: 6 T sg, רֹעִי.

rod, and stretched out his hand over the sea, and divided it, and so led the people through it: but, lest this should be attributed to Moses and his rod, the glorious arm of the Lord is made mention of, which held and guided the right hand of Moses, and from whence came all that power that was exerted on this occasion. Ibn Ezra interprets this of the Angel of the Lord, that went before them: it seems to design the arm of omnipotence, which was gloriously displayed (Exodus 15:6).” ¶ *Dividing the water before them.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Dividing the waters of the Red Sea before them (literally, ‘from before thee’).” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “He forced back the water from before him.” Allusion to the Exodus and the crossing of the Red Sea. ¶ Rawlinson has: “*Dividing the water before them*] literally, *cleaving the waters before their face* (comp. Exodus 14:21).” Gill says: “The waters of the sea, so that they rose up as a wall on each side [of] them, through which they passed as on dry land.” ¶ *To make himself an everlasting name?* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “To make himself an everlasting name.” ¶ Barns explains: “He designed to perform a work which, it would be seen, could not be performed by any false god or by any human arm, and to do it in such circumstances, and in such a manner, that it might be seen everywhere that this was the true God. The deliverance from Egypt was attended with such amazing miracles, and with such a sudden destruction of his foes, that none but the true God could have performed it. Egypt was at that time the center of all the science, civilization, and art known among mankind; and what occurred there would be known to other lands. God, therefore, in this signal manner, designed to make a public demonstration of his existence and power that shall be known in all lands, and that should never be forgotten.” Rawlinson has: “*To make himself an everlasting name* (see Exodus 15:11–16). It was one of the main purposes of the entire series of miracles wrought in Egypt, ‘that God’s Name might be declared throughout all the earth’ (Exodus 9:16).”

13 That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, [that] they should not stumble?

That led them through the deep. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “He led them through the deep.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “He that led them out through the deep.” ¶ This and the next verse continue the allusions to the children of Israel crossing the Red Sea in safety. Gill suggests: “The depths, the bottom of the sea; not through the shallow, but where the waters had been deepest, the descent greatest; and at the bottom of which might have been expected much filth and dirt to hinder them in their passage, yet through this he led them.” Barnes has: “They went through the deep on dry land—the waters

having divided and left an unobstructed path.” ¶ *As an horse in the wilderness, [that] they should not stumble?* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “As a horse that stumbleth not in the plain? thus also they stumbled not.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Like a horse through a desert.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲥ) has “As a horse is led in the wilderness (or *desert*, BPE), and they stumbled not.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “As a horse in the wilderness that stumbleth not.” ¶ Calvin has: “That is, he led out his people as gently as if one were leading a horse into a plain. By the word ‘desert’ is not meant the wilderness of Paran in which the people dwelt forty years; but, in accordance with the ordinary usage of the Hebrew tongue, it denotes pasture, in which herds and flocks wander at large. This is still more evident from the following verse.” Wade explains it: “*That made them go through the depths as a horse in the wilderness* (or *prairie*), *as the cattle that descend into the valley, so that they stumbled not, the spirit of the LORD leading them*, etc. Both similes illustrate the security with which Israel was guided through the deep bed of the Red Sea: cf. Psalm 106:9³⁵.” The bottom of the Red Sea as they crossed, then, was made as passable and easy as if riding through a flat prairie or wilderness wherein a horse would not stumble. Shalom Paul suggests Jeremiah 31:9.³⁶

14 As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused him to rest: so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name.

As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused him to rest: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “As a beast is led in a plain, the Word of the Lord led them.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And they were not fatigued: and like cattle through a plain. A spirit from the Lord descended and conducted them.” Instead of *beast*, the Peshitta (Ⲥ) has *cattle* (Lamsa) / *livestock* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “As a beast that goeth down in

³⁵ “He rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them through the depths, as through the wilderness” (Psalm 106:9).

³⁶ This is not only a beautiful example of the Lord’s role as Father and Guide, but also speaks of the gathering of Israel in the latter days: “⁶ For there shall be a day, *that* the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the LORD our God. ⁷ For thus saith the LORD; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O LORD, save thy people, the remnant of Israel. ⁸ Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, *and* with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither. ⁹ They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn” (Jeremiah 31:6-9).

the field, the spirit of the Lord was their leader.”

¶ Rawlinson has: “*As a beast goeth down into the valley*] Bishop Lowth’s version seems the best, ‘As the herd descendeth to the valley.’ Israel’s passage through the Sinaitic peninsula into Canaan is compared to the movement of a herd of cattle from its summer pastures in the mountains to the valley at their base, where for a time it rests. So God gave his people, after their many trials, ‘rest’ in Canaan (Hebrews 3:11–18).” Wordsworth suggests: “Israel went down into the depths of the Red Sea by a safe and easy descent, and in order to find repose from his enemies; as an ox goes down a gentle declivity after its toil, in order to drink from the waters of the brook which flows through the vale.” Alexander, in part, has: “... ‘will bring him to a place of rest,’ a form of expression often used in reference to the promised land.” Surely, with the Psalmist we can say: “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake” (Psalm 23:1–3). Young points out that the ease of the descent is not so much an issue of terrain as it is of finding the verdant “abundant pastures.” ¶ *Spirit of the Lord*. Young suggests that the implication is that of the Spirit as a guide. Gill has: “Some understand this of leading Israel through the wilderness, where often resting places were found for them, and at last they were brought to the land of rest, Canaan, and settled there.” ¶ *So didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name*. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “So didst Thou lead Thy people to make thyself a glorious name.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Thus thou didst lead this people of thine, to make thyself a glorious name.” ¶ Rawlinson has: “*So didst thou lead thy people*] ‘So’ refers, not to the last simile only, but to the entire description contained in Isaiah 63:11–14. *To make thyself a glorious name*] (comp. ISAIAH 63:12, and see also Ezekiel 36:21–23; Malachi 1:11).” Similarly, Alexander suggests: “In the last clause the Prophet ceases to regard the scene as actually present, and resumes the tone of historical retrospection, at the same time summing up the whole in one comprehensive proposition, *thus didst thou lead thy people*.—With the last words of the verse compare ISAIAH 60:21, 61:3.”

vv. 15–19. Rawlinson suggests: “A PRAYER FOR DELIVERANCE FROM SIN AND SUFFERING. From thanksgiving and confession, the people betake themselves to prayer, and beseech God to look down from heaven once more, to have compassion on them, to acknowledge them, and to save them alike from themselves (ISAIAH 63:17) and from their adversaries (ISAIAH 63:18, 19). ‘It is difficult to overrate the spiritual beauty of the prayer contained in this passage. We may admit that the most prominent motive urged by

the speaker has a nationalistic air; but behind this, and strengthening it, is a sense of the infiniteness of the Divine mercy, and of the strong vitality of the union between Jehovah and his people’ (Cheyne).” Alexander says: “The foregoing description of God’s ancient favours is now made the ground of an importunate appeal for new ones.”

15 ¶ Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory: where [is] thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me? are they restrained?

✓ or, the multitude

Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory: where [is] thy zeal and thy strength. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “and reveal thyself” instead of *and behold*; and for the last clause, “Where is Thy vengeance and Thy great might?” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Return from heaven and take a view from the house of thy sanctuary and thy glory. Where is thy zeal and thy majesty?” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, “Look down from heaven, and behold from thy holy habitation and the place of thy glory: where is thy zeal, and thy strength.” ¶ According to Ibn Ezra, this request is associated with ISAIAH 63:10, wherein we read that the Lord [turned](#)³⁷ to become Israel’s *enemy*. Barnes says: “This commences an earnest appeal that God would have mercy on them in their present calamities and trials. They entreat him to remember his former mercies, and to return and bless them, as he had done in ancient times.” Gill says: “Here begins the prayer of the ... people of God, which continues to the end of the chapter, goes through the next, and the answer to which begins at ISAIAH 65:1.” Jenour suggests: “That is, that zeal, and that mighty power which thou hast shewn in former times on behalf of thy people? The expostulation of the Jewish nation is founded on the idea that we expect, and are justly entitled to, more sympathy and help in times of affliction from those to whose kindness we are already indebted, than we are from those who have never conferred any benefit upon us.” ¶ Alexander has: “The unusual word for dwelling-place [מִבְּרָה] is borrowed from the prayer of Solomon (1 Kings 8:13 [וּבְרָה]) For a similar description of heaven, see ISAIAH 57:15. God is here represented as withdrawn into heaven, and no longer active upon earth.” ¶ *The sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me?*

³⁷ There, the word מִפְּנֵי is used. Gesenius explains as [turning](#) such as [turning](#) their neck, back or heart [Psalm 105:25] on someone.

are they restrained? The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The multitude of Thy mercies and Thy compassion towards me are restrained.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Where the abundance of thy loving kindness and tender affections, that thou hast withdrawn thyself from us?” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has “Turn thy tender mercies and compassion toward us. Are they restrained?” (Lamsa) / “Have the commotion and mercy of thy bowels left us?” (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (ⲱ) has, “The multitude of thy bowels, and of thy mercies? they have held back themselves from me.” ¶ Cowles explains: “As usual, the bowels are thought of as the seat of affections and sympathies. Even the word rendered ‘mercies’ [ⲕⲏⲙⲓⲙ] means ... **bowels**,³⁸ the *soft* organs of the abdomen.” Rawlinson has: “The sounding of thy **bowels**; *i.e.* their thrilling or vibration—an indication of **sympathy** (ISAIAH 16:11). Jeremiah has a similar expression (Jeremiah 31:20).” Wordsworth has: “*Toward me? Are they restrained?*” Rather, are they restrained toward *me*? those bowels of fatherly mercy which yearn toward all Thy children, and which of old yearned so tenderly toward *me*, Thy favoured people, are they now restrained toward *me*? This is a mournful and piteous appeal from Israel to God.” Barnes suggest this is much like asking: “Are thy mercies to be exercised no more?” I sense that these are the sentiments and pain being experienced by modern-day Judah—a sense of yearning and abandonment. Of course the Lord has not abandoned either Judah or Israel.

16 Doubtless thou [art] our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O LORD, [art] our father, our redeemer; thy name [is] from everlasting. ✓

✓ or, our redeemer from everlasting is thy name

Doubtless thou [art] our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “For Thou art He, whose mercies towards us are as many as a father’s towards *his* children: for Abraham hath not brought us up out of Egypt, and Israel hath not wrought for us wonderful works in the wilderness.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For thou art our father. Because Abraham knoweth us not, and Israel hath not acknowledged us.” The Douay-

Rheims (ⲱ) has, “For thou art our father, and Abraham hath not known us, and Israel hath been ignorant of us.” ¶ Rawlinson explains: “*Doubtless thou art our Father*] rather, *for thou art our Father*. This is the ground of their appeal to God. As their Father, he must love them, and must be ready to listen to them.” Alexander says: “Why do we ask thee to look down from heaven and to hear our prayer? *Because thou art our father*. This does not merely mean our natural creator, but our founder, our national progenitor, as in Deuteronomy 32:6. Here, however, it appears to be employed in an emphatic and exclusive sense, as if he had said, ‘Thou, and thou alone, art our father;’ for he immediately adds, as if to explain and justify this strange assertion, ‘for Abraham has not known us, and Israel will not recognise or acknowledge us.’” ¶ *though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not.* Rabbi Ibn Ezra has: “Abraham is mentioned, as having been the first with whom God made a covenant to be a God unto him and his children; Jacob is also mentioned as the last of the patriarchs, and the founder of our nation exclusively.” Young well notes that in so speaking of Abraham and Jacob, “In this utterance there is no depreciation of the patriarchs.” ¶ The LDS footnotes explain: “Such forefathers as Abraham and Jacob, long dead, were not available to help.” Also see Shalom Paul, who explains that these, our forefathers, are no longer among the living. The only who could help was the Lord, as we see in the next clause. It should be made clear that Abraham was otherwise *not* ignorant of his posterity. Alexander has: “Its father is not Abraham or Israel, but Jehovah, who is and always has been its redeemer, who has borne that name from everlasting; or as Hitzig understands the last clause, he is our redeemer, whose name is from everlasting. Most interpreters ... are agreed in understanding this specific name of *our redeemer* to be here described as everlasting or eternal.” ¶ *Thou, O LORD, [art] our father, our redeemer; thy name [is] from everlasting.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Thou art the Lord (the Royal Polyglot adds אֱלֹהֵינוּ, ‘our God’), Thy mercies towards us are many, like a father’s towards *his* children, O, our Redeemer; Thy name is from everlasting.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Do thou, Lord, our father, do thou deliver us. From the beginning thy name is upon us.” ¶ Rawlinson has: “*Thou, O Lord, art our Father*] (comp. ISAIAH 64:8; and see also Deuteronomy 32:6 and Jeremiah 3:4).” The Savior is not only our Redeemer and Deliverer in the expiatory sense, but also on physical basis, as Cheyne well points out: “The history of Israel presented a continual succession of ‘captivities’ and deliverances.” ¶ Abinadi taught of Christ: “I would that ye should understand that God himself shall come down among the children of men, and shall redeem his people. And because he dwelleth in flesh he shall be called the Son of God, and having

³⁸ Gesenius shows that ⲕⲏⲙⲓⲙ is translated both as **bowels** as well as **mercies**. In fact, even when translated as bowels, it is often in the context of feelings of tenderness (e.g., Genesis 43:30). As Gesenius shows, an example of the idea of mercy is given in Psalm 25:6, “וְחַסְדֶּיךָ ... ⲕⲏⲙⲓⲙ,” *tender mercies and lovingkindnesses*. Also see Proverbs 12:10; Amos 1:11; and Psalm 40:12.

subjected the flesh to the will of the Father, being the Father and the Son—The Father, because he was conceived by the power of God; and the Son, because of the flesh; thus becoming the Father and Son—And they are one God, yea, the very Eternal Father of heaven and of earth. And thus the flesh becoming subject to the Spirit, or the Son to the Father, being one God, suffereth temptation, and yieldeth not to the temptation ...” (Mosiah 15:1b – 5a). ¶ President Joseph F. Smith explains, “... in the old Jewish scripture God is more particularly called the ‘Father of his people, Israel’ (Deut. 14:1; ISAIAH 63:16). But in the teachings of Christ there is a fuller embodiment of revelation in the word Father, and the application which he makes of the Fatherhood of God invests his life with supreme tenderness and beauty. As an example: In the old scripture, we are told, ‘Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him’ (Psalm 103:13); but by the interpretation of Jesus, the love of God as Father extends beyond these limitations even to those who are unthankful and evil: ‘But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust’ (Matthew 5:45). ‘But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest; for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil’ (Luke 6:35).”³⁹

17 O LORD, why hast thou **suffered** ~~made~~ us to err from thy ways, **[and]** to **hardened** our heart from thy fear? Return for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance.

O LORD, why hast thou suffered us to err from thy ways, and to harden our heart from thy fear? The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Why hast thou cast us off, O Lord, that we should go astray from the paths which are right in Thy sight, as the nations which have not part in the instruction of the Thy law?” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Why, O Lord hast thou suffered us to wander from thy way, and our hearts to be hardened so as not to fear thee?” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “Why hast thou made us to err, O Lord, from thy ways: why hast thou hardened our heart, that we should not fear thee?” ¶ Rawlinson observes: “The reproach borders on irreverence, but is kept within the

limits of piety by the affection and trust that underlie it.” Jenour has: “The expressions in this verse would seem to imply that God had caused these supplicant Jews *to wander from his ways*; and that *he had*, by a positive act of his power, *hardened their hearts*. But can this be? Certainly not. In imputing their wanderings and hardness of heart to Jehovah, they do not, they cannot mean, that he had actually *caused* them to sin; but the ground of their complaint is that he had *permitted* them to do so: and this expostulation therefore implies a full conviction on their part, of their disposition to wander, and of the hardness of their hearts; because it intimates that the *allowing* them to wander was equivalent to causing them do to so; and the *not* softening their hearts was the same as hardening them.” We sometimes hear people say, “God made me this way.” See also Romans 9:20: “Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou made me thus?” (Romans 9:20, see notes on ISAIAH 64:8). Throughout the Holy Scriptures we have examples (see especially Moses and his interaction with Pharaoh) of how the JST corrects the notion that God would harden people’s hearts. Rather, we harden our own hearts. So the JST {and the LXX (Ⓛ)} has *suffered* which means *permitted* or *allowed* (see Judges 15:1; Ecclesiastes 5:6; Matthew 3:15; Mark 10:14; 1 Corinthians 10:13). As in the last of these scriptures parenthetically listed, the Lord is careful that we will not even be tempted beyond that which we can endure: “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*” (1 Corinthians 10:13). The accusation, then, seems to ask why the Lord has permitted Israel to stray. The answer, of course, is *moral agency*.⁴⁰ ¶ Rosenmüller, in Alexander, agrees with the JST in suggesting that the proper word is *suffer* (i.e., permit) rather than *made*, “Rosenmüller shews, by a reference to Deuteronomy 2:28, and 1 Samuel 14:36, that the *Hiphil* often signifies *permission* rather than direct causation [and “this usage is indisputable” says Alexander, meaning] ... to *suffer* to grow hard” (emphasis added). So also Lowth.⁴¹ Also Matthew Watson who translates it: “O Lord, why hast thou *suffered* us to err from thy ways and *permitted* our hearts to become insensible of thy fear”⁴²(emphasis

⁴⁰ President David O. McKay taught: “Next to the bestowal of life itself, the right to direct that life is God’s greatest gift to man” (Conference Report, April 1950, 32).

⁴¹ *The Critical Commentary and Paraphrase on the Old and New Testament and the Apocrypha*, Volume III, p. 581, Book of Isaiah by William Lowth. Pitman (Editor). London, 1822.

⁴² Matthew Watson in *A New and Complete Explanation of the Common Prayer Book, Containing a most copious, full and complete explanation of every part of the morning and evening prayers, as*

³⁹ Smith, Joseph F. *Gospel Doctrine*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1939, p. 29.

added). Watson clarifies, with the words *suffered* and *permitted*, that the Lord only provided the moral agency to man. In ISAIAH 63:17, the word *suffered* (a synonym for *permitted*) modifies both the *err from thy ways* and the *hardened our heart* clauses in the JST. Also George R. Noyes⁴³, “Why, O Jehovah, dost thou *suffer* us to wander from thy ways, And harden our hearts against thy fear?” (emphasis added). Of the Gentile authors, Barnes well says: “No man who has any just views of God can suppose that he exerts a positive agency to make them sin, and then punishes them for it.” ¶ *Return for thy servants’ sake, the tribes of thine inheritance.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Our heart is not turned away from Thy fear: return Thy Shekinah unto Thy people, for the sake of Thy righteous servants, unto whom Thou whom Thou hast sworn by Thy Word to make the tribes amongst them Thine inheritance.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Return for the sake of thy servants—for the sake of the tribes of thy heritage.” ¶ This seems to be a request to God to bring back the lost tribes of Israel as well as the promised remnant of Judah. Alexander has, in part, “The tribes of thine inheritance is an equivalent expression to thy people; which originated in the fact that Israel, like other ancient oriental races, was divided into tribes.” ¶ The Savior, as we have quoted earlier, speaks of the return of the ten tribes in D&C 133:25–34. The expression there *and his fellows* reminds us of Ezekiel 37:19 “...the stick of Joseph, which *is* in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel *his fellows*” (ⲁⲃⲓⲣⲓ, Ezekiel 37:19b) to include all of the ten tribes. But Judah (and her fellows, i.e., the southern tribes) is not left out: “And they also of the tribe of Judah, after their pain, *shall be sanctified in holiness before the Lord*, to dwell in his presence day and night, forever and ever” (D&C 133:35, emphasis added).

18 The people of thy holiness have possessed [it] but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.

The people of thy holiness have possessed [it] but a little while: The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “That we may inherit a little of thy holy *mountain*.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲧ) has, “They have possessed thy holy people as nothing.” ¶ Rawlinson has: “*The people of thy holiness*” or, *thy holy people* [ⲉⲙⲉⲧⲁⲣⲓ]. ... The general meaning is... ‘Israel, God’s people, has held Palestine but for a little

appointed by the Church of England – 1795. Page 84, the exegesis on ISAIAH 63 begins on page 83, bottom part of the page, Explanatory Notes and Commentaries.

⁴³ George R. Noyes, *A New Translation of the Hebrew Prophets*, 5th Edition, Volume I, 1880, American Unitarian Association. Noyes was a professor at Harvard.

while’—a few centuries—and now the heathen have been allowed to make themselves masters of it (comp. Ezra 10:8).” Following the reading in the LXX (Ⲅ)—where we have ⲁⲃⲓ instead of ⲉⲙ—Lowth has: “Not only our enemies have taken possession of *Mount Sion*, and trodden down thy sanctuary; even far worse than this has befallen us: Thou hast long since utterly cast us off; and dost not consider us as thy peculiar people.” Cheyne compares this to ISAIAH 57:13, ⲁⲃⲓⲣⲓ, *My holy mountain*. Wordsworth, who wrote in 1871, says: “Our Lord explains these words when He says, ‘Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled’ (Luke 21:24). Jerusalem has now been trodden down of her adversaries for 1800 years. How short a time did the holy people possess it in peace, in comparison with the time of desolation! ... As *S. Jerome* observes here; All that is said in this passage is to be referred to the time of the desolation of Jerusalem after its capture by the Roman armies, which is described by Josephus in his *History of the Wars of the Jews*.” ¶ *Our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “We are become as at the beginning.” Instead of *adversaries*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *oppressors*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲧ) has, “Our enemies have trodden down thy sanctuary.” Could these reflect the feelings of pain of present-day Jewry for the loss of the 2nd Temple?⁴⁴

19 We are [thine]: thou never barest rule over them; they were not called by thy name. ✓

✓ thy name was not called upon them

We are [thine]: thou never barest rule over them. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “We are Thy people that were of old: not unto the Gentiles hast thou given the doctrine of Thy law.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “When thou didst not rule over us.” For the first clause, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has “We are thine from of old.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲧ) has, “We are become as in the beginning, when thou didst not rule over us.” ¶ Rawlinson warns: “*We are thine*] There is no ‘thine’ in the original, and so important a word cannot possibly be supplied from without.” Leeser translates, “We are become as though we are those over whom thou hast never ruled, over whom thy name hath not been called.” Returning to Rawlinson: “Translate, *We are as those over whom thou hast not ruled from of old, as those upon whom thy Name has not been called*; i.e. we have lost all our

⁴⁴ Eldin Ricks, “Judah Must Return.” May 1972 *Ensign*; David B. Galbraith, “Orson Hyde’s 1841 Mission to the Holy Land.” October 1991 *Ensign*.

privileges—we have become in God’s sight no better than the heathen—he has forgotten that we were ever his people.” Alexander, in part, has, “Most of the modern writers have adopted a construction of the first clause suggested by the paraphrastic versions of the Septuagint and Vulgate. This supposes the description of the people’s alienation from God to be continued: We have long been those (or like those) over whom thou didst not rule, and who were not called by thy name; that is to say, thou hast long regarded and treated us as aliens rather than thy chosen people.” Barnes says: “The idea is, that it is an argument why God should interpose in their behalf, that they had been for a long time his people, but that his foes, who then had possession of the land, had never submitted to his

laws.” ¶ *They were not called by thy name.* The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “Neither is Thy name invoked upon them.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And when we were not called by thy name.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “And when we were not called by thy name.” ¶ Wordsworth has: “*We are—thy name*] Rather, *We are become like those over whom Thou hast not ruled from everlasting, and over whom Thy Name has not been called.* See Septuagint. We Thy People are treated as if we were aliens, and aliens are treated as if they were Thy people.”

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Isaiah 64

If the Masoretic text (מ) is not corrupted in this respect, Isaiah prays to the LORD.¹ How do we reconcile the fact that today we pray to the Father when prayers seem to have been addressed to Yahweh in the Old Testament? Although *we cannot rule out textual corruption*, it has been suggested² that with the Fall mankind was separated from the Father—as part of the spiritual death. Under LDS Gospel Topics we learn: “Spiritual death is separation from God. The scriptures teach of two sources of spiritual death. The first source is the Fall, and the second is our own disobedience. Spiritual death can be overcome through the Atonement of Jesus Christ and by obedience to His gospel.”³ We were not left alone, but were given access to pray to the mediator of the New Covenant, even Jesus Christ, the LORD—or Yahweh of the Old Covenant. Christ, through the atonement, opened the way for us to be reconciled again with the Father. In John we read of what seems to be a transition, wherein Christ is teaching His disciples that they will be able, “at that day,” probably speaking of a time after His atonement, to pray directly to the Father as long as they pray in the name of Christ: “At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you” (John 16:26). ¶ I was speaking to some missionaries, sharing with them some principles wherein they can help their investigators learn how to discern the way God will answer their prayers regarding the Book of Mormon, based on Moroni 10:3-6. I asked them to imagine how someone would be received back in their homes if they said, “Hi, are you Elder or Sister such-and-such parents? I met him or her in Chile and wanted to tell you how wonderful it was to see them.” Do you not suppose, I suggested, that the parents would quickly welcome you into their home and want to know all about how their son or daughter is doing in the mission field? Back in the day when parents did not have e-mails I often would call missionaries parents to let them know how wonderfully their son or daughter was doing on their mission. This almost always caused great rejoicing. As we pray the Father in the name of His beloved Son, it is similar to the analogy I have offered. We are importuning the Father and we approach Him as having been sent by His beloved Son to do so. Every time we pray to the Father, in the name of Christ, we are bearing witness to this great expiatory gift. We are also following the commandment of the Savior who repeatedly taught us to pray to the Father in His name: “... that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you” (John 15:16b, also see John 16:23; Matthew 6:6; Ephesians 5:20). I do not know that we fully realize how wonderful a privilege it is to pray to the Father in the name of His Son. ¶ Rawlinson suggests: “Not content with praying God to look upon them once more with favour (ISAIAH 63:15), Israel now asks for a theophany, or manifestation of the Divine Presence, such as they have experienced in the times of old.” Mankind would experience a number of theophanies, including the birth of Christ—Emmanuel. In the latter days, the Father and the Son would appear to the boy prophet, Joseph Smith. But my sense is that this prayer most especially looks on to the end-of days, a prayerful pleading for the Lord’s Second Coming at the time when Jerusalem will be surrounded by her enemies in an epic battle. Then will Christ appear and stand upon the Mount of Olives, which will rend in two. ¶ Regarding the text itself, Cheyne writes: “In the modern editions of the Hebrew Bible, the verse which, in the printed editions of the ancient as well as in the modern versions, stands as ISAIAH 64:1, forms the second half of ISAIAH 63:19. Birks says: “The Masoretic pointing joins the first verse of this chapter to the verses before. But the other division (LXX, Syriac, Vulgate, AV, Gesenius, Ewald, Maurer, Henderson) is plainly required by the construction of the verses that follow, and also by the change from deep confession to earnest and intense prayer. Still the two passages, as a whole, are very closely linked together.” In our English Bibles, then, ISAIAH 64:2 corresponds with the Hebrew ISAIAH 64:1; the English ISAIAH 64:3 to the Hebrew ISAIAH 64:2, and so on.

¹ See for instance, *All the Prayers of the Bible* by Herbert Lockyer (Publisher: Zondervan Pub. House, 1970), and compare against the Hebrew text (מ) or the DSS (Q).

² For example, see “An Essay on Closet Prayer,” *The Primitive Methodist Magazine*, “We have no right to pray to the Father, but for the work Christ has wrought in our behalf” (p. 267, p. 1072 of 1583 in PDF), 1864.

³ LDS.org, accessed 13 February 2017, URL <https://www.lds.org/topics/death-spiritual?lang=eng&old=true>

vv. 1–5. Some elements of the prayer we find here in Isaiah remind us of Joseph Smith’s prayer: “O GOD, where art thou? And where is the pavilion that covereth thy hiding place? How long shall thy hand be stayed, and thine eye, yea thy pure eye, behold from the eternal heavens the wrongs of thy people and of thy servants, and thine ear be penetrated with their cries? Yea, O Lord, how long shall they suffer these wrongs and unlawful oppressions, before thine heart shall be softened toward them, and thy bowels be moved with compassion toward them? O Lord God Almighty, maker of heaven, earth, and seas, and of all things that in them are, and who controlllest and subjectest the devil, and the dark and benighted dominion of Sheol—stretch forth thy hand; let thine eye pierce; let thy pavilion be taken up; let thy hiding place no longer be covered; let thine ear be inclined; let thine heart be softened, and thy bowels moved with compassion toward us. Let thine anger be kindled against our enemies; and, in the fury of thine heart, with thy sword avenge us of our wrongs. Remember thy suffering saints, O our God; and thy servants will rejoice in thy name forever” (D&C 121:1–6). Both Isaiah and Joseph Smith enjoyed of the Lord’s presence but they wished that presence to be made manifest to the whole world.

1 ¶ OH that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence,

OH that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down [תִּרְדָּהּ]. The Targum (T)¹ has, “Not unto them hast Thou inclined the heavens and revealed Thyself.” The LXX (G) reads, “If thou wilt open the heaven.” To *rend the heavens* means to part the veil in some fashion. ¶ Calvin says: “God is said to ‘rend the heavens,’ when he unexpectedly gives some uncommon and striking proof of his power.” Skinner has: “*that thou wouldest rend*] Lit. ‘hadst rent.’ So ‘hadst come down,’ ‘had quaked.’ This use of the perf in the expression of a real wish, whose realisation is contemplated, is unusual, and is only to be explained by the urgency of the speaker’s feeling (Driver, *Tenses*, § 140).” ¶ In the Doctrine and Covenants we have: “I have sent forth mine angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel, who hath appeared unto some and hath committed it unto man, who shall appear unto many that dwell on the earth. And this gospel shall be preached unto every nation,

¹ Pauli includes the Targum (T) from this verse from the last verse ISAIAH 63.

and kindred, and tongue, and people. And the servants of God shall go forth, saying with a loud voice: Fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come; And worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters—Calling upon the name of the Lord day and night, saying: O that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence. And it shall be answered upon their heads; for the presence of the Lord shall be as the melting fire that burneth, and as the fire which causeth the waters to boil ... Yea, when thou comest down, and the mountains flow down at thy presence, thou shalt meet him who rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, who remembereth thee in thy ways” (D&C 133:36b–41, 44). These seem to be prayerful, prophetic requests for the Second Coming of Christ—both given by revelation very much the way temple dedications are given. ¶ *That the mountains might flow² down at thy presence.* The Targum (T) has, “The mountains quaked before Thee.” The LXX (G) reads, “At thy presence terror will seize the mountains.” Instead of *flow*, the Peshitta (S) has *flee*. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “The mountains would melt away at thy presence.” ¶ When the Lord comes again, the earth will burn. Jenour and some others have suggested this is an allusion to Mount Sinai, “The purport of the prayer is, that Jehovah would manifest himself to the enemies of his people Israel as he had formerly done on that occasion, when the mountain burned with fire, ‘And so terrible was the sight, that even Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake’ (Hebrews 12:21).” Rawlinson, as do several exegetes, see powerful earthquakes: “*That the mountains might flow down*] or, *quake*. When God descended on Sinai, ‘the whole mount quaked greatly’ (Exodus 19:18). When he appeared to David, ‘the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken’ (Psalm 18:7). When he was seen of Elijah, ‘a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; and after the wind was an earthquake’ (1 Kings 19:11). Micah saw the Lord ‘coming forth out of his place,’ and ‘the mountains were molten under him, and the valleys cleft’ (Micah 1:3, 4). The mountains

² President John Taylor speaks about another flowing down, one related to the return of the lost Ten Tribes: “Now, then, all of these dispensations had to be restored. Then comes Moses. Why? Because he held the keys of the gathering dispensation. And he conferred upon Joseph Smith the power to gather Israel from the four quarters of the earth, and also the ten tribes. But the latter have not come yet; but people are hunting them up, and they will be found by and by; when the time comes, and the mountains will flow down at their presence, and a highway will be cast up, and they will come to a knowledge of the people. But they could not come without the restoration of the keys I have referred to” (President John Taylor, “The Great Principles of Truth.” Ogdan Tabernacle, 21 March 1880. JD 25:253a).

represent that which is most firm and solid and strong upon the face of the earth. If even they ‘melt and flow and tremble’ at the presence of God, what might must his be! And who may abide him?” These thoughts remind us of the earthquakes in the American continent after the death of our Savior. This flowing down, seems to be a combination of both earthquakes; and as we see in ISAIAH 64:2, of consuming fire. ¶ Elder Orson Pratt shared: “Prior to [the Second coming] there will be numerous destructions, by way of earthquakes, plagues, hailstorms, wars, etc., that will prevail and that will sweep away millions from the face of our globe ... When he burns up the wicked, when he causes the elements to melt with fervent heat, when he causes the mountains to flow down and melt like wax before his presence ... yet the Lord could reorganize these elements, so scattered in space, by his power, bringing them together again by his law and by his word, making a new world, and creating a new heaven, and a new earth ... there will be an entire change in the condition of the earth, and also in the condition of the human family, the curses of the fall will not be found in either, and consequently there will be no more mortality upon the new creation, neither sorrow, nor weeping; neither will there be any more death; for the former things will have passed away, and all things will become new.”³ At another time Elder Orson Pratt observed: “When the Lord shall again convulse this continent, as he assuredly will do, throwing down the mountains and raising up the valleys, at the time of his second coming, for then, says the prophet Isaiah, the mountains shall flow down at his presence. Then, says the prophet David, the hills and the mountains shall melt like wax before the presence of the Lord. I say when this great and terrible convulsion shall come we may find cities rising, as it were, from the bowels of the earth, disgorged and brought to the surface. It need not surprise the inhabitants who then live to see cities brought up from the depths of the lakes and from the depths of great waters; to see mountains removed from their places and uncovering ancient cities that have been covered up for generations.”⁴

2 As [when] the melting fire[✓] burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, [that] the nations may tremble at thy presence!

✓ the fire of meltings

As [when] the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “When Thou didst send forth thine anger like fire in the day of Elijah, the sea was melted, the waters were flames of fire,” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And they will melt as wax melteth before fire; and a fire will burn up the adversaries.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲯ) has, “That they might melt as wax melts before the fire, and that fire might devour (or *burn*, BPE) thy enemies.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “They would melt as at the burning of fire, the waters would burn with fire.” ¶ Birks has: “The word rendered ‘melting’ AV [הַמִּסִּים], occurs here only, and is now commonly held to mean dry twigs or **brushwood**. The rendering above, though not quite literal, retains the emphatic mention of fire first and last in the double clause. One figure is of swift, rapid, noisy consumption by the flames; the other of violent agitation and tumult, like water that boils over a glowing fire. The former has occurred before, ISAIAH 27:11. The nations, with all their might, will be agitated, dismayed, confounded, when the mighty King of nations reveals His presence.” Similarly, Cowles would translate: “As fire burns **brush-wood**—as fire will make waters boil.” Leiser has: “As fire is kindled on **brushwood**, as water is made to bubble up by fire.” The idea of brushwood, brush, twigs or stubble is utilized by most English translators (see e.g., AMP, ASV, BBE, CJB, Darby, ERV, ESV, GW, HCSB, ISV, JPS, LEB, LITV, MKJV, NASB, Rotherham, RV, TS2009, WEB, WEBA, YLT). Lowth prefers the Vulgate (Ⲯ): “*the dry fuel*” הַמִּסִּים. “It means dry stubble, and the root is הַמִּסִּים,⁵” says Rabbi Jonah, apud Sal. ben Melech in loc. Which is approved by Schultens, Orig. Hebr. p. 30 ... [but] The LXX and Syriac agree exactly together in rendering this line by, ‘As the wax *melted* before the fire,’ which can by no means be reconciled with the present text. Vulgate for הַמִּסִּים reads מִסִּי.⁶” Alexander, still leaning on the

⁵ Gesenius explains it: “הַמִּסִּים, an unused root, i.q. همس, همش, which are used of a gentle noise of various kinds (comp. הַמִּל, הַמִּל, הַמִּל, as of persons walking, of small branches and twigs mixed together and breaking one another (Knicken des Reisholzes); compare transp. to break any thing dry, as brushwood, هشم brushwood. Hence—הַמִּסִּים m. pl. ISAIAH 64:1 [64:2 in AV], **brushwood**. Saadiah has well retained the همس. See Schult. in Orig. i. p. 68, 69.”

⁶ Gesenius has the root מִסִּי: “TO MELT, TO FLOW DOWN, TO WASTE AWAY. In Kal once found, used of a sick person wasting away, ISAIAH 10:18. (Kindred roots are מִסִּי, מִסִּי No. II; see also מִסִּי to dissolve, to macerate in water, and the words given under מִי.)

NIPHAL מִסִּי, in pause מִסִּי, fut. מִסִּי, inf. 1) —(הַמִּסִּים) *to be melted*, used of the manna, Ex. 16:21; of wax, Psalm 68:3; by hyperbole of mountains melting with blood, ISAIAH 34:3.—Judges 15:14, ‘his bands *melted* [הַמִּסִּים] from off his hands,’ i.e. fell from his hands as if loosed. Used of cattle when sick, 1 Samuel 15:9.” Judges 15:14, in

³ Elder Orson Pratt, “Fulfillment of Prophecy,” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 23 June 1878. JD 20:11b-14 and also see JD 20:11a and JD 15:55a (Second Coming of Christ).

⁴ Elder Orson Pratt, “The Day of God’s Power,” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 11 February 1872. JD 14:328b.

Masoretic text (מ) suggests: “The ancient versions and several of the Rabbins derive it from **מִסַּח**, to melt, but in violation of etymological analogy [while] Rabbi Jonah ... pronounces it to mean dry stubble (**קֶסֶם בָּבֶל**), and the definition has been since completed by the Arabic analogy.” Ibn Ezra explains, regarding ISAIAH 34:3 “**וְנִמְסָה** And shall be melted. Niphal of **נִמַּס** ‘to melt.’” ¶ Rabbi Rosenberg explains that this verse is similar to Exodus, one of the plagues of Egypt: “And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; and the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt. So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation” (Exodus 9:23–24). Alternately, Rosenberg leaning on Rashi, suggests that it refers to the struggle between Elijah and the Priest of Baal, “Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench” (1 Kings 18:38). According to Redak, in Rabbi Rosenberg, “As a melting fire burned, a fire that bubbled water. This refers to the fire burning on Mt. Sinai at the time of the Revelation⁷.” In Exodus 19:18 we note: “And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.” Oswalt has: “Throughout the Bible, from Genesis 3:24 through Exodus 3:1 and Acts 2:3 to Revelation 20:9, *fire* is intimately associated with the presence of the holy God. In no book is that more true than this one (ISAIAH 4:5; 6:6; 9:4 [Eng. 5]; 10:16; 29:6; 30:27, 30; 31:9; 33:12, 14; 66:15, 16, 24).” All of these things, of course, are only types of the burning that would take place during the Second Coming. ¶ *To make thy name known to thine adversaries, [that] the nations may tremble at thy presence!* The Targum (ܬ) has, “To make Thy name known to the enemies of Thy people, *that* the nations may tremble at Thy presence.” The LXX (6) reads, “And thy name will be manifest to the adversaries—At thy presence the nations will be troubled.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has *enemies* for *adversaries*. ¶ Rabbi Rosenberg points us to Exodus 9:16 as an example: “And in very deed for this *cause* have I raised thee up, for to shew *in* thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.” Skinner, along with almost every commentator, suggests that the requested theophany was for the purpose of making the Lord’s

name known to His adversaries. So also in Joseph Smith’s prayer above, D&C 121:1–6. ¶ Elder Orson Pratt spoke of the prayers that would be uttered by the Brethren: “We are told ... by the Prophet Isaiah, how that the servants of God in those notable days should call upon the name of the Lord, saying, ‘Oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence, As when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations might tremble at thy presence,’ which prayer shall be answered.”⁸

3 When thou didst terrible things [which] we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence.

When thou didst terrible things [which] we looked not for. The Targum (ܬ) has, “When Thou didst wonderful things, which we expected not.” The LXX (6) reads, “When thou executest thy glorious works.” Instead of *terrible*, the Peshitta (ܫ) has *wondrous* (Lamsa) / *impressive* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “When thou shalt do wonderful things, we shall not bear them.” ¶ Rather than terrible, then, the idea is that of *mighty* things. Wordsworth has: “*When thou didst terrible things*] At the Exodus, and at Sinai.” Keith suggests: “The figures of the Lord coming down—of the mountains melting at his approach, are not, however, limited to the events of the last national woes, the text in ISAIAH 64:3 appealing in the same language to what God had already done for Israel in punishing her enemies, as in the destruction of the Egyptian host, and in other miraculous interferences. He is urged to do for her again in reference to her final deliverance what he had done in former ages. There follows a declaration [see margin ¶ ISAIAH 64:4] that there is no God who doeth such things for those who seek him as the true God.” These *marvelous*⁹ things are those alluded to in ISAIAH 64:2. Skinner says: “*while thou doest terrible things which we hoped not for*] i.e. surpassing all our expectations ... *terrible things*] A standing phrase, as Cheyne remarks, for the marvels of the Exodus, the type of the great final deliverance (cf. Deuteronomy 10:21; 2 Samuel 7:23; Psalm 106:22).” These also point to the deliverance that will take place as the Savior stands on the Mount of Olives and creates a safe shelter for the remaining inhabitants of Jerusalem to run away from the enemies surrounding that Holy City. So also

AV, “and his bands *loosed* [ܐܦܬܐܪܐ] from off his hands” (Judges 15:14b). Leeser more literally has: “and his bands *melted* [ܐܦܬܐܪܐ] from off his hands.”

⁷ Refers to Moses experience with the Lord on top of Mount Sinai.

⁸ Elder Orson Pratt, “Changes in the Configuration of the Globe.” Twentieth Ward Meetinghouse, Salt Lake City, 3 December 1876. JD 18:315. See D&C 133:36b–41, 44, quoted above.

⁹ Shalom Paul also uses the word *marvelous* for *terrible*. Dr. Paul utilizes such words as *awesome*, *marvelous*, *awesome*.

Ironside, who says: “God has said in the book of Zechariah, ‘I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle’ (Zechariah 14:2). The remnant see that ominous gathering and cry, ‘O God, wilt Thou not intervene? Wilt Thou not rend the heavens and come down? Wilt Thou not deal with these nations Thyself and give the deliverance for which our hearts crave?’” ¶ *Thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Thou didst reveal Thyself; the mountains trembled at Thy presence.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Because of thee terror will seize the mountains.” Instead of *flowed*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *fled*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, “Thou didst come down, and at thy presence the mountains melted away.”

¶ Cowles explains: “The verb, ‘come down’ [יָרַד], is not only the same verb but the same form of it as in ISAIAH 64:1, and therefore should come under the force of the optative particle, which would make it a prayer.” As Rashi and Rabenu Tam explain (in Rabbi Rosenberg), as related to Mount Sinai, where the Lord came down to speak with Moses, see Judges 5:5, where we have: “The mountains melted from before the LORD, even that Sinai from before the LORD God of Israel.” Keith has: “In agreement with the whole context, their hopes and prayers for future deliverance are based on their memories of the past, ISAIAH 63:7, 9, 11. The allusion here is to the giving of the Law on Sinai, and completes those already made to the passing of the Red Sea, and the journey through the wilderness.” Dunash, in Rabbi Rosenberg, relates it more specifically to the plagues in Egypt. Shalom Paul observes: “The term מִפְּנֵי¹⁰ occurs here for the third time and serves as the introduction to the threefold refrain: ISAIAH 63:19: “And mountains quaked *before You*”; 64:1: “So that nations will tremble *before You*”; 64:2: “And mountains quaked *before You*.” ¶ Apostle Moses Thatcher beautifully testified: “God dwells in eternal fire, and no human being who has not been baptized in water and Spirit can abide that which will come, when the earth is immersed in flames, mountains melt with fervent heat and run down like wax.”¹¹

4 For since the beginning of the world [men] have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, [what] he hath prepared for him[✓] that waiteth for him.

✓ or, seen a God beside thee, which doeth so for him, &c.

For since the beginning of the world [men] have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And since the world was, ear hath not heard the report of such mighty deeds, nor hearkened to the speech of rapture, nor hath eye seen, what Thy people saw, the Shekinah of Thy glory, O Lord.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Never have we heard, nor have our eyes seen.” ¶ I would render this Scripture in Spanish as follows: “Ya que desde el principio del mundo los hombres no han oído, ni percibido en sus oídos, ni los ojos han visto, oh Dios, además de ti, lo que Él ha preparado para los que confían (o esperan) en Ti” (ISAÍAS 64:4). ¶ A number of exegetes focus on the comparison between what the true God can do and that which the no-gods can achieve, as in the margin ¶. Rawlinson suggests: “*Neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared*” rather, as in the margin ¶, *neither hath the eye seen a God, beside thee, which worketh for him that waiteth upon him.* The only ‘living God’ who really works for his votaries, and does them good service, is Jehovah.” We also have the testimony of Paul¹² regarding this beautiful verse: “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (1 Corinthians 2:9). Jenour suggests: “The things therefore which their *ears had not heard*, &c. are the wonderful blessings of the Gospel, which far exceeded what believers of old hoped for, or anything that man could ever have imagined or anticipated. This is the interpretation of the passage given by St. Paul, as cited above.” That these several interpretations are implied is undeniable, but they fail to capture the fuller meaning of this verse: related to the joy in this life as well as in the eternities. Birks, regarding this verse, calls it a “glorious promise.” ¶ As I mentioned in a footnote in ISAIAH 63, my son David Marsing Billikopf passed to the Spirit World yesterday, 6 February 2017, after a battle with cancer. About three years ago, when the Lord gave him a priesthood blessing, where I was mouth—I saw the glorious state which awaited him—not really understanding that he would be moving on to his next mission so soon or precisely what all of this meant. Interestingly, my son fell asleep as soon as I put my hands on his head and I was the only one who heard the blessing on this side of the veil. Now, I believe I understand why this happened. It was another of Heavenly Father’s tender mercies. It was I who needed to hear these words of comfort for a coming day: for today. The thoughts in ISAIAH 64:4 may be entertained by all those who have loved the Lord. The sufferings of

¹⁰ מִפְּנֵי is literally, *before your face*. Please remember that in the Biblia Hebraica the numbers are one off from the English.

¹¹ Apostle Moses Thatcher, “Baptism of Water and of Fire.” Tabernacle, Logan, 28 August 1885. JD 26:309b. Also see 26:211b.

¹² Kay suggests of Paul’s quotation: “St. Paul refers to this passage as having been verified by the fact that, when ‘the Lord of glory’ came to redeem mankind, ‘none of the princes of this world recognized’ Him (see 1 Corinthians 2:7–8).”

the martyrs, and of all those who for Christ's sake have endured difficulties, are now set aside. For truly, "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces" (ISAIAH 25:8a). We also find this scripture in the Doctrine and Covenants—in the context of the Second Coming, "For since the beginning of the world have not men heard nor perceived by the ear, neither hath any eye seen, O God, besides thee, how great things thou hast prepared for him that waiteth for thee" (D&C 133:45). Yet, President Harold B. Lee warns that we not diminish the full force of these blessings—for we do not have to die or only look forward to the eternities to have the Lord *wipe away our tears* and fill us with joy unspeakable: "Sometimes [1 Corinthians 2:9] has been taken to mean blessings hereafter, and too little thought has been given that those great and wonderful blessings can apply to us here and now. [For there are ...] wonderful experiences and blessings that we here can enjoy that no one, outside of those who do enjoy them, can fully appreciate."¹³ ¶ *O God, beside thee, [what] he hath prepared* [עָשָׂה root עָשָׂה] *for him that waiteth for him.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, "For there is none beside Thee, who will do such things for Thy righteous people, who were of old; who hope for Thy salvation." The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "A God besides thee; nor works such as thine, which thou wilt do for them who wait for mercy." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has *them* instead of *him*. ¶ Birks has: "The waiting on God, in the OT promise, becomes the love of God in the New."

5 Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, and rejoiceth him [those that] remembereth thee in thy ways; in righteousness there behold, thou art wroth; for we have sinned: in those is continuance, and we such shall be saved.

Thou meetest him that worketh righteousness, and rejoiceth him that remembereth thee in thy ways. The Prophet Joseph Smith, in the Inspired Version, has moved נִחַחְטָא, *for/but have sinned*, to the next verse.

The Targum (ⲧ) has, "The works of our righteous fathers were acceptable in Thy sight, who rejoiced to do Thy will in truth and in righteousness: in the way of Thy goodness and mercy they remembered Thy fear whenever (literally, 'at all times')." The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "For it will meet them who practise righteousness." The Peshitta (Ⲫ) renders it: "Thou meetest with joy him that works *righteousness* (Lamsa) / *justice* (BPE). The

Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, "Thou hast met him that rejoiceth, and doth justice: in thy ways they shall remember thee." ¶ Cowles says: "Of this verse there have been an indefinite number of diverse interpretations." Whitehouse calls it a "hopelessly corrupt text." Keith has: "This passage has been very perplexing both to ancient and modern expositors, not from any diversity of readings, but from the difficulty of educating¹⁴ the meaning of the original. Lowth writes: "I am fully persuaded, that these words, as they stand in the present Hebrew text, are utterly unintelligible: there is no doubt of the meaning of each word separately, but put together they make no sense at all." ¶ This is because the Masoretic text (ⲙ) has been so altered. "This is one of those verses," I wrote in my handwritten journal on Isaiah decades ago, "that immediately screams out, 'Look at the JST!'" Gladly, there is a JST to look at. The JST reads, with my observations in brackets: "Thou [God] meetest him [the man] that worketh righteousness, and rejoiceth him [the man who fears the Lord rejoices] that remembereth thee [or, the man who remembers God and His ways is filled with joy] in thy ways; in righteousness [or, righteous living is the key] there is continuance [rather, עוֹלָם, eternity, continuation, permanence, posterity], and such shall be saved [exalted]. Wordsworth interestingly notes: "the contrast is between the error and uncertainty of men's ways, and the truth and stability of God's ways ... since God's ways are everlasting ... They who walk in His ways enjoy *continuance* (ISAIAH 64:5), but the wicked fade away as a leaf (ISAIAH 64:6)." ¶ Birks says: "Joy in God is one mark of a true faith, a contrast to the impenitence that only frets and murmurs under the hand of God." Cowles has: "Thou meetest *with favor* him who joyfully does right; *i.e.*, who does righteousness not under compulsion but of his free will, as one who loves it. A further description of this class is that they *remember God as to his ways*. A case in illustration of this remembrance of God is that of Habakkuk in his third chapter, calling to mind the ancient ways of God so grandly and with such effective moral power upon his own soul." ¶ Jenour has: "*In thy ways*] *i.e.*, walking in thy ways; or, living according to thy will." ¶ *In righteousness there is continuance, and such shall be saved.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, "Thy wrath from Thy presence was upon us, because we have sinned: on account of the works of our righteous¹⁵ fathers, we have been saved." The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "And they will remember their ways." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, "Behold thou art angry, and we have sinned: in them we

¹⁴ That is, to draw out the meaning, *Webster*.

¹⁵ This is another of those interesting cases where the Targum (ⲧ) coincides with the Joseph Smith Translation or the Book of Mormon, in that it has the word *righteous* / *righteousness* repeated twice. Actually, the Targum (ⲧ) has it thrice.

¹³ *Stand Ye In Holy Places: Selected Sermons and Writings of President Harold B. Lee*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1988, pp. 113-115.

have been always, and we shall be saved.” ¶ Despite the corruption of the text, Cowles also agrees with my interpretation of the second clause: “Literally the statement is, ‘In those ways there is an eternity’ ... The general strain of thought is richly hopeful. God will surely meet with interposing mercy the faithful few who truly love righteousness, known by their affectionate, trustful remembrance of God’s ways.”

vv. 6–12. Recognition for Israel’s need to repent and turn to the Lord. The people have not been praying. Christ, in His role as spiritual Father, helps mold us. Isaiah, as an intercessor, reminds the Lord that Israel are His people. A lamentation for Zion and for Jerusalem, including the destroyed temple, is heard. A request, once again—similar to that of the first verse—is uttered for the Lord to forgive and to manifest His presence.

6 ¶ But we have sinned; we are all as an unclean [thing], and all our righteousnesses [are] as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

But we have sinned; we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. (Also see ISAIAH 30:22, *menstruous cloth*). The Targum (ⲓ) has, “But we are all as an unclean thing; all our righteousnesses are as an abominable garment.” The LXX (ⲛ) reads, “Behold thou wast angry when we sinned; because of this we wandered and became all of us as unclean, and all our righteousness was like a polluted rag.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲕ) has, “And we are all become as one unclean, and all our justices as the rag of a menstruous woman,” Vulgate (ⲕ), *pannus menstruatae*, o paño de menstruosa (ⲕ traducida al español).¹⁶ ¶ So also Horsley, “*As filthy rags*] properly, a menstruous rag.” Alternately, Horsley suggests it refers to the “rag of testimonies”¹⁷ wherein the tokens of a woman’s virginity were collected on the wedding night. Redak, in Rabbi Rosenberg, “since a woman in confinement¹⁸ soils her clothes.” In Hebrew we have נִדָּה associated with *ritual uncleanness* or impurity, associated with the menstrual discharge of blood (Gesenius). This was the state between the menstrual discharge and the ritual bath or מִקְוֵה. A similar word,

נִדָּה, a requirement of persons who were ritually impure remove themselves from the immediate association of others (see *Cyclopædia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature* (7:82). Both men and women were prohibited from entering the temple when in a state of uncleanness. ¶ No doubt the unrighteous are here contrasted with the upright. We know this because of the context of this verse along with ISAIAH 64:7. But I cannot help but also think that this verse may well be a *warning against self-righteousness* (that is the topic of much of ISAIAH 65). I prefer, then, that we liken ISAIAH 64:6 to ourselves. Also see ISAIAH 40:6–7. Despite our efforts toward righteousness just mentioned (ISAIAH 64:5), this verse reminds us that “... all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23b) and all need to be redeemed and partake of the saving ordinances of the Gospel, and above all, the expiatory sacrifice of the Lamb. These sentiments are parallel to those we find in King Benjamin’s address: “I say unto you, my brethren, that if you should render all the thanks and praise which your whole soul has power to possess, to that God who has created you, and has kept and preserved you, and has caused that ye should rejoice, and has granted that ye should live in peace one with another—I say unto you that if ye should serve him who has created you from the beginning, and is preserving you from day to day, by lending you breath, that ye may live and move and do according to your own will, and even supporting you from one moment to another—I say, if ye should serve him with all your whole souls yet ye would be unprofitable servants” (Mosiah 2:20–21). Jenour suggests: “These words are only an enlargement upon the confession made in the preceding verse. The pious penitents acknowledge, in the name of their nation, that, like a leprous person, they were *unclean*, and unfit consequently to appear amongst the number of his chosen people. As a leper, on account of his uncleanness was excluded from the congregation of Israel, and from the worship of the Temple. They acknowledge further, that, being unclean themselves, their works also, even the best of them, are defiled with a mixture of sin, and as incapable of hiding the deformity of their souls and rendering them fit to appear in the presence of God, as *filthy rags* are of covering and adorning the body. Can language express the *insufficiency* of our works to justify us in the sight of the most high God? For let it be observed that the speakers in this instance are supposed to be the pious, not the reprobate part of the nation;¹⁹ so that the

¹⁶ *La Biblia, o el Antiguo y Nuevo Testamento traducidos al español de la Vulgata Latina* por el Rmo. P. Phelipe Scio de S. Miguel, Obispo de Segovia. Impreso en Londres en 1855.

¹⁷ See Deuteronomy 22:14–19, the *tokens of virginity*.

¹⁸ This is an allusion to the menstrual period. See for instance Genesis 31:35.

¹⁹ This is certainly the case if we attach ISAIAH 64:6 to the previous verses, but in the next verse we have a people who will not even pray. What is most likely, however, is that these are abrupt changes in direction, wherein the prophet considers the more righteous portion, then man’s weaknesses and then the nation as a whole.

acknowledgment they make of their guilt and pollution may be considered as of general application.” The words of ISAIAH 64:6 are given to put whatever righteousness man may have (ISAIAH 64:5) in context. This does *not* mean that we do not work towards righteousness and good. Our works are vital for they are a reflection that we have been truly converted. Even so, we are ever dependent on the Savior, “For we labor diligently to write, to persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God; for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do” (2 Nephi 25:23, also see notes in ISAIAH 33:6). ¶ I love what Jenour has to say: “I beg any fellow-believer who reads these lines to note this mark of the Spirit of God in the last hours of any dispensation: the speaker is ever saying, ‘Every one of us.’ No Pharisee is this petitioner, thanking God that he is not as other men. He identifies himself with all the rest, confesses his own full share in all that has brought dishonor on the Name. It is by this humble confession, amid a mass of boasting, that the true Israel was, is, and ever shall be manifested. Surely we have, ‘every one of us,’ to use the words of our prophet, a part in that responsible witness, and so we will not say ‘they,’ but ‘we have sinned,’ and thus confess to our place and part in the present Witness upon earth, a Witness that has failed as much beyond all who have gone before as its privileges have exceeded. But our boast and hope shall be in One sitting at the right hand of the Majesty on high, with whom failure is unknown, and with whom interest and love for His redeemed never chills nor varies!” ¶ *And we all do fade [נִבֵּל] as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.* This reminds us of ISAIAH 40: “The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh *is* grass, and all the goodness thereof *is* as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower *fadeth* [נִבֵּל]: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people *is* grass” (ISAIAH 40:6–7, emphasis added, also see ISAIAH 40:8, נִבֵּל צִיץ). The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And we all do fade as the fading of a leaf; and because of our sins, we are taken away as by the wind.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And for our iniquities we have fallen like leaves; so that the wind will sweep us away.” Keith says: “The Jews [better, *Judah and Israel*—GB] have been tossed about and scattered over the earth like the faded leaves before the winds of autumn,²⁰ and here they are represented as confessing [their fault].” Cowles likewise has: “As the leaves of a tree ... wither, fall off, and are carried about by the wind; so the Jewish people, being deprived of the protection of Jehovah and the consolation of his spirit, complain of having lost all

their strength and glory, being scattered, and driven about from country to country, like withered leaves, the derision of their enemies.” Oswalt notes a similar sentiment in Psalms, where the chaff is driven away by the wind rather than a leaf: “Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly *are* not so: but *are* like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish” (Psalm 1:1-6).

7 And [there is] none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed[✓] us, because^{✓✓} of our iniquities.

✓ melted

✓ ✓ by the hand

And [there is] none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee. The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And there is none that prayeth in Thy name willing to lay hold on Thy fear.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “There is indeed none who invoceth thy name, or who remembered to lay hold on thee.” Instead of *stirreth up*, the Peshitta (Ⓟ) has *remembers*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, for the second clause, “That riseth up, and taketh hold of thee.” ¶ Birks notes: “The figure is the same as ISAIAH 27:5, where Israel are exhorted to lay hold on the strength of their God.” Cowles well observes: “The most fatal fact in their condition was that no men of prayerful interceding spirit remained. There was no one who roused himself up to take strong hold upon God in prayer. Nothing can so surely presage the ruin of a nation as this prayerlessness...” Jenour has: “Although reduced to a state of the greatest distress and misery, they none of them think of turning to the only quarter from which they can obtain help, or of awaking from their stupefaction and folly to seek strength from Jehovah.” One of the most beautiful things about the USA for me, when I lived there, was that prayers were often offered to God. This was in striking contrast to my own country. And one of the saddest was to see the decline in such public prayers over the years. One of our local Farm Bureaus stopped offering prayers at the beginning of their meetings. I was devastated. I do not

²⁰ Allusion to scattering of Israel in *Rain in Due Season*.

know if they realized the great, great privilege of offering prayers in the Land of Liberty. Rawlinson suggests: “This expresses more than mere prayer; it is earnest, intense, ‘effectual fervent’ prayer.” I have come to love this word, *effectual*. It is used in Doctrine and Covenants: “Behold, and lo, I have much people in this place, in the regions round about; and an *effectual door* shall be opened in the regions round about in this eastern land” (D&C 100:3). Where there seems to be a wall or barrier to reach a goal, the Lord opens an effectual door for us to pass that obstacle and reach our goal. When used for prayer, it means that the heavens are rent and our prayer reaches our Father in Heaven. ¶ *For thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Because Thou hast taken away the fear of Thy Shekinah from us, and Thou hast delivered us to the power (literally, ‘hand’) of our sins.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Because thou hast turned away thy face from us, and delivered us up for our sins.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, beginning with the second clause, “And hast crushed us in the hand of our iniquity.” ¶ See D&C 101:7–8, but also see D&C 101:9.

8 But now, O LORD, thou [art] our father; we [are] the clay, and thou our potter; and we all [are] the work of thy hand.

But now, O LORD, thou [art] our father. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “And Thy mercies, O Lord, have been as many upon us as a father’s upon *his* children.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “But now, Lord, thou art our father.” ¶ Isaiah prays for mercy after confessing the people’s general sins. Birks says: “The ‘now’ is not a mark of time, but of transition from deep confession, and guilty sleep in sin, to earnest cries for deliverance. They appeal to God’s love as their Father, to His power as of a potter over the clay.” Alexander also suggests that the *now* was “not merely [used] as a particle of time, but as a formula of logical resumption, which could not be omitted without obscuring the relation of this verse to the preceding context, as a summing up of its appeals and arguments.” Whitehouse says: “There is ... a gleam of hope in the use of the term father in the appeal addressed to Yahweh,²¹ which is therefore grounded on high moral relations subsisting between Yahweh and Israel greater than those of a potter to the clay or even of a sovereign to his subjects.” Alexander suggests: “Instead of relying upon any supposed merits of their own, they appeal to their very dependence upon God as a reason why he should have mercy on them.” Indeed, we are dependent on the atonement and the merits of Christ our Lord—yet we must permit that the Lord

molds us. ¶ Elder Richard J. Maynes shared: “The ancient prophet Isaiah stated, ‘But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.’ If our lives are centered in Jesus Christ, He can successfully mold us into who we need to be in order to return to His and Heavenly Father’s presence in the celestial kingdom. The joy we experience in this life will be in direct proportion to how well our lives are centered on the teachings, example, and atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ.”²² ¶ *We [are] the clay, and thou our potter; and we all [are] the work of thy hand.* The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Though we are clay, we are all the works of thy hands.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “And we are clay: and thou art our maker, and we all are the works of thy hands.” ¶ In Jeremiah we read: “The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter’s house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make *it*. Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay *is* in the potter’s hand, so *are* ye in mine hand, O house of Israel” (Jeremiah 18:1–6). We also have: “Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou made me thus?” (Romans 9:20, see also notes on ISAIAH 63:17). ¶ Wade says: “What the Lord had made He would surely not allow to perish.” Skinner has: “Can the potter allow the work on which he has lavished his utmost skill and care to be broken in pieces?” Jenour has: “In these verses [ISAIAH 64:8–9] the supplicants again express their confidence in the mercy of Jehovah. They plead their relationship to him as his children, and as being in a peculiar manner the *work of his hands*. God indeed is the Creator of all men; but the Jews might, in an especial sense, call him *their* Father and Creator, because of those peculiar favours he had shewn to them above every other nation upon earth. Could he then now cast them off? Could he neglect the work of his own hands?” Redak, in Rabbi Rosenberg, has: “Now if we have sinned against You and angered You, we are an inferior vessel. Make us, then, into another vessel.” It seems to be a request for the Lord to help us soften our hearts and be receptive to the things of the Spirit, as in “Create in me a clean heart” (Psalm 51:10a). Or, “pure heart” in ISV. The Book of Mormon has had a powerful effect on softening my heart. ¶ Alexander suggests: “There is more dignity in the original expression than in the English phrase *our*

²¹ See Mosiah 15:3.

²² Elder Richard J. Maynes, “The Joy of Living a Christ-Centered Life.” October 2015 General Conference.

potter, as the Hebrew word properly denotes one forming or imparting shape to anything, though specially applied in usage to a workman in clay, when that material is mentioned ... The same plea [than found on this verse is], derived from the relation of the creature to the maker, is used in Psalm 138:8, *forsake not the work of thy hands.*” ¶ President Brigham Young taught: “When we get to understand all knowledge, all wisdom, that it is necessary for us to understand in the flesh, we will be like clay in the hands of the potter, willing to be molded and fashioned according to the will of him who has called us to this great and glorious work, of purifying ourselves and our fellow beings, and of preparing the nations of the earth for the glory that awaits them through obedience.”²³ On another occasion President Young taught: “We should divest ourselves of all feelings of selfishness, become like clay in the hands of the potter, and say, ‘I have no mind of my own; it must be passive, and suffer God to direct. He has given me good powers of mind, and he shall have the privilege of directing them.’ Then you can enjoy this, that, or the other, and all will be right.”²⁴ ¶ President Harold B. Lee taught, “I’ve read [ISAIAH 64:8] many times but had not received the full significance until I was down in Mexico a few years ago at Telacapaca, where the people mold clay into various kinds of pottery. There I saw them take clay that had been mixed by crude, primitive methods, the molder wading in the mud to mix it properly. Then it was put upon a potter’s wheel and the potter began to fashion the intricate bits of pottery, which he was to place on the market. And as we watched, we saw occasionally, because of some defect in the mixing, the necessity for pulling the whole lump of clay apart and throwing it back in to be mixed over again, and sometimes the process had to be repeated several times before the mud was properly mixed. With that in mind, I began to see the meaning of this scripture. Yes, we too have to be tried and tested by poverty, by sickness, by the death of loved ones, by temptation, sometimes by the betrayal of supposed friends, by affluence and riches, by ease and luxury, by false educational ideas, and by the flattery of the world. A father, explaining this matter to his son, said: ‘And to bring about his eternal purposes in the end of man, after he had created our first parents, and the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, and in fine, all things which are created, it must needs be that there was an opposition; even the forbidden fruit in opposition to the tree of life;

the one being sweet and the other bitter’ (2 Peter 2:15). It was the Prophet Joseph Smith who said, speaking of this refining process, that he was like a huge, rough stone rolling²⁵ down the mountainside, and the only polishing he got was when some rough corner came in contact with something else, knocking off a corner here and a corner there. But, he said, ‘Thus will I become a polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty.’ So, we must be refined; we must be tested in order to prove the strength and power that are in us.”²⁶ ¶ President Lee spoke about the need to “start all over” through disciplinary councils in order to permit a person to improve his or her life: “... when one has sinned so seriously that to hold further membership or to hold the holy priesthood would be as a stumbling block and burden rather than a blessing. In the wisdom of the Lord, these privileges are taken from him that he might be ground as ‘clay in the hands of the potter,’ again tried and tested, until he is again worthy to receive these holy blessings.”²⁷ ¶ Then Elder Russell M. Nelson reminds us: “Personal identity is much more than a passport photograph. We also have roots and branches. Divinity is rooted in each of us. ‘We all are the work of [our Creator’s] hand.’ We are eternal beings. In premortal realms, we brethren were foreordained for our priesthood responsibilities. Before the foundation of the world, women were prepared that they may bear children and glorify God.”²⁸

9 Be not wroth very sore, O LORD, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, see, we beseech thee, we [are] all thy people.

Be not wroth very sore, O LORD, neither remember iniquity for ever: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Let there not be, O Lord, very sore wrath from Thee against us, neither remember iniquities for ever.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Be not angry with us to the uttermost; nor remember forever our sins.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “Be not very angry, O Lord, and remember no

²³ President Brigham Young, “The Lord’s Supper.” Special Conference, Brigham City, Box Elder County, for the Purpose of Organizing a Stake of Zion in said County, 19 August 1877. JD 19:93b.

²⁴ President Brigham Young, “Religion of the Saints.” Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 22 April 1860. JD 8:72b-73a.

²⁵ Sadly, these words have become popular of late by those who like to speak of the Prophet Joseph Smith’s weaknesses. While I have no doubt that our beloved Prophet had weaknesses—for he was fully human—I really worry when people point out *specific* behaviors and label them as weaknesses. I fear that doing so is engaging in ignorant if not unrighteous judgment. I, for one, will not permit it in my presence.

²⁶ *Stand Ye In Holy Places: Selected Sermons and Writings of President Harold B. Lee.* Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1988, pp. 113–115.

²⁷ *Stand Ye In Holy Places: Selected Sermons and Writings of President Harold B. Lee.* Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1988, pp. 119–122.

²⁸ Elder Russell M. Nelson, “Roots and Branches,” *Ensign* (CR), May 2004, p.27.

longer our iniquity.” ¶ Kay notes, “*wroth very sore*] the last words of the Book of Lamentations.” Westermann suggests: “The line taken in asking for forgiveness is not that God should simply cancel this sin; it has been committed, and it has its inevitable consequences. Instead, supplication is made that, in spite of it, it should still be possible [to have God turn] again towards sinful Israel.” Gill has: “*neither remember iniquity for ever*] to afflict and punish for it, but forgive it, for not to remember sin is to forgive it.” ¶ *Behold, see, we beseech thee, we [are] all thy people.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Behold, it is revealed before Thee, that we *are* all Thy people.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “But, O look down now upon us; for we are all thy people.” The Peshitta (ܣ) does not contain the words, *we beseech thee.* The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “Behold, see we are all thy people.” ¶ Similarly to ISAIAH 63:19, Isaiah reminds the Lord of His covenant relationship with Israel, “thy people” ܕܝܝܪܐ. Gill has: “*Behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people*] look upon all our troubles and distresses, and upon us under them, with an eye of pity and compassion; and consider that we are thy people, not only by creation, but by covenant and profession.”

10 Thy holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation.

Thy holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a wilderness. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “The city of thy sanctuary is become a desert: Zion is become like a desert.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “The city of thy sanctuary is become a desert, Zion is made a desert.” ¶ Several LDS²⁹ note that two distinct places are here mentioned, Zion in contrast to Jerusalem. Both need to be built up. ¶ Birks notes: “The holy cities are those of [the Holy Land], not Jerusalem only (Vitrina). The words will apply to the exile in Babylon. But they apply, even more forcibly still, to the later and longer Roman desolation, in which one stone of the temple has not been left on another, and Jerusalem has been trodden down for long ages.” Jenour, likewise, thinks of the post-Roman devastation of Jerusalem, which is the condition in which the House of the Lord in Jerusalem finds itself in even today. So also Rabbi Rosenberg who points out that “Even today, part of Jerusalem is occupied by Arabs, as is the Temple Mount.” Calvin suggests, “She calls them ‘cities of holiness,’ because, as the Lord had sanctified a people, so he also wished that the cities, and even the whole country, should be

consecrated to himself.” Westermann explains: “Certain striking expressions such as ‘our beautiful house’ and ‘thy holy cities’ are probably due to the tradition of the lament for the sanctuary.” ¶ *Jerusalem a desolation.* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Jerusalem, for a curse.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “Jerusalem is desolate.” ¶ Oswalt suggests: “This emphasis on the destroyed temple is of special significance at this point in the lament form. Laments normally close with a vow of praise, which is frequently to be fulfilled in the temple (cf. Psalm 22:26 [Eng. 25]; 26:6, 12; 27:4; 42:5 [Eng. 4]; 43:4; 51:21 [Eng. 19]; 54:8 [Eng. 6], etc.). But here the temple where praises were wont to be given does not even exist! How then can one make a vow of praise? This is some measure of the desperation that the writer feels.” Wordsworth has: “The fulfilment of this prophecy, which foretells the lamentations of the Jews over this desolation of their city and the Temple, is remarkably exemplified in the name, ‘... wailing-place,’ [in Spanish, *el muro de lamentación*, the Wall of Lamentation—GB] assigned to a spot on the Tyropoemum, at the ‘base of the wall which supports the south-west side of the Temple area.’ On Fridays they assemble there in great numbers. This ‘wailing’ is of great antiquity. It is mentioned by Benjamin of Tudela in the twelfth century ...” ¶ I love and honor my Jewish ancestry. When I went to Jerusalem a few years ago I fully expected to wail at the wall—that tears would flow freely. Tears of joy frequently come to me when I am moved by the Spirit. Yet when I was standing by that awesome wall so full of history and beauty, I was not able to cry at all and felt that the Lord was telling me, “I am no longer here.” A few weeks later, when I was able to walk into the garden tomb outside the city walls, on the other hand, I was so filled with the Spirit, “I am not here but am risen,” reverberated through my soul—and the tears flowed strongly as the Holy Ghost testified of the divinity of our Savior and Redeemer. I testify that the day will come when the Spirit of the Lord will be fully poured upon the Lord’s temple to be built in Jerusalem: HOLINESS TO THE LORD. Then, Jerusalem will no longer be labeled *desolation*.

11 Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire: and all our pleasant things are laid waste.

Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “The house of our holiness and of our glory, where our fathers worshipped Thee, is burned up with fire.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “The house, our sanctuary—even that glory which our fathers blessed, is utterly burnt up

²⁹ For example, see Elder Bruce R. McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man*; and Franklin D. Richards and James A. Little, *Compendium of the Doctrines of the Gospel*, p.175..

with fire.” Instead of *house, our sanctuary*, the Peshitta (S) has *temple* (Lamsa) / *house of our sanctuary* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “The house of our holiness, and of our glory, where our fathers praised thee, is burnt with fire.” ¶ Kimhi, in Slotki-Rosenberg, thinks it of the “First and Second Temples.” Keith says: “‘Our holy and beautiful house’ refers to the temple at Jerusalem.” ¶ *And all our pleasant things are laid waste*. The Targum (T) has, “And every place of our desire hath become a waste.” The LXX (G) reads, “And all our glorious things are in ruins.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “And all our lovely things are turned into ruins.” ¶ Slotki-Rosenberg have: “‘Desirable places’ (Targum, Kimhi), referring to the Holy of Holies (Abarbanel).” Redak, in Rabbi Rosenberg, “The Temple, which has been a waste for many years.” Gill explains: “*and all our pleasant things are laid waste*] their pleasant land, and pleasant cities, and especially Jerusalem, the palaces of their princes and nobles, and all the riches and grandeur of them, the temple, and all the rich vessels and utensils in it.”

12 Wilt thou refrain thyself for these [things], O LORD? wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore?

Wilt thou refrain thyself for these [things], O LORD? The LXX (G) reads, “Yet for all these things, thou, Lord.” The BPE (S) has, “In these matters thou hast persisted (or *restrained thyself*, Lamsa), O Yahweh.” The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Wilt thou refrain thyself, O Lord, upon these things.” ¶ Keith says: “The prayer throughout, and especially the close of it, is distinguished by the greatest tenderness and earnestness; and the plaintive and sad air which pervades it, renders it most suitable in the circumstances of the Jewish nation.” It seems to be a plea for mercy against the consequences for estrangement from God. Gill has: “*Wilt thou refrain thyself for these things, O Lord?*] From delivering us out of our troubles and miseries, and taking vengeance on our enemies, and showing thy zeal for thine own glory; or, as Kimhi paraphrases it, ‘how canst thou contain thyself for these

things, and not have mercy?’ how canst thou bear to see Judea, and all its cities, a wilderness; Jerusalem, and the temple of it, in ruins?” ¶ *Wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore?* The Targum (T) has, “And wilt Thou give prosperity (or, ‘continuance’) for ever to the wicked, who made use servile (the Royal Polyglot reads עַד לְחַדָּא, ‘very much’)?” The LXX (G) reads, “Hast refrained, and been silent. Thou hast humbled us exceedingly.” The Peshitta (S) makes this whole clause a statement of fact, rather than a question. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us vehemently?” ¶ Jennings says: “So wrote the prophet with eyes so anointed that he saw afar to a time that even now, to this day, lies in the future, when a God-fearing remnant of Jews will thus be mourning as they who mourn for their first-born (Zechariah 12:12). The interposition of Jehovah on behalf of the penitent remnant of His people of which Isaiah speaks, is to be final.” Westermann observes: “The fact that a psalm of lamentation like this ends with an anxious question put to God shows how genuine the language of these psalms is, and how it chimes in with the facts of the case. The final words make it apparent that the entire psalm is designed as a question put to God by men who waited anxiously for him. It also shows that men who spoke in this way looked to God and to his turning again towards them as the sole source of a change in their lot.” Jenour suggests: “*Be silent*] That is, ‘Wilt thou though disregard our prayers, and take no notice of our calamities?’” Cowles has: “In view of all these things, wilt thou, O Lord, still shut up thy bowels of compassion; hold thy tender sympathies under stern constraint, and still go on to afflict us even to extremity? What God will do in answer to these imploring supplications, will appear in the next chapter.” The prophet does not question whether the Redeemer of Israel hears his petition, but rather, he wishes the Lord to act presently.

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Isaiah 65

The words of Paul interpret the scriptures to indicate that the Lord first turned to Israel and pleaded with her to accept the Gospel and only after being rejected turned to the nations. A second view shows that the Lord may be found of them that will seek Him out, as found in the Inspired Version. Both of these teachings, of course, are true. Our Redeemer, with spread out hands, invites us to come unto Him. ¶ The sins of Israel are enumerated. Of these, self-righteous pride is among the worst. A remnant of Israel and Judah will be preserved. After briefly dwelling on the remnant, Isaiah returns to speak of the apostate state of Israel. When the Lord called, the people did not answer or pay heed. The joy and exaltation of the Lord's disciples is contrasted to the pain of the apostates. While the apostates shall be cursed by men, the Lord's servants shall be blessed and receive a new name. In the Millennium the former things or this terrestrial world shall be forgotten. A new heaven and earth shall come forth. Joy shall abound. Those who die during the Millennium will receive their resurrection in the twinkling of an eye. Moral agency is an eternal principle. Even during the Millennium there will be those who will reject truth. The *Rain in Due Season* curses mentioned in the books of Moses will be reversed. Those who are true disciples of the Lord will be able enjoy eternal family relationships. The Lord will answer prayers before they are even uttered. Enmity between beasts; and between beasts and mankind will cease.

vv. 1–7. Cowles points us to Romans, where we read the words of Paul: “First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by *them that are* no people, *and* by a foolish nation I will anger you. But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not¹; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people” (Romans 10:19b–21). The words of Moses, where the history of Israel is recounted as well as the Lord's loving kindness toward her, includes: “For the LORD's portion *is* his people; Jacob *is* the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye [i.e., the nation of Israel was placed in a position of preference by the Lord—GB]. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: *So* the LORD alone did lead him, and *there was* no strange god with him. He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock; Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape [all of these wonderful things did the Lord do for Israel—GB]. But Jeshurun [a nickname for Israel—GB] waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art

grown thick, thou art covered *with fatness*; then he forsook God *which* made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation [Israel was pampered and ungrateful and grew complacent or fat²—GB]. They provoked him to jealousy with strange *gods*, with abominations provoked they him to anger. They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new *gods that* came newly up, whom your fathers feared not [Israel turned to idolatry—GB]. Of the Rock *that* begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee [Israel was ungrateful to the Rock of Ages, even Christ or Jehovah of the Holy Scriptures—GB]. And when the LORD saw *it*, he abhorred *them*, because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters. And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end *shall be*: for they *are* a very froward generation, children in whom *is* no faith. They have moved me to jealousy with *that which* is not God [with idols—GB]; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities [another word for idols—GB]: and I will move them to jealousy with *those which are* not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation” [the Lord was provoked to jealousy by Israel's idol worship and would return feelings of jealousy to Israel when He would accept the Gentile nations for a season—GB]” (Deuteronomy 32:9–21). In the next Deuteronomic verses, the Lord alludes to the *Rain in*

¹ Keith wrote: “If God would deal so mercifully with them who were not called by his name, that is, to whom he had never stood in such a relation as he had done to the Jewish nation, much more would he be gracious to Israel ... It does not teach that God is found where he is not sought at all; but that if sought at all, even after long delay, he will be found.”

² Speaking of Church members today, President Brigham Young likewise warned as to how we take the Lord's blessings: “The worst fear I have about this people is that they will get rich in this country, forget God and His people, *wax fat*, and kick themselves out of the Church and go to hell. This people will stand mobbing, robbing, poverty, and all manner of persecution and be true. But my greatest fear is that they cannot stand wealth” (emphasis added, quoted in Spencer W. Kimball's, *Miracle of Forgiveness*, 48). From, “The Legacy of President Brigham Young: A Latter-day Moses,” *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Student Study Guide*, (2005).

Due Season. These verses end with a promise to Israel and all the Gentiles who accept the Gospel: “Rejoice, O ye nations, *with his people*: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, *and to his people*” (Deuteronomy 32:43). Paul, then, was likening these Isaianic scriptures—as they were had at the time of Christ—unto his own times. The Great Isaiah Scroll {1QIsa^a (Q)} is thought to have existed since a few centuries *before* Christ and it is extremely similar to the Masoretic text (M) upon which the King James Bible was produced. We also read that “One of the most important contributions of the scrolls is that they have demonstrated the relative stability of the Masoretic text”³ and that they are “astonishingly similar”⁴ with the Masoretic text (M). The JST, on the other hand, is a *restoration* of the Biblical text to its original. The official Biblical text for The English-speaking members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the KJV. This is in part because the Prophet Joseph Smith was not able to complete the *Inspired Version* before his death.

1 ¶ I am sought found of [them that] who seek after asked not [for me], I give unto all them that ask of me; I am not found of [them that] sought me not, or that inquireth not after me. I said unto my servant, Behold me, behold look upon me; I will send you unto a nation [that] is not was not called after by my name, for*

* This section part of verse 2 in JST.

I am found of them who seek after me, I give unto all them that ask of me. The Targum (T) has, “I am asked concerning my Word of them that have not asked after me (literally, ‘from before me’).” The LXX (L) reads, “I became manifest to them who inquired not for me.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “They have sought me that before asked not for me.” God is ready to answer our prayers if we but seek Him out—but generally we must seek Him out. So it is that we read: “But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find *him*, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul” (Deuteronomy 4:29). Three clear ways in which we seek the Lord are through prayer, scripture study and

service to others. We also have: “I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me” (Proverbs 8:17); “And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (Luke 11:9). ¶ *I am not found of them that sought me not, or that inquireth not after me.* The Targum (T) has, “I am inquired of for instruction in my law, of them who have not sought my fear.” The LXX (L) reads, “I was found by them who sought me not. I said, ‘Behold here I am’ to the nation which did not invoke my name. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “They have found me that sought me not.” ¶ Of those who do not seek God, except when they are in desperate straits, we hear: “Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices” (Proverbs 1:28–31). Elder Parley P. Pratt taught: “When you see men that are not ready to repent, to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, but say, I want to indulge in sin a little longer, and then I am going to turn round and be a first-rate good Saint, I will tell you they are deceiving themselves, for they will not do it, for every time they think of doing it they will love sin as much as they did before, and they will continue to love sin, and why? Because, when He (the Lord) spoke they would not hear.”⁵ ¶ Such sentiments must always be understood in their proper context. When individuals are humbled to turn to the Lord, we read of His mercies: “Verily I say unto you, notwithstanding their sins, my bowels are filled with compassion towards them. I will not utterly cast them off; and in the day of wrath I will remember mercy” (D&C 101:9, see also D&C 101:7–8; and ISAIAH 64:7). The bottom line, I think, is that the Lord does not want us to be like an ungrateful child: “And in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things, and obey not his commandments” (D&C 59:21). ¶ I feel to understand both the received Masoretic text (M) [also see Paul, Romans 10:17–21] as well as the Inspired Version. For instance, regarding the former, the Holy Ghost bore a solemn testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon before I read it—when I was not interested. After my heart was softened by the reading of the Book of Mormon, four years later, then I sought the Lord and He did invite me to be His disciple. Ever since that day, I have continually sought the Lord despite my profound weaknesses. The Lord took me both *weak* and *unlearned* (D&C 35:13)—and I continue to be both of

³ Biblical Archeology Society, The Masoretic Text and the Dead Sea Scrolls (20 January 2017), URL accessed 19 March 2017, <http://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/biblical-artifacts/dead-sea-scrolls/the-masoretic-text-and-the-dead-sea-scrolls/>

⁴ Notre Dame News (30 November 2000), URL accessed 19 March 2017, <http://news.nd.edu/news/dead-sea-scrolls-yield-major-questions-in-old-testament-understanding/>

⁵ Elder Parley P. Pratt, “Progress of the Latter-Day Church.” Delivered in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 7 April 1856. JD 3:14a.

these things. To those who accept the invitation to study, ponder and cherish the scriptures and the words of the present-day prophets, and come unto Him in prayer, He has promised that: "...the power of your mind may be expanded, in particular that your comprehension of eternal principles may be increased and that the great beauty of the gospel of Jesus Christ will expand your understanding and increase your capacity to understand spiritual things."

2 I said unto my servant, Behold me, behold look upon me; I will send you unto a nation [that] is not ~~was not~~ called after by my name,* for I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people which who walketh not in a my ways, and their works are evil and [that was] not good, and they walk after their own thoughts.

* From "I said ... my name," part of verse 1 in KJV.

I said unto my servant, Behold me, look upon me; I will send you unto a nation that is not called after my name. The Targum (ܬ) has, "I will say, Behold, I am inquired after continually, all the day, of a people that hath not prayed in my name." The LXX (ϸ) reads, "I stretched out my hands." Instead of *not called by my name*, the Peshitta (ܫ) has *not called my name*, that is, would not pray to God. The Douay-Rheims (Ϯ) has, "I said: Behold me, behold me, to a nation that did not call upon my name." ¶ Who is the Servant that is sent to a nation who was not ready for Him but the Messiah? These are the words, through Divine Investiture, of the Father to His beloved Son. The Son feels deeply of the love of the Father for His children. As Jehovah, the pre-mortal Christ, He stretched His arms to Israel all the day long. The Father tenderly asked the Son to look upon Him before sending Messiah on this most difficult commission. Christ asks us to look upon Him, just as He looks upon the Father. He lovingly invites, "Come unto me" (Matthew 11:28). As we accept the invitation to come unto Christ we are also accepting the call to come unto the Father, for "no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). ¶ Cheyne, while disagreeing with the following, notes: "St. Paul ... following perhaps the tradition of Gamaliel, applies the passage to the conversion of the Gentiles (Romans 10:20), and most Christian commentators have done the same." Paul commented on this verse as follows: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. But I say, Did not Israel know?

First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by *them that are* no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you. But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people" (Romans 10:17–21). It seems, then, that the Lord was found of the Gentiles during the meridian of times, to whom He did *not* go personally to teach; but Israel, to whom He taught *all the day* long, rejected her Lord. God the Father is speaking of sending His Servant, even Jesus Christ, to such a trying task. ¶ In the last days, however, the house of Israel would once again turn to the Lord. Indeed, all are invited to come unto Christ, for "he inviteth them all to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and all are alike unto God, both Jew and Gentile" (2 Nephi 26:33). In the last days individuals from all nations will come unto Christ: "In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, *even* a blessing in the midst of the land: Whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed *be* Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance" (ISAIAH 19:24-25). In all these nations the remnants of Israel will be found. ¶ Keith notes: "*Behold me*" ܠܗܝܢܝ, literally, '*here am I*,' expressive of readiness to come to their help." Henderson also translates it, "*Behold me*." The Inspired Version, "*Look upon me*." In the Masoretic text (מ) we have this expression doubled, "ܠܗܝܢܝ ܠܗܝܢܝ," thus making this invitation to *come unto Christ*, to behold Him, all the more powerful. We have similar invitations from the Savior in His visit to the American Continent: "Behold, I am the law, and the light. *Look unto me*, and endure to the end, and ye shall live; for unto him that endureth to the end will I give eternal life" (3 Nephi 15:9, emphasis added). Also, we have: "*Look unto me*, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth *in* righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear" (ISAIAH 45:22–23, emphasis added). ¶ *For I have spread out my hands all the day unto a people who walketh not in my ways.* The Targum (ܬ) has, "I have sent my prophets every day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way which was not good." The LXX (ϸ) reads, "All the day long to a disobedient and gainsaying people." The Douay-Rheims (Ϯ) has, "I have spread forth my hands all the day to an unbelieving people." ¶ Shalom Paul points out the fervency of this pleading with the people, where the frequency is "further reinforced by the addition of ܠܗܝܢܝ ('all day')." And more literally, *all the day*.

¶ All of this reminds us of the Savior's anguished cry: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not!" (Matthew 23:37; also see 3 Nephi 10:5). Birks notes: "In the later prophets and especially in Jeremiah, great stress is laid upon the reiterated and long protracted efforts of the Lord to reclaim his sinning people. See Jeremiah 7:24–28, 25:3–7, 26:5, 29:17–19, and 44:4–5. Such persistent entreaty may well be expressed by stretching out the hand imploringly all the day." Wade has: "*I have spread out my hands*, i.e. in an attitude of entreaty (Proverbs 1:24; cf. on ISAIAH 1:15)." ¶ After I finished the Book of Mormon for the first time, during that Christmas vacation in 1973, this is the posture I felt the Lord took as He invited me to follow Him. I could not *see* Him but could *feel* of His presence and of His personal invitation to me to be a disciple. It was as if He had His hands and arms stretched out to me in tender invitation. ¶ *And their works are evil and not good, and they walk after their own thoughts.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "After their own thoughts." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "Who were walking not in a good way, but following their own sins." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, "Who walk in a way that is not good after their own thoughts." ¶ *To walk after their own thoughts* is to walk in apostasy; it is to trust in the arm of flesh. We need to heed the warning: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Colossians 2:8). Also, "O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish. But to be learned is good if they hearken unto the counsels of God" (2 Nephi 9:28–29). ¶ In ISAIAH 58 we learn: "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, *from* doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words" (ISAIAH 58:13). If we are humble and willing the Lord will put His thoughts in our hearts: "... speak the thoughts that I shall put into your hearts" (D&C 100:5b) and we will then be able to serve as instruments in inviting others to come unto Christ.

3 A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that sacrificeth in

gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick; ✓

✓ upon bricks [i.e., burneth incense upon bricks]

A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "my Word" rather than *me*. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "This people are provoking me continually to my face." The Peshitta (Ⲫ) is missing the words, "to my face." ¶ It seems that with this *continually* [ⲉⲙⲉⲣⲉ] a list of offenses against God are enumerated beginning with the times before the captivities that took place through Assyria and Babylonia but which also have spiritual modern-day equivalents. Birks suggests: "*The people*, ⲉⲙⲉⲣⲉ] *The article* has much force. Once defined as the holy people, the Lord has now to define them by their sins. The warning in the song (Deuteronomy 32:16), had been verified, 'With abominations provoked they him to anger.' 'To my face' refers to the first commandment. 'Thou shalt have none other gods *before my face*.' Idol worship is an open affront to the Divine majesty." Leiser renders it: "*To the people* that provoke me to anger to my face continually." Also it is rendered, "*the people* who provoke me to anger continually to my face" (LEB). Also see Rotherham, TS2009, and YLT. ¶ *That sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick.* The Targum (Ⲯ) adds after gardens, "to idols." The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, "They will sacrifice in the gardens and burn incense on the tiles, to demons which have not an existence." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, "That immolate in gardens, and sacrifice upon bricks." ¶ Wordsworth summarizes: "*A people—that sacrificeth in gardens*] i.e., which comply with idolatrous practices. To 'sacrifice in gardens' is, in prophetic language, to commit idolatry. Compare ISAIAH 1:29–30; 66:17." Wordsworth also points out that the Jews were compelled to violate their own beliefs as pointed out in Maccabees and an allusion to such practices from the writings of Peter: "The time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness ... and *abominable idolatries*" (1 Peter 4:3)." Birks has: "This resumes Isaiah's earliest warning,—'Ye shall be confounded for the gardens ye have chosen' (ISAIAH 1:29). Their idolatries, in the days of the kings, were 'under every green tree' (Jeremiah 2:10). *Upon the bricks*] has been referred to the tiles of houses, where they offered incense to the queen of heaven, or to heathen inscriptions on the bricks of Babylon. But the more probable reference is to altars of forbidden worship in the garden (Alexander, Hahn, Stler). As Ahaz corrupted God's worship by a heathen altar of burnt offering, so the people are charged with offering incense to their idols on base and unworthy substitutes for the golden incense altar, which God had

ordained.” Keith proposes: “The sin of building altars with bricks (לְבִנִּים, literally, upon bricks) lay in its being contrary to the requirement that the Jewish altars should be constructed of hewn stone; a rule, like so many others in the Mosaic code, intended chiefly to preserve the separation of Israel from the heathen.” Regarding hewn stone, Keil (Keil & Delitzsch *Commentary on the Old Testament*) explains in Exodus 20:25: “The altar, as an elevation built up of earth or rough stones, was a symbol of the elevation of man to God, who is enthroned on high in the heaven; and because man was to raise himself to God in his sacrifices, Israel also was to make an altar, though only of earth, or if of stones, not of hewn stones. ‘For if thou swingest thy tool (כְּתִרָה lit., sharpness, then any edge tool) over it (over the stone), thou defilest it.’ ‘Of earth:’ i.e., not ‘of comparatively simple materials, such as befitted a representation of the creature’ (*Schultz* on Deuteronomy 12); for the altar was not to represent the creature, but to be the place to which God came to receive man into His fellowship there. For this reason the altar was to be made of the same material, which formed the earthly soil for the kingdom of God, either of earth or else of stones, just as they existed in their natural state ... because the altar was to set forth the nature of the simple earthly soil, unaltered by the hand of man.” Kay has: “burneth incense upon bricks] altars of brick; erected ‘on the mountains’ (ISAIAH 65:7; 2 Kings 16:4; Hosea 4:13); or on roofs of houses (Jeremiah 19:13; 32:29): the appointed place being ‘the roof’ of that golden altar (Exodus 30:3), which was hidden away in the sanctuary, on which the high-priest was daily to burn incense (Exodus 30:7–8) which was ceremonially cleansed every year on the Day of Atonement (Exodus 30:10). Thus the altar-incense represented the fragrance of Israel’s self-devotion, reverentially offered in God’s own appointed way, by ministers of His own constituting, and under the protection of the great Atonement. The popular incense-burning, in contrast to all this, told men that they might go forth and offer their own unauthorized will-worship, boldly, in their own name, in the face of the universe and of God Himself.” Note Kay’s emphasis on *authority* and *lack of authority*. The latter, effected in the name of the person carrying it out and without authority; the former, by the proper authority and in the name of God. President Spencer W. Kimball taught: “It is a terrible thing for any human being to use the names of Deity in disrespect. And this includes the use of the name of the Lord without authority, and there are many people who claim revelations and claim authority who do not have it directly from the Lord. Through the ages, the prophets have never ceased to rebuke this grave sin. The prophet Isaiah called to accounting and repentance those ‘which swear by the name of the Lord, and make

mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth, nor in righteousness’ (ISAIAH 48:1).”⁶ In *Doctrine and Covenants* we read from the Savior: “Behold, I am Alpha and Omega, even Jesus Christ. Wherefore, let all men beware how they take my name in their lips—For behold, verily I say, that many there be who are under this condemnation, who use the name of the Lord, and use it in vain, having not authority” (D&C 63:60–62). Brother Robert L. Millet beautifully put it: “We are to do *all* things in the name of the Son. We are to speak and act and worship and perform the labors of the kingdom and the labors of life in the name of the Son. Whenever the gospel has been on the earth, he has empowered others to act in his holy name, extending an investiture of his divine authority to chosen servants and recognizing the acts they perform by his word. Likewise, the everlasting gospel has been restored in our day ‘that every man might speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world’ (D&C 1:20).”⁷ All ordinances, then, need to be carried out *as the Lord has instructed* and by *properly authorized priesthood servants*. Furthermore, we are also guilty of idolatry when we place our trust in the arm of flesh rather than in that of God. We may call it the idolatry of false science, or the idolatry of vain philosophy or *intellectual idols*. For no true science or pursuit of understanding will contradict the word of the Lord.

4 Which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments; which eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable beasts, ~~[things is in]~~ and pollute their vessels;

✓ or, pieces

Which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “Who dwell in houses, which are built of the dust of graves, with the dead bodies of the sons of men they dwell.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “They sleep in tombs and in caverns for the purpose of dreaming.” Instead of *monuments*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *caves*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, “That dwell in sepulchers, and sleep in the temple of idols.” ¶ Birks has: “The words refer to necromancy and offerings to the dead.” Wade suggests: “*which sit ... graves*] i.e. for the purpose of necromancy. Oracles from the dead (who were credited with possessing knowledge not enjoyed by the living) were supposed to be conveyed in dreams to persons who passed the night

⁶ Kimball, President Spencer W. “President Kimball Speaks Out on Profanity.” First Presidency Message. February 1981 *Ensign*.

⁷ Millet, Robert L., Dean of Religious Education at Brigham Young University, “Honoring His Holy Name.” March 1994 *Ensign*.

in burial places, and the LXX here adds διὰ ἐνύπνια.⁸ The practice prevailed among the Greeks and Romans as well as among the Semites ...” ¶ *Which eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable beasts, and pollute their vessels.* The LXX (Ⲫ) and the Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲑ) renders it: “All their vessels are polluted” and “And pollute their vessels,” respectively. The Peshitta (Ⲑ) has them polluting their vessels “with *unclean carcasses* (Lamsa) / *carcasses* or *cadavers* (BPE).” The Douay-Rheims (ⲑ) has, “That eat swine's flesh, and profane broth is in their vessels.” ¶ Regarding the pots themselves, Rabbi Rosenberg leaning on Redak has: “The fat of the broth always adheres to their vessels, so that it is apparent that they have cooked forbidden food therein.” Birks explains: “Eating swine's flesh, and drinking their broth in sacrifice, would be a contemptuous rejection of the law of God. Perhaps the charge is to be explained by ISAIAH 66:3, that their pride and rebellion made even their legal sacrifices like illegal abominations.” Cheyne points out to both Leviticus 11:7 and Deuteronomy 14:8. Rawlinson, along with numerous exegetes, suggests: “*Which eat swine's flesh*] Not in mere defiance of the Law, but in sacrificial meals (ISAIAH 66:17) of which swine's flesh formed a part. Swine were sacrificial animals in Egypt (Herodotus 2:47–48), in Phœnicia (Lucian, ‘De Dea Syra,’ § 54), and with the Greeks and Romans. They do not appear to have been employed for the purpose either by the Assyrians or the Babylonians. It was probably in Palestine that the Jews had eaten ‘swine's flesh,’ at sacrifices to Baal or Astarte (Ashtoreth). In later times to do so was regarded as one of the worst abominations (1 Maccabees 1:41–64; 2 Maccabees 6 and 7). *Broth of abominable things*] Either broth made from swine's flesh, or from the flesh of other unclean animals, as the hare and rabbit (Leviticus 11:5–6), or perhaps simply broth made from the flesh of any animals that had been offered to idols (Acts 15:29).” Either way, eating swine was an abomination before the Lord. ¶ Kay notes: “Antiochus employed it [willingness vs. unwillingness to sacrifice or eat swine's flesh—GB] as his test of Judaism (1 Maccabees 1:41–64; cp. 2 Maccabees 6:18).” Regarding abominable flesh, Kay points us to “Then said I, Ah Lord GOD! behold, my soul hath not been polluted: for from my youth up even till now have I not eaten of that which dieth of itself, or is torn in pieces; neither came there abominable flesh into my mouth” (Ezekiel 4:14). We are also reminded of Peter in Acts 10:9 ff., associated with the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles in the New Testament.

5 Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou.

⁸ For the purpose of dreaming.

These [are] a smoke in my nose, ✓ a fire that burneth all the day.

✓ or, anger

Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. The Targum (Ⲫ) has, “purer” for *holier*. The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “Yet they say, ‘Keep at a distance from me; come not near me, for I am clean.’” The Peshitta (Ⲑ) reads something like, “Which say: step back, do not come near me; for I am *purified* (BPE) / *sanctified* (Lamsa).” The Douay-Rheims (ⲑ) has, “That say: Depart from me, come not near me, because thou art unclean.” ¶ Birks has: “A striking picture of the pride of the Pharisees.” So also Cowles: “This sanctimonious bigotry, ‘Keep to thyself,’ paints strongly the ostentatious, exclusive, uncharitable spirit of the Pharisees of our Savior's time.” Kay interestingly notes: “*I am holier than thou*] A deep insight is here given us into the nature of the mysterious fascination, which heathenism exercised ... on the people ... The man, who had been offering incense on the [pagan] mountain-top, *despised* the penitent who went to the temple to present ‘a broken and contrite heart.’ If Pharisaism led to a like result, it was because it, too, had emptied the Law of its spiritual import, and turned its provisions into intellectual *idols*.” ¶ In one of my consulting trips to Washington State, a professing Christian refused to shake my hand when he found out I was a Latter-day Saint—but he had no trouble accepting the tip I had offered him. Gladly, such behavior has been the exception rather than the rule in my life. ¶ *These [are] a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day.* The Targum (Ⲫ) has, “These their provocations are as smoke before me: their recompense shall be in hell, where the fire burneth all the day.” The LXX (Ⲫ) reads, “This is a smoke which causeth my wrath; a fire is kindled by it every day.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲑ) has, for the first clause, “These shall be smoke in my anger.” ¶ Cowles has: “As the word rendered ‘nose,’ legitimately means ‘anger,’ according to the English margin ||, and as the parallel clause, ‘a fire that burneth all the day,’ cannot well be said of that which is merely disagreeable (like smoke), it is better to give both clauses this sense: They are (shall become) as smoke under my anger; a fire burning all the day; *i.e.*, they shall be surely consumed in the fierceness of my displeasure. So God doomed the proud sanctimonious hypocrites of the Savior's time. The event shortly fulfilled the fearful prediction.” ¶ The Jerusalem siege, to which Cowles alludes to here, took place 70 AD and would only be a type of the greater burning associated with the Second Coming as well as the one associated with the final transformation of the earth. The Savior, during His visit to the American continent after His resurrection, “expound all things, even from the

beginning until the time that he should come in his glory—yea, even all things which should come upon the face of the earth, even until the elements should melt with fervent heat, and the earth should be wrapt together as a scroll, and the heavens and the earth should pass away” (3 Nephi 26:3). So it is that we may profitably ask how the twin sins of pride and hypocrisy affect our lives today—rather than assume these were only the tribulations of the Pharisees. As we read below (ISAIAH 65:20, particularly see notes from Elder Bruce R. McConkie), even during the Millennium, when knowledge will abound, there will be open rebellion against the Lord. ¶ Kay notes: “*a smoke in my nose*” (cp. Psalm 18:8). Instead of an acceptable fragrance, they send forth offensive smoke; for they have the wrath of God (as a ‘burning fire,’ *s.w.a.* Deuteronomy 32:22) perpetually abiding on them.” Skinner, although he is of a different view, shares the following: “*These are a smoke in my nose*] If the clause stood alone it would be interpreted as a figurative expression of the idea of ISAIAH 65:3a—a smoke entering into and irritating the nostrils. The parallel clause, however, has led nearly all commentators to understand the ‘smoke’ as a symbol of the Divine anger (cf. Psalm 18:8); and to paraphrase the line thus: ‘these are (the cause of) a smoke (proceeding from) my nostrils.’” Skinner points us to Jeremiah, “... and I will cause thee to serve thine enemies in the land which thou knowest not: for ye have kindled a fire in mine anger, *which* shall burn for ever” (Jeremiah 17:4b).

6 Behold, [it is] written before me: I will not keep silence, but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom,

The Targum (Ⲯ) has, after the first clause, “I will not give unto them prolongation in this life; but I will recompense unto them the wages for their sins, and deliver their bodies to the second death.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Behold it is written before me: I will not keep silence, until I have retributed into their bosom their sins.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has, for the second clause, “I will not keep silence until I recompense them a double portion into their bosom.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, for the second clause, “But I will render and repay into their bosom.” ¶ The word *recompense* is in modern language (especially in Spanish, *recompensa*) often associated with a positive reward, but the archaic meaning is closer to the Biblical one, to suffer the consequences for behavior—either righteous or unrighteous. Gesenius explains regarding one of the definitions of שָׁלַם: “(4) to requite, to recompense ... to recompense to any one according to his works, Psalm 62:13; Jeremiah 50:29.” In Alma 41 we learn how we

will be judged according to the desires of our hearts and the resulting works. A number of General Authorities have taught that it is not just a balancing scale between the good and the bad in our lives, but rather, the type of individuals we have become. ¶ Cowles says, “This is strongly in the tone of retribution. ‘*Written* before me,’ in the sense of being fixed, determined upon. The next clause gives at least the substance of this determined purpose, if not the very words ... The phrase, ‘recompense *into their bosom*,’ is thought to come from the original usage of drawing a loose garment (a vail or mantle) so as to form a capacious sack at the bosom into which articles might be poured. Thus Boaz said to Ruth, ‘Bring the vail that thou hast upon thee and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six measures of barley and laid it on her’ (Ruth 3:15).” Rawlinson explains: “*But will recompense, etc.*] rather, *until I have recompensed, yea, recompensed them into their bosoms* (comp. Luke 6:38). Gifts were given and received into the fold of the *begeg*,⁹ or cloak, which depended¹⁰ in front of the bosom.” Skinner also, “*I will not keep silence until I have recompensed*] For the construction cf. Genesis 32:26; Leviticus 22:6, &c.” So also Leeser, who renders it: “Behold, it is written before me; I will not keep silence, till I have recompensed, yea, recompensed into their bosom.—” ¶ Kay associates these words with those in *Rain in Due Season* and says: “*Written*] in the Law generally (Deuteronomy 29:20–21): but especially in the Song of Moses, Deuteronomy 32:35, 41 (compare with ISAIAH 65:15, below). *Not keep silence*] compare with Psalm 50:3. *Into their bosom*] in requital of the iniquity, which they had ‘hid’ in it (Job 31:33¹¹).” Skinner points us to Jeremiah, “The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, *and* with the point of a diamond: *it is* graven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars” (Jeremiah 17:1).

7 Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the LORD, which have burned incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed me upon the hills: therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom.

Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the LORD. The Targum (Ⲯ) adds, “are revealed before me.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And the sins of their fathers, saith the Lord.” ¶ Kay observes

⁹ בִּגְדָּה. Clothing, garment or covering, see Strong, Vine, Gesenius.

¹⁰ See Webster, “to hand down.”

¹¹ “... by hiding mine iniquity in my bosom” (Job 31:33b).

regarding **אָמַר יְהוָה**, “saith the Lord”] The frequency, with which this formula (or its equivalent) recurs in this and the next chapter, is remarkable.” Rawlinson suggests that this clause refers back to **שְׁלֵמֶתִי**, *I will recompense*. Earlier we read: “But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear” (ISAIAH 59:2). When instead the Lord has commended us: “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you” (2 Corinthians 6:17). We are to live in the world but not be part of the world as Jesus taught in His Intercessory Prayer: “I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world” (John 17:14–16). ¶ *Which have burned incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed me upon the hills:* The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “They have burned incense on the mounts, and treated me with scorn on the hills.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “Who have sacrificed upon the mountains, and have reproached me upon the hills.” Kay has: “*which have*] Or, ‘for that they have.’ *blasphemed me*] Resorting to idols, as though I were negligent or powerless.” ¶ *Therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom.* The Targum (ⲉ) has, “give the reward” for *measure*. The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “I will retribute their works into their bosom.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “And I will measure back their first work in their bosom.” ¶ Skinner proposes: “The word for ‘former’ (**רִאשֹׁנָה**) if an adjective, ought to have the article, and moreover the thought expressed by this translation would be unsuitable, since it passes by in silence the recompense due to the sins of the children themselves. It must therefore be rendered as an adverb, as in Jeremiah 16:18 (‘and first I will recompense their iniquity’ &c.). So Revised Version.” ¶ Also, we need to consider that our former sins return to us if having left mystic Babylon for Zion we then decide to return to Babylon.

vv. 8–10. Rawlinson suggests: “In Isaiah, and especially in ... ISAIAH 40–66, promises are almost always intermingled with threatenings. The threats extend to the bulk of the nation; the promises are limited to ‘a remnant’ ... Here the announcement that a remnant would be spared is introduced by a simile from men’s treatment of their own vineyards.” Skinner has: “In spite of the gross idolatries denounced in the preceding section there is that in Israel which makes it precious in the sight of Jehovah, and ensures for it a brilliant future.”

8 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and [one] saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing [is] in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all.

Thus saith the LORD, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and [one] saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing [is] in it: The Targum (ⲉ) has, “Thus saith the Lord, As Noah was found righteous in the generation of the deluge, and I said that I would not destroy him, for the purpose that I might raise up the world by him.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Thus saith the Lord, as when a good grape is found in the cluster, they will say, ‘Destroy it not; for there is a blessing in it.’” Instead of *[one] saith*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *one says to another*. The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “Thus saith the Lord: As if a grain be found in a cluster, and it be said: Destroy it not, because it is a blessing.” ¶ Birks explains: “The contrast lies, perhaps ... between an unripe cluster, and the same when fully ripened. New wine ‘is found in the cluster,’ belongs to it as the usual result, when the vintage comes. ‘And one saith,’ even while it is unripe, and the grapes are sour and worthless, ‘Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it.’ The wise vinedresser restrains every rash hand that would destroy the cluster, because at present worthless, by reminding them of the blessing when the full ripeness is come. So God would deal with His people, still beloved for their fathers’ sakes. With such rich promises of future blessing in store, they should be sorely chastened, but not crushed or utterly destroyed. At length, like the clusters of Eshcol,¹² they should yield, in a righteous generation, the precious new wine of the kingdom of God.” Kay explains it thus: “*Destroy it not*] Both the second member of the verse and ISAIAH 65:9 imply that this refers not simply to the cluster, but to it and the branch on which it grows. The vine-dresser, as he is about to cut down a degenerate vine, espies a full rich cluster on one part, and gives orders that the plant shall not be wholly *destroyed* (Luther, Marloratus); so it shall be now with the vines of Jacob and Judah (ISAIAH 65:9). The denunciations in ISAIAH 65:2–7 (compare ISAIAH 65:15, and ISAIAH 64:6–7) appeared to include the *whole people*. But it was not so: there should still be a holy ‘seed’ (ISAIAH 64:9, 23; cp. ISAIAH 6:13; Romans 11:5) ...” The Lord sees the potential of His people, scattered Israel, and does not wish her to be extinguished, but rather preserved for the latter days. Many exegetes focus on the rotten or bad grapes, along with good ones. From a viticulture perspective, I prefer the explanations of

¹² See Numbers 13:23–24.

Birks and Kay. The expression regarding the *new wine* found in the cluster is not an implication that we are speaking of grape juice, but rather, that the vinedresser can already mentally sense the joy of the new wine (grape juice that has gone through the first fermentation) well before the grapes ripen. ¶ We have a similar situation in the allegory found in Jacob 5, of the tame and wild olive orchards. There the Master says, “I do it that I may preserve unto myself the natural branches of the tree; and also, that I may lay up fruit thereof against the season, unto myself; for it grieveth me that I should lose this tree and the fruit thereof” (Jacob 5:13b). When the Master threatened to cut down the trees, his servant pleaded for its preservation. A second person seems to talk, also, in this Isaianic verse, possibly a servant . . . , “*and one saith, destroy it not, for a blessing is in it.*” “Spare the vine (or the branch), do not cut it down, for there is yet life and sap in it, and it may grow, and bring forth much fruit.” ¶ The primary meaning of this verse is that of the preservation of the natural branches of Israel to be grafted-in during the latter days. But also, as a secondary signification when likening the scriptures unto ourselves, God sees each of our potential and has more confidence in us than we have in ourselves. Satan is busy destroying our self-worth and pointing the accusatory finger. Part of the pure love Christ is to see the potential in others—what the Lord sees in them—rather than what we may, on the surface, observe with our human eyes. If we are to be effective missionaries, it is requisite we see with these loving eyes. ¶ *So will I do for my servants’ sakes, that I may not destroy them all.* The Targum (Ⲯ) specifies עֲבָדֵי צְדִיקָא, “righteous servants.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “So will I do for the sake of him who serveth me; for his sake I will not destroy them all.” ¶ Luther says: “An objection precedes the question, as Abraham says (Genesis 18:23), ‘Wilt Thou indeed destroy the righteous with the wicked?’ To this objection God answers, ‘I will not do it.’ For God knows how to save the godly and confound the ungodly. ¶ In September 2001 I wrote in my journal, “My tangerine tree is all but dead.” Oh, how I loved that tangerine tree. It was my favorite fruit tree in my property and the fruit was so delicious. But this tangerine tree died. I had another tree, one that I despised, an orange tree that did not give fruit. My youngest son, Miguel, pleaded with me not to cut it off and I heeded. In time that tree grew and yielded some of the best oranges I have ever eaten. The pleadings of my son saved that orange tree. Despite its apparent worthlessness, the orange tree would come to yield wonderful fruit. Once again, the Lord knows each one of us and He has more confidence in us than we do, “... for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7).

9 And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.

And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “I will indeed bring forth the seed from Jacob namely, from Juda, and he shall inherit my holy mountain.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has *possessor* instead of *inheritor*. ¶ Redak, in Rabbi Rosenberg, explains that *Jacob* stands for the ten tribes while *Judah* for the two: Benjamin and Judah. Keith suggests: “This seed from Jacob and Judah, who are to inherit the land once more, are the ripe vine-clusters of the previous figure.” Or, the transplanted vine. These are, indeed, all of scattered Israel which will be gathered in the last days through the Bible and the Book of Mormon. Jenour offers a couple of suggestions including: “... does not this promise refer rather to the restoration of the Jews in the latter days? The words seem to imply, not merely that a few of them, like the apostles and evangelists, should be the means of raising up a spiritual seed from among the Gentiles, but that, in due time, the whole nation shall again obtain possession of the Holy Land, and dwell at Jerusalem?” ¶ The *inheritor of my mountains* refers to both the gathering of the Saints beginning with Ephraim to the Rocky Mountains as well as the gathering of *Judah* to the Holy Land. Delitzsch well says: “*out of Jacob and Judah*], i.e., the people of the two captivities (see ISAIAH 56:3).” The first captivity refers to that of the ten tribes or Ephraim; the second, that of Judah and Benjamin. Kay has, “*bring forth a seed*] sprung from Jacob, yet discriminated from the mass of the nation; the seed of God’s *elect Servant* (ISAIAH 53:10¹³): whence they also are called, *Mine elect ones, My servants.*” Rawlinson observes regarding the Holy Land: “*An inheritor of my mountains*] The whole of Palestine is little more than a cluster of mountains.” McFadyen has: “Throughout this chapter the faithful are frequently called *my servants*, and they are rewarded with secure possession of the *mountain* land of Palestine, in its length and breadth—from *Sharon*, the plain between Carmel and Joppa, to the *valley of Achor* near Jericho.” To these mountains, we can add the Rocky Mountains as mentioned above, in reference to the gathering of Ephraim and *his companions*. ¶ *And mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.* The Targum (Ⲯ) specifies, “righteous servant.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And my chosen ones and my servants shall inherit and dwell

¹³ See Mosiah 15:10–14.

there.” Rawlinson has: “*Mine elect*] (comp. ISAIAH 43:20; 45:4). The same expression is used of Israel in 1 Chronicles 16:13; Psalm 89:3; 105:6, 43; 106:5. God ‘chose’ Israel out of all the nations of the earth to be his ‘peculiar people.’” ¶ Perhaps the inheritance speaks especially of the condition of the earth after it is exalted and only celestial beings live there.

10 And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me.

And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in. The LXX (Ⓜ) reads, “And there shall be in the forest folds for flocks; and the valley of Achor shall be a resting place of herds.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, for the first clause, “And the plains shall be turned to folds of flocks.” ¶ The tone seems to be that of the Millennial Day. Kay observes: “The whole land shall be in peace; from Sharon (ISAIAH 33:9) in the west, to the valley of Achor (Joshua 7:24; Hosea 2:15) in the east.” ¶ *For my people that have sought me.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “For my people which have sought my fear.” The LXX (Ⓜ) reads, “For my people who have sought me.” Keith has: “Since the Lord has shewn rich grace even to Gentiles who had not sought Him, how much more will He bless His ancient people, whose are the fathers and the covenants, when they turn to Him in godly sorrow! (comp. Romans 11:24).” Rawlinson has: “*My people that have sought me*] or, *inquired of me* [גָּדַלְתִּי מִי] from the root גָּדַל—the same verb as that used at the beginning of the chapter [גָּדַלְתִּי מִי].” Do we wish to be counted among those who seek after the Lord?

vv. 11–16. After seeing the future glory of Israel, Isaiah turns back to the apostasy that would mean the scattering of Israel and Judah throughout the world.

11 ¶ But ye [are] they that forsake the LORD, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for that troop, and that furnish the drink offering unto that number. ✓ ✓

✓ or, Gad

✓ ✓ or, Meni

But ye [are] they that forsake the LORD, that forget my holy mountain. The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “But ye, O house of Israel, ye have forsaken the worship of the Lord, ye have forgotten the worship of my holy mountain.” The

LXX (Ⓜ) reads, “But as for you, who forsake me and forget my holy mountain.” ¶ Shalom Paul notes: “*But as for you who forsake the Lord*] The *waw* [ו] at the beginning of the verse indicates contrast. For forsaking the Lord as the opposite of seeking the Lord (the end of the previous verse), see ISAIAH 58:2; 1 Chronicles 28:9¹⁴.” Keith suggests: “We may assume that they refer to actual forms of idolatry in the days of the prophet, representing some kindred evils of the last days.” Regarding the *holy mountain*, it speaks of those who had neglected Temple and substituted it for idolatrous worship. Skinner’s words are interesting here, as he belongs to the critical school, because they acknowledge that the verse may well be speaking of the temple: “The phrase may denote either simple indifference to the welfare of Zion (cf. Psalm 137:5), or deliberate abstention from the Temple ritual. The second view implies residence in Palestine at a time when the Temple services were in full operation; hence the other is necessarily adopted by all who hold the prophecy to have been written in Babylon. It is perhaps impossible to decide which is right, although those who recognise a Palestinian colouring throughout the chapter will naturally prefer the second as the more forcible interpretation, and find in it some confirmation of their theory.” McFadyen, alluding back to ISAIAH 65:9, has: “In contrast with this happy destiny of the faithful will be the bloody doom of the idolaters who *forget my holy mountain ...*” ¶ *That prepare a table for that troop, and that furnish the drink offering unto that number.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “That prepare tables for the idols, and mix goblets for their gods.” The LXX (Ⓜ) reads, “And who prepare a table for the Demon, and fill up a mixed potion for Fortune.” Instead of *that troop*, the Peshitta (Ⓟ) has *fortune tellers* (Lamsa) / *Fortune* (i.e., the pagan goddess of luck, BPE); instead of *that number*, *bowls* (Ⓢ). The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “That set a table for fortune, and offer libations upon it.” ¶ Note the margin ||, **Gad** (גָּד) and **Meni** (מֵנִי). Gad was one of the twelve patriarchs: one of Jacob’s sons through Zilpah, Leah’s servant. But here it refers to an idol. In TDOT, we read that “All examples indicate that ‘fortune’ is to be assumed as the original meaning. The LXX and Vulgate, which translate the appellative by Τύχη and *felix* [my copies of the Latin Vulgate (Ⓟ) have *Fortunae* —GB] respectively (cf. Genesis 30:11¹⁵), confirm this. But beyond this גָּד also serves as a proper name for a Semitic deity or as an epithet of local deities.” Ottley has: “τῷ δαιμονίῳ ... τῇ τύχῃ] Heb. *Gad ... Meni*, two

¹⁴ But if abandon, אָבַדְתִּי אֶת־בְּנֵי (1 Chronicles 28:9b).

¹⁵ Leeser offers for Genesis 30:11, “And Leah said, Good luck hath come: and she called his name Gad.” See also the LDS 2009 Reina Valera for the Genesis quote as well as ISAIAH 65:11–12—both of which are very close to Leeser and other like translations.

heathen deities, probably Syrian, the star-gods Jupiter and Venus, the ‘Greater and Lesser Fortune’ of astrologers ... Gad means ‘Fortune,’ and Meni perhaps ‘number,’ and so ‘destiny’: cf. Jeremiah 33:13, Daniel 5:25. We might have expected Τύχη therefore to correspond to the former. Probably the two were regarded as near akin.”¹⁶ Leeser translates ISAIAH 65:11b, “that set out a table for the god of Fortune, and that fill for Destiny the drink-offering.” After listing a number of views on who Gad and Meni represented, Barnes says: “That two idols are intended here, there can be no doubt. For, (1) The circumstance mentioned of their preparing a table for them, and pouring out a drink-offering, is expressive of idolatry. (2) The connection implies this, as the reproof in this chapter is to a considerable extent for their idolatry. (3) ... [Regarding Gad, Fortune] It is agreed on all hands that some idol is here referred to that was extensively worshipped in the East; and the general impression is, that it was an idol representing Fortune. But whether it was the Sun, or the planet Jupiter, is not easy to determine. [Regarding Meni] ... It seems to be agreed that the word refers to the worship of either the moon or the planet Venus, regarded as the goddess of good fortune. It is not very material which is intended, nor is it easy to determine. ... The leading idea of the prophet is ... [that they had forsaken Yahweh] and [were] endeavoring to propitiate the favor of idol-gods.” ¶ Barnes has: “*That forget my holy mountain*] Mount Moriah, the sacred mountain on which the temple was built. *That prepare a table*] It was usual to set food and drink before idols – with the belief that the gods consumed what was thus placed before them ... In all ancient worship, it was customary to pour out a libation, or a drink-offering. This was done among idolaters, to complete the idea of a repast. As they placed food before the idols, so they also poured out wine before them, with the idea of propitiating them.” Skinner suggests: “The rites described are the *lectisternia*,¹⁷ well known throughout the ancient world, in which a table was spread, furnished with meats and drinks as a meal for the gods (Liv. v. 13; Herodotus 1:183; Ep. of Jeremiah, vv. 27 f.; Bel and the Dragon, v. w, cf. Jeremiah 7:18; 19:13; 44:17; 1 Corinthians 10:21) ... Gesenius remarks that the description of the complete

lectisternium extends over both members of the parallelism, and infers that the two deities were worshipped together.” ¶ McFadyen well points out: “This deliberate worship of foreign gods, coupled with the practice of necromancy and the other mystic, superstitious, and illegal rites alluded to in ISAIAH 65:3 f., sheds a very lurid light on the religious conditions which Ezra, Nehemiah, and the reforming party had to face, and goes a long way to justify their severe and exclusive policy.”

12 Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose [that] wherein I delighted not.

Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “them” rather than *you* in the first instance. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “You I will deliver up to the sword; you shall all bow down to slaughter.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “I will number you in the sword, and you shall all fall by slaughter.” ¶ Leeser translates as: “Yea, I will destine you to the sword, and all of you shall kneel down to the slaughter.” Cowles suggests that as the people were attracted to idolatrous worship, they would be destined to punishment: “The terms he uses would remind them of their sin. Ye pour out your drink-offerings to a fancied *Destiny*; I *Destine* you to the sword.” Rawlinson well observes: “Not, perhaps, intended literally. Wicked men are God’s sword (Psalm 17:13), and deliverance into their hand would be deliverance to the sword ...” Skinner notes the paronomasia: “There is a play upon words between the verb for ‘destine’ (ⲙⲛⲁⲣ) and Meni in ISAIAH 65:11

(ⲙⲛⲓ).” ¶ *Because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Because I sent my prophets, and ye repented (literally, ‘returned’) not; they prophesied, and ye did not receive them (or ‘obey them’).” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Because I called and you answered not: I spake and you would not listen.” ¶ Cowles suggests: “No calls from God availed toward reclaiming them to himself. Their depravity baffled every moral endeavor to save them.” This brings us back to ISAIAH 65:2b, where we read of the Lord’s tender invitation: “For I have spread out my hands all the day unto a people who walketh not in my ways.” ¶ *But did evil before mine eyes, and did choose [that] wherein I delighted not.* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “But did what is evil in my sight; and chose the things in which I did not delight.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲟ) has, “And you

¹⁶ Ottley, R. R. (Ed.). (1906). *The Book of Isaiah according to the Septuagint* (Codex Alexandrinus) (2:381–382). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁷ “*Lectisternium* (Lat. lectus, a couch, and sternere, to spread), a religious festival ceremony among the ancient Romans. It was celebrated during times of public calamity, when the gods were invited to the entertainment, and their statues taken from their pedestals and laid on couches” (M’Clintock, J., & Strong, J. (1882). *Lectisternium*. In *Cyclopædia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature* (5:318). New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers).

did evil in my eyes, and you have chosen the things that displease me.” ¶ Man is given the moral agency to choose between that which is pleasing to God and that which is not right. Some philosophies suggest that there is no such thing as right and wrong, but surely these things exist.

13 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed:

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: The Targum (ⲧ) specifies, “righteous servants” in contraposition to the wicked who would be *hungry*. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold my servants shall eat but you shall be hungry.” ¶ The contrast here is between those who in the latter days would return to the Lord—and those who persist in remaining in a state of apostasy. Elder George Q. Cannon explained: “Herein we possess advantages not possessed by other people; we have revelation to guide us, we have the word of the Lord in our midst; we are not dependent upon man’s wisdom, nor upon human plans, but we have the wisdom of eternity manifested through the servants of God to guide us. We have the opportunity of building up the Kingdom of God and of carrying out the designs of heaven according to His plan; and if we will do so we shall fulfil the word of the Lord given anciently, when speaking of and comparing his people with the people of the world. Said he, ‘My servants shall eat, and you shall be hungry: my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: my servants shall rejoice, but you shall be ashamed: my servants shall sing with gladness of heart, but you shall sorrow with sadness of heart, and howl with vexation of spirit. And ye shall leave your name as a curse to my chosen: for the Lord God shall slay thee, and call His servants by another name.’”¹⁸ ¶ *Behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty:* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “righteous servants” in contrast to the *wicked*, who would be *thirsty*. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Behold my servants shall drink; but you shall be thirsty.” ¶ Speaking to the Samaritan woman by the well: “Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John

4:13–14). These are invitations to discipleship.

¶ *Behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed:* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “righteous servants” in contrast to the *wicked*, who would be *ashamed*. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Behold my servants shall rejoice; but you shall be ashamed.” Instead of *ashamed*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *weep* (Lamsa) / *lament* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has *confounded* instead of *ashamed*. ¶ This rejoicing begins in this life and continues throughout eternity.

14 Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit.

✓ breaking

Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “righteous servants.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Behold my servants shall triumph with joy.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “Behold my servants shall praise for joyfulness of heart.” ¶ *But ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit.* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “But you shall scream for sorrow of heart, and howl for anguish of spirit.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “And you shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for grief of spirit.” ¶ Once again, joy in this life and exaltation in the world to come is offered to the true disciples.

15 And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord GOD shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name:

And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For you shall leave your name for a loathing to my chosen.” The Douay-Rheims (ⲫ) has, “And you shall leave your name for an execration to my elect.” ¶ Kay explains it: “*for a curse*] Lit. ‘an oath;’ *s.w.a.*¹⁹ in the formula, with which the priest was to administer the water of jealousy; ‘the Lord make thee for a curse and *for an oath* (*s.w.*) among thy people.’ So would it be with unfaithful Israel (ISAIAH 57:8), when the ‘jealousy’ of the Lord should ‘smoke against’ them (Deuteronomy 29:20). Cp. with ISAIAH 65:16. *Obs.* In Numbers 5:23 the priest was directed to ‘write these curses in a book.’ The same words are used in Deuteronomy 29:20–21, 27, respecting the curses which were recorded by Moses against the national infidelity.” Cheyne suggests: “*For a curse*] i.e., as the centre of a formula of imprecation. Comp. Numbers

¹⁸ Elder George Q. Cannon, “Necessity of Union and Obedience to Counsel.” Bowery, Great Salt Lake City, 7 April 1867. JD 12:16b.

¹⁹ Same way as.

5:21; Zechariah 8:13; Psalm 102:8, and especially Jeremiah 29:22, ‘And from thee shall be taken a curse ... saying, Jehovah make thee like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon wasted in the fire.’ The formula is quoted imperfectly, like the first words of a song.” ¶ *For the Lord GOD shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name*: The Targum (ⲧ) has, “slay with the second death” and “call His righteous servants by another name.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “As for you, the Lord will destroy you; but to my servants, a new name.” ¶ In the Doctrine and Covenants we read: “Then the white stone mentioned in Revelation 2:17, will become a Urim and Thummim to each individual who receives one, whereby things pertaining to a higher order of kingdoms will be made known; And a white stone is given to each of those who come into the celestial kingdom, whereon is a new name written, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it. The new name is the key word” (D&C 130:10–11).” See also ISAIAH 62:2. Kay has: “*shall slay thee*] *s.w.a.* ISAIAH 11:4; Hosea 2:3: ‘and slay her (unfaithful Israel) with thirst.’ *another name*] not taken from Jacob or Judah (ISAIAH 65:9), but from God Himself (Amos 9:12). LXX ὄνομα καὶνόν, identifying it with the ‘new name’ of ISAIAH 62:2.” The fact that this verse is so intimately associated with the new heavens and the new earth, help point out to the proposed exegetical view given here. ¶ This in no way contradicts—but on the contrary reaffirms—the need that we each have to take upon ourselves the name of Christ. Elder Milton R. Hunter beautifully taught: “There has been a growing tendency during the past few years for ministers of various Christian religions, writers and numerous others to deny the divinity of Jesus Christ. They put forth the claim that he was a great teacher and class him among the prophets, but they deny that he was literally the Son of the true and Living God. We, the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, revolt against such teachings, because we know different. We accept Jesus Christ as our Lord, as our God, as our king, as our Savior and Redeemer ...”²⁰

16 That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.

That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “That

²⁰ Elder Milton R. Hunter, “The Only Name Given Under Heaven,” *Conference Report*, October 1952, pp. 36–39.

he who blesseth in the earth shall bless by the God of the covenant.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Shall be given which shall be blessed on the earth: for they will bless the true God.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “In which he that is blessed upon the earth, shall be blessed in God, amen.” ¶ Kay has: “*That*] So that (Genesis 13:16, s.w.) *shall bless himself*] in God; no longer in the imagination of his heart, Deuteronomy 29:19. *the God of truth*] A remarkable expression; lit. ‘the God of AMEN,’ of what is *firm and true*. Vulgate ‘in Deo Amen.’ The Targum points in the right direction when it paraphrases, ‘the God of the covenant;’ for AMEN was the word by which the assembled people on entering Canaan gave their formal assent to the conditions of God’s covenant (Deuteronomy 27:14–26; Joshua 8:33–34). The God, to whom that quality of covenant-keeping truth essentially belongs, is He in whom all shall ‘bless themselves.’ A comparison of Genesis 22:18 and Psalm 72:17 with the present verse shews that ‘the Seed of Abraham’ and the ‘Son of David’ are to be identified with this God of truth: a mystery completely realized in Him Who is ‘the AMEN, the Faithful and True Witness’ (Revelation 3:14; cp. Revelation 19:11).” Rawlinson likewise has: “*In the God of truth*] literally, *in the God of the Amen*; i.e. the God who keeps covenant and promise, to which the strongest formula of consent was the word ‘Amen’ (see Numbers 5:22; Deuteronomy 27:15–26; 1 Kings 1:36, etc.).” The righteous that live upon the earth and seek blessings will do so by turning to the Lord. ¶ Birks beautifully suggests: “The effect of the solemn judgment predicted will be deep reverence for God, as the God of truth. The restoration of Israel, the ingrafting of the olive branches after ages of unbelief, will put an open seal to the truth of all God’s prophecies, and the word of God be shewn to be ‘settled for ever in heaven.’” ¶ *And he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “God of the covenant” rather than *God of truth*. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And they who swear on the earth, will swear by the true God.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲑ) has, “And he that sweareth in the earth, shall swear by God, amen.” ¶ In the latter days, sacred oaths or promises will be restored. Some of these through oath formulas, others by the raising of the arm and hand. For instance, when we raise our hands²¹ to sustain our prophets, seers and revelators—as well as others in the Church—this we do with the *symbols of oath taking*. ¶ *Because the former*

²¹ See for instance, *Oath Formulas in Biblical Hebrew* by Blane Conklin (2011), Eisenbrauns, p. 13. One of the “authenticating elements,” explains Conklin, includes “raising of the hand.” Logos Bible Software. Book summary with this point is also mentioned in the *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* © 2012 SAGE Publications, Book List © The Society for Old Testament Study. I was interested in this book on oath formulas, but it sadly uses transliterations rather than Hebrew text.

troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes. The Targum (Ⓣ) has, for the last clause, “And because they shall be hidden from before me.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “For they will forget their former affliction and it shall not recur to their mind.” The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has *distresses* for *troubles*. In this wonderful prophetic statement the righteous are blessed with being able to completely forget their past sorrows.

vv. 17–25. The new heavens and new earth are associated with the transformations that will take place beginning with the Second Coming of Christ, at the beginning of the Millennium and then when the earth is transformed into its final Celestialized state.

17 ¶ For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. ✓

✓ come upon the heart

For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “For there shall be a new heaven and the earth shall be new.” ¶ In Ether we read about the gathering of Joseph, the Ten Tribes, as well as that of Judah; the New Jerusalem and the Old Jerusalem; as well as the new heavens and the new earth: “For as Joseph brought his father down into the land of Egypt, even so he died there; wherefore, the Lord brought a remnant of the seed of Joseph out of the land of Jerusalem, that he might be merciful unto the seed of Joseph that they should perish not, even as he was merciful unto the father of Joseph that he should perish not. Wherefore, the remnant of the house of Joseph shall be built upon this land; and it shall be a land of their inheritance; and they shall build up a holy city unto the Lord, like unto the Jerusalem of old; and they shall no more be confounded, until the end come when the earth shall pass away. *And there shall be a new heaven and a new earth; and they shall be like unto the old save the old have passed away, and all things have become new.* And then cometh the New Jerusalem; and blessed are they who dwell therein, for it is they whose garments are white through the blood of the Lamb; and they are they who are numbered among the remnant of the seed of Joseph, who were of the house of Israel. And then also cometh the Jerusalem of old; and the inhabitants thereof, blessed are they, for they have been washed in the blood of the Lamb; and they are they who were scattered and gathered in from the four quarters of the earth, and from the north countries, and are partakers of the fulfilling of the covenant which God made with their father, Abraham. And when these things come, bringeth to pass the scripture which saith, there are they who were first, who shall be last; and there are they who were last, who shall be first” (Ether

13:7–12, emphasis added). ¶ Elder Orson Pratt gives an overview of the changes to be experienced by our globe: “First its spiritual creation, secondly its temporal, in which its spiritual and temporal were combined. The next condition is that of restoring it from the fall back to a temporal condition, and then a still greater change [wherein] the new earth will look like unto a sea of glass, and those who are worthy of the celestial glory will inhabit it forever.”²² In other words, we have the (1) paradisiacal, before Adam and Eve partook of the fruit (terrestrial); (2) mortal, after Adam and Eve were expelled from the garden (telestial); (3) millennial, or the time marked by the Second Coming of Christ (terrestrial); and (4) post-millennial, when the earth is transformed into a sea of glass (celestial) conditions. Elder Orson Pratt, speaking of these two last phases explains: “We are told in this that the earth shall die, and pass away, but it shall be quickened again, for God shall quicken the earth upon which we live. It will become a new earth [says he regarding the millennial age—GB]; but will be prepared more perfectly than it was under the three other conditions in which it was placed [speaking of the celestial condition—GB].”

¶ The Brethren seemed mostly agreed that the focus of these Isaianic verses is on the millennial age. Elder Orson Pratt explained that the new heavens and the new earth have “reference to the creation that will be renewed, at the beginning of the millennium.”²³ President Joseph Fielding Smith, who spoke extensively about these verses, also said: “You can see that does not have any reference [these Isaianic verses—GB] at all to the earth when it is celestialized.²⁴ The new heaven and earth have nothing to do at all with this earth [i.e., the future celestialized one—GB] as it will be after it dies and is raised in the resurrection to be a celestial body because then there will not be any death at all. It is going to be restored as nearly as possible to what it was in the beginning. This is coming to pass [the Isaianic verses here quoted—GB] when Christ comes, and that’s part of this restoration.”²⁵ ¶ Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained the meanings of the expressions, *times of refreshing* as associated with a new earth: “This designated period, this *times of refreshing*, is to take place at the second coming of the Son of Man, in the day when the Lord sends Christ again to earth ... It is elsewhere spoken of by Jesus as ‘the regeneration when

²² Elder Orson Pratt, “The Millennium—The Final Change.” Mount Pleasant, 12 November 1879. JD 21:204–205.

²³ Elder Orson Pratt, “Heaven and Earth to Pass Away.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 1 August 1880. JD 21:327b.

²⁴ So also Rawlinson, leaning on Delitzsch: “... according to Delitzsch, represents the millennial state, not the final condition of the redeemed.”

²⁵ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Signs of the Times*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News Press, 1952, pp. 36–38.

the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory’ (Matthew 19:28). It is the day ‘when the earth shall be transfigured, even according to the pattern which was shown unto mine apostles upon the mount,’ the Lord says. It is the day when ‘the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory’ (Articles of Faith 1:10). It is the day of the ‘new earth’ that Isaiah saw the earth which will prevail when wickedness ceases ...”²⁶ ¶ Elder Orson Pratt taught about the exalted nature of some of the buildings constructed on earth: “Therefore, Latter-day Saints, when you return to build up the waste places of Zion, when you build up the New Jerusalem upon the place that he has appointed, whatever materials shall be used, by the blessing of the Priesthood, which God has ordained, these materials will endure forever: they will continue during the thousand years, without waste, and when they shall be caught up to heaven, when the earth flees away, they will still endure in all their perfection and beauty. When these cities shall descend again upon the new earth, in its immortal and eternal state, they will still be as enduring as the earth itself, no more to be subject to the curse, and therefore, will no more waste; death is gone—everything that is corruptible in its nature has ceased, so far as this habitable globe is concerned, and all sorrow and mourning are done away.”²⁷ ¶ Elder LeGrand Richards explained: “... Isaiah tells us that when that day shall come there shall be a new heaven and a new earth in which the lamb and the lion shall lie down together.”²⁸ ¶ CELESTIALIZED NEW HEAVENS AND NEW EARTH. This, as we have explained, will take place the terrestrial globe is transformed into a celestial orb. Elder Orson Pratt speaks of the final change of the earth at the millennium as the new earth: “When the thousand years are passed, the earth will be made new: it will then become a heaven, the habitation of the former and Latter-day Saints, as well as all they who prove themselves faithful who will be born during the Millennium. How long will they inhabit it? Forever”²⁹ President Brigham Young also spoke of the new earth in relation to the final celestialized globe: “The possession of all the gold and silver in the world would not satisfy the cravings of the immortal soul of man. The gift of the Holy Spirit of the Lord alone can produce a good, wholesome, contented mind. Instead of looking for gold and silver, look to the heavens and try to learn wisdom until you can organize

the native elements for your benefit; then, and not until then, will you begin to possess the true riches. All the riches, wealth, glory and happiness that we shall ever possess in heaven will be possessed on and around this earth when it is brought up into the presence of God in a sanctified and glorified state; and the sanctified ones who enter through the gate and pass the sentinel into the New Jerusalem,³⁰ and into the presence of the Father and the Son, are the ones who will inherit the new heavens and the new earth in the presence of God, for here is the eternity, the glory and the power.”³¹ ¶ In the Book of Revelation we have—and note the great promise from *Rain in Due Season* contained therein: “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and *they shall be his people*, and God himself shall be with them, and *be their God*. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away” (Revelation 21:1–4, emphasis added, and compare with ISAIAH 65:17–19). ¶ Oswalt, leaning on Delitzsch, well says that these several periods “seem to be telescoped³² together.” ¶ *And the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind*. The LXX (6) reads, “And they shall no more remember former things, nor shall they ever come again into their mind.” The Douay-Rheims (7) has, for the second clause, “And they shall not come upon the heart.” ¶ As in the margin ¶, the literal Hebrew speaks of the heart, but it encompassed the idea of the thoughts:

: **וְלֹא תִּזְכְּרֶנָּה עַל-לֵב**. LITV translates as: “and they shall not go up on the heart.” ¶ President Joseph Fielding Smith tells us, “That is, the earth as it is now, this mundane earth covered all over its face with wickedness will not be remembered when this change comes. We will be glad to get rid of this condition, and we will not bring it up to mind. Remember, in speaking of the heavens he is not referring to the sidereal

²⁶ Bruce R. McConkie, “The Times of Refreshing.” *Conference Report*, October 1967, pp. 42–44.

²⁷ Elder Orson Pratt, “The Coming Millennium and Triumph of the Saints.” Eighteenth Ward Meetinghouse, Salt Lake City, 25 February 1877. JD 18:348b.

²⁸ Elder LeGrand Richards, “Laying a Foundation for the Millennium.” October 1971 General Conference. Also see October 1974 General Conference, “What after death?”

²⁹ Elder Orson Pratt, “Transformation of the Earth.” New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 12 November 1876. JD 18:295b.

³⁰ Rawlinson agrees with the LDS perspective regarding the New Jerusalem: “The ‘new Jerusalem’ is not the old Jerusalem renovated, but is a veritable ‘new Jerusalem,’ ‘created a rejoicing’ (ISAIAH 65:18; comp. Revelation 21:2).”

³¹ President Brigham Young, “True Riches.” Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 8 April 1862. JD 10:35.

³² The term *telescoping*, when speaking of the scriptures, means that the prophet looks toward the future—or past—and things seems to be closer to each other, as when using a telescope or binoculars, things that are far apart may seem much closer to each other. So Isaiah may well have seen both the millennium and the celestialized globe in the future as standing closer to each other in time.

heavens. He is speaking of that which pertains to our own earth, the heavens in which the birds fly.”³³

¶ SABBATH DAY. Johns Parker argues that the transfer of the Sabbath day from the 7th day of the week to the 1st day of the week [see notes under ISAIAH 56:2] was symbolic of a new order, alluded to in ISAIAH 65:17–19. Parker writes: “The (Jewish) Sabbath was the memorial day set apart for the commemoration of the work of creation. The prophet says ... the old creation ‘shall not be remembered nor come into mind.’” As Latter-day Saints we believe that so many events are types and shadows of the most important event in eternity, the expiatory sacrifice of our Lord and Savior.

18 But be ye glad and rejoice for ever [in that] which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

But be ye glad and rejoice for ever [in that] which I create: The Targum (Ⓢ) has, for the second half, “rejoice in the world of worlds (or, ‘in the most glorious world’), which I create.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “But in this they shall find joy and gladness.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “But you shall be glad and rejoice for ever in these things, which I create.” ¶ Barnes says: “Forever] It is not to be momentary happiness—like a bright morning that is soon overcast with clouds. The joy of God’s people is to endure for ever, and they shall have ceaseless cause of praise and thanksgiving.” ¶ An important note is provided by Rabbi Ibn Ezra that agrees with the teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, regarding בְּרָאָה [בְּרָאָה], to *form*: “From this passage it can be proved that the word בְּרָא does not mean ‘to create’ (‘to produce from non-existence into existence’) but ‘to *form*,’ ‘to renew.’” See Genesis 1:1,

בְּרָאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהֵי אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ:
¶ *For, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.* The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “For behold I am about to make Jerusalem a subject of joy, and this people of mine a subject of rejoicing.” The Peshitta (Ⓟ) also seems to have the Lord rejoicing over Jerusalem. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “For behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and the people thereof joy.” ¶ Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “Isaiah, in the 65th chapter, verses 17–25, by prophetic utterance, declares that there shall come ‘new heavens and a new earth.’ When that day comes Jerusalem shall be cleansed and

there shall be joy in her.”³⁴ The earth will have two centers from which the Lord will guide His followers, Jerusalem of old as well as New Jerusalem or Zion.

19 And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: The Targum (Ⓢ) has, for the last clause, “And my people shall be glad in her.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And I will exult in Jerusalem and rejoice in my people.”

¶ Joy and rejoicing are different than temporary pleasure. These words speak of those who will be exalted and filled with enduring joy. Elder George Q. Cannon taught: “I ask again, what is your aim, or my aim? What do I desire? If I desire celestial glory, the highest law that God has revealed I will be willing to obey, and to observe every word that proceedeth from His mouth. I do not want to speak of myself, but if there is a law that God has revealed and it is necessary to be obeyed before celestial glory can be reached, I want to know it and obey it. All that I am on this earth for is to get celestial glory.”³⁵ President Lorenzo Snow testified: “Through a continual course of progression, our Heavenly Father has received exaltation and glory, and He points us out the same path; and inasmuch as He is clothed with power, authority, and glory, He says, ‘Walk ye up and come in possession of the same glory and happiness that I possess.’ In the gospel, those things have been made manifest unto us; and we are perfectly assured that, inasmuch as we are faithful, we shall eventually come in possession of everything that the mind of man can conceive of—everything that heart can desire.”³⁶ Our great purpose is to achieve such joy and exaltation: “Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy” (2 Nephi 2:25). ¶ *And the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.* The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And there shall no more be heard therein, the voice of wailing nor the sound of a mournful cry.” The sadness and sorrows that can so easily bring people down in our imperfect world will be no longer. Isaiah goes on to explain some of the reasons for this:

³⁴ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Church History and Modern Revelation*. Salt Lake City, Utah: The Council of The Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1946, pp. 216–218.

³⁵ George Q. Cannon, Conference Report, April 1900, 55–56. (My daughter-in-law, Terry Billikopf, just sent me these two quotes from Elder Cannon and President Snow as I was reviewing this verse, today 28 September 2017.)

³⁶ President Lorenzo Snow, *The Teachings of Lorenzo Snow*, 3–4.

³³ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Signs of the Times*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News Press, 1952, pp. 36–38.

20 In those days there shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall not die, but shall live to be an hundred years old; but the sinner [being], living to be an hundred years old, shall be accursed.

In those days there shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “There shall be no more thence a suckling of days, or an old man that shall not accomplish his days.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “Nor shall there any more be there an untimely birth, nor an old man, who shall not complete his term.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⲫ) has, “There shall be no more in her a child who dies in infancy nor an old man who has not filled his days.” ¶ Birks says: “There shall neither be early death nor premature decay.” Skinner quotes the Pseudepigrapha: “See Charles, *Book of Enoch*, pp. 26, 55, 98. Comp. Enoch 5:9: ‘And [the elect] will not be punished all the days of their life, nor will they die of plagues or visitations of wrath, but they will complete the full number of the days of their life, and their lives will grow old in peace, and the years of their joy will be many, in eternal happiness and peace all the days of their life’ (cf. also 10:17 and 25:4–5).” And once again we read the heartwarming words of the Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith here: “Ezekiel also speaks of this glorious day, and says that the Lord will make with the people ‘a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land:’ so that the people may ‘dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods.’ Moreover they shall be blessed with rains in their proper season, and ‘the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke’ (Ezekiel 34:25–27). In the Doctrine and Covenants we have been given further instruction in relation to this glorious and happy time of peace. What joy will fill the hearts of those who are worthy to receive it. They shall not be subject to the ills that now trouble us. We will have no need for hospitals; men shall live in health and vigor until they are old and there shall be no graves, for death shall come as a peaceful transition from the mortal to the immortal state. ‘And he that liveth when the Lord shall come,’ said the Lord to Joseph Smith, ‘and hath kept the faith, blessed is he; nevertheless, it is appointed to him to die at the age of man. Wherefore, children shall grow up until they become old; old men shall die; but they shall not sleep in the dust, but they shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye’ (D&C

63:50–51).”³⁷ On another occasion President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “The Lord definitely fixes the time when this change will come and all corruptible things be removed. It is in the day when enmity shall cease on the earth and love shall take the place of hate even among the beasts and fowl as well as with mankind. It shall be a day when there shall be no sorrow for there shall be no death. Men on the earth will still be mortal, but a change shall come over them so that they will have power over sickness, disease and death. Death shall all but be banished from the earth, for men shall live until they are the age of a tree or one hundred years old (see D&C 63:50–51), and then shall die at the age of man, but this death shall come in the twinkling of an eye and mortality shall give way to immortality suddenly. There shall be no graves, and the righteous shall be caught up to a glorious resurrection. In that day the resurrected Saints will work hand in hand with the mortal Saints on the earth. It is the purpose of the Lord during that thousand years to have the ordinance work performed for all the dead who are entitled to receive it. It is the time of restoration and perfection, when all things pertaining to the Salvation of man will be fulfilled. Mortals must perform in the Temples the ordinance work which pertains to this mortal life. All who are raised in the resurrection also belong to another life, and therefore cannot be baptized, confirmed, ordained, endowed, or sealed for themselves, since all of these ordinances belong to this mortal sphere. Those who have passed through the resurrection will come with the needed records so that those in the flesh, or mortality, can perform the work for their dead. The Prophet Joseph Smith says: ‘Christ and the resurrected saints will reign over the earth during the thousand years. They will not probably dwell on the earth, but will visit it when they please, or when it is necessary to govern it. There will be wicked men on earth during the thousand years. The heathen nations who will not come up to worship will be visited with the judgments of God, and must eventually be destroyed from the earth’ (*History of the Church*, 20 December 1842). It would be inconsistent for mortals and immortals to dwell together. The resurrected Saints and Christ will visit as Christ did with his disciples for forty days after his resurrection. Their natural abode, however, must be on some celestial world until this world is finally celestialized. Those of the terrestrial order will be on the earth during the Millennium but the time must come, as expressed by Zechariah (Zechariah 14:16–20) and by Joseph Smith in above quotation, when all the heathens who will not repent must eventually be eliminated from the earth. The sinner

³⁷ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Way to Perfection: Short Discourses on Gospel Themes*. 9th ed. Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1951, pp. 308–314.

being one hundred years old, shall be accursed (ISAIAH 65:20). We have seen that when Christ comes the wicked, all things corruptible, will be consumed. In other words all that pertains to the telestial kingdom will be removed from the face of the earth. The sinner spoken of in these references, is the unrepentant man, that is to say, the man who has not accepted the fulness of the Gospel. In the eyes of the Lord such a man, no matter how just or worthy he may be, is a sinner, or one still in his sins (see D&C 84:49–53.)”³⁸ ¶ *For the child shall not die, but shall live to be an hundred years old; but the sinner, living to be an hundred years old, shall be accursed.* The Targum (T) has, “For even the child that sinneth shall die an hundred years old; but he that is a sinner *being* an hundred years old shall be thrust out.” The LXX (L) reads, “For he who is a hundred years old shall be young; and the sinner, who dieth at a hundred years, shall be deemed accursed.” The Lamsa Peshitta (S) has, “For the child shall die a hundred years old; but a sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, for the first clause, “For the child shall die a hundred years old.” ¶ Elder Lorenzo Snow explained, “But in those days people must live perfectly before the Lord ... When we once get it into our minds that we really have the power within ourselves through the gospel we have received, to conquer our passions, our appetites and in all things submit our will to the will of our Heavenly Father, and, instead of being the means of generating unpleasant feeling in our family circle, and those with whom we are associated, but assisting greatly to create a little heaven upon earth, then the battle may be said to be half won. One of the chief difficulties that many suffer from is, that we are too apt to forget the great object of life, the motive of our Heavenly Father in sending us here to put on mortality, as well as the holy calling with which we have been called; and hence, instead of rising above the little transitory things of time, we too often allow ourselves to come down to the level of the world without availing ourselves of the divine help which God has instituted, which alone can enable us to overcome them.”³⁹ Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: “As to those who are born after the Millennium and who turn to unrighteousness, their state will be awful. We suppose they will continue to live on an earth where there is no death and that they will be numbered among those of whom Isaiah said: ‘The child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be

accursed.”⁴⁰ (ISAIAH 65:20.) Surely there shall be many sons of perdition in that day, for many shall come out in open rebellion against God, knowing perfectly that he is supreme and that they are fighting him and his plan of salvation.”⁴¹ President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “The question naturally will arise, if the wicked are to be destroyed when Christ comes, then how can there be wicked men on the earth during the Millennium, as stated by Joseph Smith and Isaiah? It is quite evident that the ‘wickedness’ during that time will be among those who are heathen, or have not come into the Church, and their wickedness consists of failure to receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is according to the Lord’s interpretation, as follows: ‘And by this you may know they are under the bondage of sin, because they come not unto me. For whoso cometh not unto me is under the bondage of sin. And whoso receiveth not my voice is not acquainted with my voice, and is not of me. And by this you may know the righteous from the wicked’ (D&C 84:50–53). Men will be free from the temptations of Satan; peace will be in the hearts of all men, and it is decreed that in time all will receive the truth, for the Gospel is to cover the earth as the waters do the sea ... We cannot help thinking ... that under such conditions of righteousness and influence of the teachings of heavenly beings, the time will not be very long before all people will forsake the ways of the world, and even the heathens will come unto the brightness of the Gospel light. During all these years men dwelling in mortality will have the privilege of associating with those who have received their resurrection. Our Lord and Savior will be a familiar figure among the righteous saints.”⁴²

21 And they shall build houses, and inhabit [them]; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.

And they shall build houses, and inhabit [them]. The LXX (L) reads, “And they shall build houses and dwell therein.” ¶ Rawlinson, speaking of *Rain in Due Season* well notes: “The curse pronounced on apostasy in Deuteronomy 28:30 shall no more rest on God’s people. They shall have the fruition of their labours. No enemy shall be able to deprive them of their crops and houses.” ¶ *And they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of*

³⁸ Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Church History and Modern Revelation*. Salt Lake City, Utah: The Council of The Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1946, pp. 216–218.

³⁹ Elder Lorenzo Snow, “Blessings of the Gospel Only Obtained By Compliance With the Law.” General Conference, Salt Lake City, 7 April 1879. JD 20:191.

⁴⁰ Rawlinson finds it “most remarkable” that sin is “represented as still continuing.” Thanks to the Prophet Joseph Smith we have a better understanding of the millennium and even of the final struggle of Gog and Magog.

⁴¹ McConkie, Bruce R. *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1985.

⁴² Smith, Joseph Fielding. *The Way to Perfection: Short Discourses on Gospel Themes*. 9th ed. Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1951, pp. 308–314.

them. The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruits thereof.” Lowth likewise correctly points out: “*They shall not build, and another inhabit*” The reverse of the curse denounced on the disobedient, Deuteronomy 28:30. ‘Thou shalt build a house, and thou shalt not dwell therein; thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof.’”

¶ Nyman has: “The Lord paraphrased these verses in D&C 101:99-101 when he instructed the Saints not to sell their properties in Jackson County, Missouri, and promised that they would be permitted to dwell upon these properties if they would ‘bring forth fruit and works meet for my kingdom.’ During the Millennium, there will be nothing to prevent or impair the inhabitants of the earth from establishing permanent homes and vineyards for their entire lives.”

22 They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree [are] the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy[✓] the work of their hands.

✓ shall make them continue long, or, shall wear out

They shall not build, and another inhabit. The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “They shall not build, and others inhabit.”

¶ Allusion to *Rain in Due Season* where we read: “Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her: thou shalt build an house, and thou shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof” (Deuteronomy 28:30). But now these curses will no longer be because of the righteousness of mankind and the binding of Satan.

¶ *They shall not plant, and another eat:* The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Nor shall they plant and others eat.” See, once again, Deuteronomy 28:30. What men plant they will be able to eat. ¶ *For as the days of a tree [are] the days of my people.* The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “For according to the days of the tree of that life, shall be the days of this my people.” Elder Orson Pratt, speaking of this verse, says: “Isaiah does not say what kind of a tree. It was simply a way the ancients had of comparing a great many things.”⁴³ The age of a tree was defined as a hundred years old, as has already been stated above.⁴⁴ ¶ *And mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.* The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “And mine elect shall wear (or, ‘make to continue’) out the work of their hands.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “For they shall wear out the works of their toils.” The Peshitta (Ⓔ) has something like, “And my

elect shall eat the work of their hands.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “And the works of their hands shall be of long continuance.” ¶ Once again, the work performed will not be spoiled by others. But this also shows that there will be work performed and that mankind will have the joy of working.

23 They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they [are] the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them.

They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble. The Targum (Ⓒ) has, for the last clause, “neither shall they rear up children for death.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “My chosen ones shall not labour in vain, nor shall they bring forth children for a curse.” Regarding the second clause, the Peshitta (Ⓔ) has something like, “Nor give birth to children for a curse.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “My elect shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth in trouble.” ¶ AMP translates it: “They shall not labor in vain or bring forth [children] for sudden terror or calamity.” Birks says: “There is an allusion to the legal threatening, Leviticus 26:16⁴⁵ [*Rain in Due Season*—GB], which is now to be reversed. These righteous dwellers in the land will not ‘bring forth for terror,’ or calamity. Their children will never be exposed to sudden alarm, hurried into captivity, or cut off by the sword; but fathers, children, and children’s children, shall abide secure under the protecting care of the King of Israel.” ¶ *For they [are] the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them.* The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Because they are a seed blessed of God, both they and their offspring.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has *posterity* instead of *seed*. ¶ Elder LeGrand Richards, regarding this comment about offspring, says, “That sounds like a continuation of the family, doesn’t it?”⁴⁶ Elder LeGrand Richards also taught, “If I were to ask those of you who are Christians what you love most in all this world, next to your love of God the Eternal Father, if you have Christian principles and you live them, you could not help saying that you love your wives and your children more than anything else. I have said that if I did not have an assurance that God intended that the companionship of husband and wife here in mortality should be projected into the eternal worlds, I would just about as soon believe that death would be a complete annihilation of both body and

⁴³ Elder Orson Pratt, “America a Choice Land.” Old Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 27 December 1868. JD 12:340b.

⁴⁴ See also President Joseph Fielding Smith, *Church History and Modern Revelation*, 1:461.

⁴⁵ “I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it” (Leviticus 26:16).

⁴⁶ Elder LeGrand Richards, “What After Death?” October 1974 General Conference.

spirit, but when the Lord placed Adam in the garden before death was known in the world, he said it was not good for man to be alone, and he gave him a helpmeet. And you know all through the scriptures and the words of the Savior, we are told that these twain shall be one flesh. If Jesus then really performed a great atonement to restore what was lost, then that means that in the great day of the resurrection, we will have our wives and our children. Isaiah understood that fully when he said he saw a new heaven and a new earth, and he tells us that in that new heaven and new earth, we should build buildings and inhabit them, and we should plant vineyards and eat the fruit thereof, that we should not build and another inhabit, nor plant and another eat, for every man should enjoy the works of his own hands and then he adds: ‘... they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them’ (ISAIAH 65:23). I wonder if anything in this world could be more important than to know that we can live to enjoy the eternal world with our loved ones.”⁴⁷

24 And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And it shall come to pass, before they shall pray before me, that I will hear their prayer.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “Therefore it shall come to pass, that before they call I will answer them.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has *hear* for *answer*. ¶ Cowles suggests: “A more precise translation of this verse is, ‘And it shall be that they shall not yet have called, and I will answer; they shall be yet speaking, and I will hear.’” Rawlinson beautifully says: “God is always ‘more ready to hear than we to pray.’ In the ‘new Jerusalem’ he will be prompt to answer his people’s prayers almost before they are uttered. It is involved in this, as Delitzsch notes, that the will of the people shall be in harmony with the will of Jehovah, and that their prayers will therefore be acceptable prayers.” ¶ *And while they are yet speaking, I will hear.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And before they supplicate before me, I will grant (or, ‘do’) their request.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “And while they are yet speaking I will say, What is the matter.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “As they are yet speaking, I will hear.” ¶ Kay has: “*yet speaking*” Literally so in Daniel’s case (Daniel 9:20–23). I had a similar experience in the summer of 1991, just after I was called to be a seminary teacher. Linda & I and Brother Gary McDaniel took my seminary class up to Yosemite, before the start of school. As we were

walking up the trail Brother McDaniel was overcome by an insulin shock and we almost lost him, were it not by the influence of the Lord. A number of events all combined at exactly the right moment, so his life could be spared. Brother McDaniel, earlier in the hike, shared with Linda that he was a diabetic. While I normally insist that an adult leader stay in front, one in the back, and in this case one in the middle, at the instant that this happened all three adults came together for an instant. Brother McDaniel’s eyes started rolling and next thing we knew he fainted and dropped to the ground. In an instant, Linda was administering sugar to him via drops of soda from Brother McDaniel’s backpack (by ‘mistake,’ he had miraculously packed a regular soda along with a sugar free one). Just as quickly, I pulled out my consecrated oil and began to administer to him. Through the power of the Holy Melchizedek Priesthood I blessed a man who was closer to death than to life, as he was pale white, cold and clammy. As I was performing this ordinance I was cold with fear. I was not far along into the blessing, truly while I was yet speaking, I heard people coming down the trail. Having pronounced the essential parts of the blessing, I closed as I did not want to make a mockery of the Priesthood in front of others. It turned out to be a French doctor and his wife. They encouraged Linda to continue to feed Gary McDaniel more sugar, which had burnt up through the strenuous hike. Brother Gary came to, and with the French physician and Linda’s help, went back to the bottom. I took the rest of the seminary class up to Nevada falls, once it was clear that he would be totally well. Later, Brother McDaniel bore his testimony that he could hear the words of the blessing as he was administered to. ¶ In the summer of 1993, we went to Disneyland, in Southern California, and then to the ocean with Steve & Donna’s family (my brother and sister in law). I could have done without Disneyland, but how I love the ocean. We found a spot to camp in San Clemente. Linda and Donna had to go shopping and left Steve and me in charge of the children. ‘Be careful of the ocean,’ Linda warned. I acknowledged Linda’s request. But internally I reacted, much like children often do when they are told to be careful, by brushing away any concerns. Steve stayed out in the beach with the younger children while I went in with David, Miguel and Bryce, Donna’s eldest son. We had much fun diving under the incoming waves and little by little we got braver. Soon we could no longer touch bottom but it did not matter as swimming in the ocean is so much easier, with the salt helping one stay afloat. At one point I told the boys it would be a good idea to turn around and swim back. Bryce asked, ‘What for?’ ‘Well,’ I thought, ‘what can I do if he will not obey? I must worry about my sons.’ David soon warned me that Miguel was experiencing trouble. I could not see Miguel, as I am so blind without glasses; I had to lean

⁴⁷ Elder LeGrand Richards, “I Tell You of Heavenly Things,” General Conference, 1 October 1962, pp. 108–109.

on David's vision to see what was going on. A great fear that Miguel or David could drown overcame me. But the rip tide was separating us from the beach and every effort to swim back was not yielding a positive result. (I later found out that one should *not* try swimming directly against a rip tide, but rather, swim with it and diagonally, until it loses its strength.) What would I tell my wife or my sister in law if one, or all, of the children that they entrusted to me perished? How foolish I had been. Because I was worrying about them I did not pay attention to my surroundings and a large wave fell upon me pushing me down into the water where it was dark and I had to really battle to make it out on time to catch a breath. I only had time to get a little air when the same thing happened again. I was exhausted and beginning to think I would perish in the ocean. I did not care for my life but that of my children. I felt so impotent now; I had put their lives in danger and was feeling the guilt and bitterness of my actions. How often do we consider how our physical or spiritual course might affect those we love? After receiving the great gift of a testimony of the Gospel of Christ we have a responsibility to hold on to the iron rod and endure to the end. Else, as sometimes happens, people occasionally take a vacation from the truths and values they cherish. But when they come back—assuming they have not drowned or died first—there may be people in their lives who could have grown strong in the gospel but did not. Those hurt through this spiritual tragedy are often the most cherished: spouse and children. It is my most ardent desire and prayer that I may live righteously; that I may endure to the end. But let me continue with my awful predicament. The ocean was furious. I was so worried about my sons that I cared about little else. It was evident we had drifted quite a ways out as people in the beach seemed so small. I felt quite dumb asking for assistance, but the moment came, when I thought my boys or I would die, and with all my strength I shouted 'HELP!' What a joke, with the sound of the waves no one could hear me. Suddenly, I saw a lifesaver, a man swimming towards me with a determined look in his eye. It is not possible he could have heard my plea for help as he was there in an instant. As he approached I begged him to take care of Miguel and not worry about me. Instead, he tackled me with both hands. The next moment we both found ourselves in the deep of the ocean, pushed down by the next wave. I thought this man would drown me. I did not want to expend my energy in trying to get rid of this lifeguard as I did not wish to lose energy and oxygen. Nor did I want him to fight me. When it was clear I would not try and drown him, and we had gone as deep as it seemed we would go, I had to bring both of us back to the surface with my hands and legs while he held on to me. When we got to the surface the lifeguard gave me the lifesaver and I thanked him a thousand

times for his help. Without the help of this young man I believe I would have perished in the ocean because of my lack of experience. Meanwhile, I had no hint of what could have happened to David, Miguel or Bryce. Concern for the children was the uppermost in my mind. As it turned out, David and another lifeguard had helped Miguel, who was closer to the beach. Miguel later told me that he was tired of trying to get oxygen and that he spent more time under the ocean than on the surface. He explained that somehow he was able to get a breath of air under the water (and if I recall properly, I had understood him to say that an angel helped him breathe). A third lifeguard helped Bryce, who was not at all concerned with any of this and only panicked when he was informed that he was swimming over a dangerous submerged rock that had sucked people in. It appears we were all going in the direction of this rock when it occurred to me that we should turn back. I felt much joy to know all were safe, but also much agony to sense that I almost lost my sons or my nephew, and that it would have been my fault. How could I have ever faced Linda and told her how I had mishandled my stewardship? How would I have ever faced myself? I was quite depressed for about a day until several scriptures helped me think about this in a different way. One of them was ISAIAH 65:24, 'And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.' The lifeguard who helped me explained that even before we knew we were in trouble, they had called for more help from a coastguard boat. And even before that, it is clear that God knew we were in trouble, and sent help even before we thought to pray. After that, we set some very specific rules: if the lifeguard left his or her post, we would get out of the water immediately; if we drifted past a mark we had set, we would get out of the water and walk back to the other side before we would reenter. Likewise, the Lord has given us commandments and we will be spiritually safe if we stay within the boundaries He has given us.⁴⁸ God is continually aware of us and sends angels to help even *before* we realize we are in trouble. Truly, before we call the Lord will answer. We need not wait for the Millennium for this to happen.

25 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust [shall be] the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.

⁴⁸ This is an excerpt I have adapted from my personal journal.

The wolf and the lamb shall feed together. The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Then shall the wolves and the lambs feed together.” ¶ Kay has, instead of *together*, *as one*, אחד. Birks nicely has: “An allusion, once more, to the earlier prophecy, ISAIAH 11:6, 7, 9.⁴⁹ Thus the whole book is knit together by many secret links, and reveals, from first to last, the unity of design which marks the whole.” Cowles says: “With the exception of the middle clause, this verse is an abridgment of the passage in ISAIAH 11:6–9, and must receive the same interpretation.” Nyman wrote: “This verse is condensed in D&C 101:26, which merely states that the enmity of man and beasts and ‘of all flesh’ will cease during the Millennium.” So we have: “And in that day the enmity of man, and the enmity of beasts, yea, the enmity of all flesh, shall cease from before my face. And in that day whatsoever any man shall ask, it shall be given unto him” (D&C 101:26–27). ¶ Elder Charles W. Penrose taught: “Men shall then be found beating their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more, but every man in every place shall meet a brother and a friend. And this same spirit of peace will also produce a change upon the brute creation, according to the words of prophets who lived centuries ago, and the earth itself will be blessed, the curse be removed therefrom, and he whose right it is to reign will come and rule in the midst of his people.”⁵⁰ ¶ *And the lion shall eat straw like the bullock.* The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “The lion and the ox shall eat straw.” ¶ Elder Orson Pratt taught, “It is then that the enmity of the beasts of the field as well as that of all flesh will cease; no more one beast of prey devouring and feasting upon another that is more harmless in its nature; no more will this enmity be found in the fish of the sea, or in the birds of the air. This change will be wrought upon all flesh when Jesus comes; not a change to immortality, but a change sufficient to alter the ferocious nature of beasts, birds and fishes. In those days the lion will eat straw like the ox; he will no more be the terror of the forest, but will be perfectly harmless, and gentleness will characterize all the wild and ferocious animals, as well as the venomous serpents, so much so that the little child might lead them and play with them, and nothing should hurt or destroy

in all the holy mountain of the Lord; all things becoming, in some measure, as when they were first created. For it will be remembered that animals did not devour one another until after the fall, neither was there any death, until after the fall. What did they eat, then? The Lord said, ‘To every beast of the field, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat.’ The grass, and the herbs, and every green thing were their food. And Adam and Eve ate fruits and vegetables, not animal flesh. The whole earth will be restored; and man will be restored; and not only upon man, but upon all flesh the Spirit of God will be poured out and they will eventually be restored to all that was lost by the fall of our first parents. Then the knowledge of God will cover the whole earth, as the waters cover the great deep. And then the animal creation will manifest more intelligence and more knowledge than they do now, in their fallen condition. Indeed, we have a declaration, by John the Revelator, that when this time shall come, they will even know how to praise God. He says, ‘And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.’ What? The animal creation endowed with language? Yes, a language of praise, saying something concerning the Lamb that was slain, and about his glory and excellency. What a beautiful creation this will be when all these things are fulfilled.”⁵¹ ¶ *And dust [shall be] the serpent's meat.* The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “But the serpent shall eat dust as bread.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “And dust shall be the serpent's food.” ¶ Cowles, speaking of the serpent, says: “John the Revelator takes special pains to identify this crafty (shall we say, slippery) personage who is wont to steal some other livery in which to prosecute his malign schemes. ‘The great dragon, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, who deceiveth the whole world’ (Revelation 12:9) ... Paul also alludes to the same primal curse, ostensibly upon the serpent, but really upon Satan, when he said, ‘And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly’ (Romans 16:20). This is his paraphrase of the promise, ‘I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed; it [her seed] shall bruise thy head,’ the head of the serpent. To the same purport the prophet here says, Satan shall meet his threatened doom, the dust of the earth his meat. He shall ‘bite the dust.’ In the phrase of the author of Psalm 72:9, ‘his’ (the Messiah’s) ‘enemies shall lick the dust,’ trodden beneath his triumphant feet.” Henderson points us to the Book of Revelation: “And I saw an angel come down from

⁴⁹ “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fating together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox ... They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea” (ISAIAH 11:6–9).

⁵⁰ Elder Charles W. Penrose, “The Work of Restitution of All Things.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 17 August 1879. JD 20:299b.

⁵¹ Elder Orson Pratt, “Interpretation of Scripture delivered.” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 23 June 1878. JD 20:18a.

heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season” (Revelation 20:1-3). ¶ Birks well says: “But here there is an addition, which refers back to the sentence, Genesis 3:14,⁵² and thus links the close of the book with the opening of the Law, as it is linked by its very first words with the message near its close, Deuteronomy 32:1, ‘And the serpent, dust shall be his meat.’ The Vision of Immanuel, and this closing message, allude thus to the two main features of the earliest promise, the gift of the Seed of Woman, and the sentence upon the old serpent. All his devices for evil will be so defeated and overcome, that the only fruit he will gain, from his persevering malice, will be disappointment, and utter and perpetual shame.” ¶ *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.* The LXX (6) reads, “They shall not hurt, nor shall they destroy on my holy mountain, saith the Lord.” The Douay-Rheims (9) has *kill* instead of *destroy*. ¶ Birks has: “‘All my holy mountain,’ as in ISAIAH 11:9, seems to denote the whole extent of [the Holy Land], the chosen mountain-range of the Lord’s

inheritance. But when Israel shall thus blossom and bud, and the chosen vine yield its richest clusters, the face of the whole world will also be filled with fruit, ISAIAH 27:6.” Rawlinson points out: “*They shall not hurt nor destroy*] Repeated from ISAIAH 11:9, word for word. In neither case should we regard the subject of the sentence as limited to the animals only. The meaning is that there shall be no violence of any kind, done either by man or beast, in the happy period described.” This lack of violence points to the beginning of the Millennial period for at the end of it, we have the final, or second, war of God and Magog.

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⁵² “And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou *art* cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:” (Genesis 3:14).

Isaiah 66

Temples are important but they must be operated by the proper Priesthood authority and maintained holy. A remnant of Israel shall be gathered back to the Lord and to the temple. The Book of Mormon would be vital in this gathering effort. Judah shall see the glory of the Lord in Jerusalem; Ephraim, in Zion. A final invitation and warning to come unto Christ is offered.

vv. 1–4. Temples are vital to our eternal salvation but principles of righteousness guide their construction and use. There are consequences for rejecting the Lord.

1 ¶ **THUS** saith the LORD, The heaven [is] my throne, and the earth [is] my footstool: where [is] the house that ye build unto me? and where [is] the place of my rest?

THUS saith the LORD, The heaven [is] my throne, and the earth [is] my footstool: The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth, my footstool: what sort of an house will you build for me?” ¶ Birks has: “*The heavens, &c.*] There is an allusion to Solomon’s prayer at the consecration of the temple. Four times in succession heaven is there called the dwelling place of God.” Rawlinson says: “The Hebrews, while they earnestly desired to have a material emblem of the presence of God in their midst, were deeply impressed with the feeling that no temple could be worthy of him ... ‘Will God,’ said Solomon, ‘indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heavens of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?’ (1 Kings 8:27). And again, ‘Who is able to build him an house, seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him? Who am I then, that I should build him an house, save only to burn sacrifice before him?’ (2 Chronicles 2:6).” ¶ Elder Wilford Woodruff said: “The earth is the footstool of the Lord, and if we ever have any of it for our own the Lord will give it to us; and we ought to be just as faithful to our religion if we had ten thousand million dollars, as if we had not any at all. Eternal life is what we are or ought to be after, and that, whatever our circumstances and condition in life may be, should be our first object.”¹ Elder Neal A. Maxwell observed: “Jesus met irony constantly as He was taunted by circumstances. For instance, this earth is Jesus’ footstool but at Bethlehem there was ‘no room ... in the inn’ and ‘no crib for his bed,’ as ‘foxes have holes, and

birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.”² ¶ *Where [is] the house that ye build unto me? and where [is] the place of my rest?* The Targum (Ⓒ) has, for the last clause, “And where is the place of the dwelling of my Shekinah.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And of what sort shall be the place of my rest?” Instead of each instance of *where*, the Peshitta (Ⓔ) has *what* (Lamsa) / *which* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “What is this house that you will build to me? and what is this place of my rest?” ¶ Some think that the Lord is ridiculing the idea of a temple as His dwelling place when He visits the earth. Nägelsbach explains: “Doubtless there was found in ISAIAH 66:1b merely the thought that there is no place which, as a dwelling, corresponds in the least degree to the greatness of God, and that the Prophet warns against such rude childish notions ... that Jehovah really dwells in the most holy place of the temple as a man dwells in his house. The thought would readily suggest itself when this passage would be considered, that the new temple was not intended to be a place to contain God, but only to be the restoration of the old place where God revealed Himself.” ¶ The building of temples is an integral part of any gathering effort. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “What was the object of gathering the Jews, or the people of God in any age of the world? ... The main object was to build unto the Lord a house whereby He could reveal unto His people the ordinances of His house and the glories of His kingdom, and teach the people the way of salvation; for there are certain ordinances and principles that, when they are taught and practiced, must be done in a place or house built for that purpose. It was the design of the councils of heaven before the world was, that the principles and laws of the priesthood should be predicated upon the gathering of the people in every age of the world ... Ordinances instituted in the heavens before the foundation of the world, in the priesthood, for the salvation of men, are not to be altered or changed. All must be saved on the same principles. It is for the same purpose that God gathers together His people in the last days, to build unto the Lord a house to prepare them for the

¹ Elder Wilford Woodruff, “Parable of the Ten Virgins.” New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 12 September 1875. JD 18:120.

² Elder Neal A. Maxwell, “Apply the Atoning Blood of Christ.” October 1997 General Conference.

ordinances and endowments, washings and anointings, etc.”³ The Lord chastised the Saints for their casual attitude towards building a temple: “Wherefore, ye must needs be chastened and stand rebuked before my face; For ye have sinned against me a very grievous sin, in that ye have not considered the great commandment in all things, that I have given unto you concerning the building of mine house” (D&C 95:2–3). The Lord also warned against desecration of His temples, and I believe that this is what Isaiah was speaking about here: “And inasmuch as my people build a house unto me in the name of the Lord, and do not suffer any unclean thing to come into it, that it be not defiled, my glory shall rest upon it; Yea, and my presence shall be there, for I will come into it, and all the pure in heart that shall come into it shall see God. But if it be defiled I will not come into it, and my glory shall not be there; for I will not come into unholy temples” (D&C 97:15–17). When a temple is desecrated, it is as if there were none, so the Lord can well ask, “Where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?” Rawlinson explains that the people have not always been worthy of building a House of the Lord: “*They*, moreover, are unworthy to build him any house, which is the real ground of the refusal. There was no refusal, when the better part of the exiles, having returned, took the building in hand (see Ezra 3:8–13; 6:14, 15; Haggai 1:8–14; Zechariah 1:16; 4:9, etc.).” The time would come, in the latter-days, when temples would *dot the earth*; and the time will also come, when a temple will again be built in Jerusalem.

2 For all those [things] hath mine hand made, and all those [things] have been, saith the LORD: but to this [man] will I look, [even] to [him that is] poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

For all those [things] hath mine hand made, and all those [things] have been, saith the LORD: The Targum (ⲧ) has, “power” rather than *hand*, and the second clause, “and have not all these things been?” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “For all these things my hand hath made: and all these things are mine saith the Lord.” Instead of *have been*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *belong to me* (Lamsa) / *are mine* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “My hand made all these things, and all these things were made, saith the Lord.” The Lord is reminding us that He formed and organized the heavens and the earth and universes without number. ¶ *But to this [man] will I look, [even] to [him that is] poor and of a contrite*

spirit, and trembleth at my word. The Targum (ⲧ) has, “But it shall be my delight to consider the man, *even him*, who is of an humble and a contrite spirit, and trembleth on account of my word.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Upon whom therefore will I look down, but upon him only who is humble and quiet, and who trembleth at my words?” and to whom shall I look, The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has “And *where* (Lamsa) / *with whom* (BPE) shall I dwell? But *to* (Lamsa) / *with* (BPE) him who is calm and humble, and trembles at my word. The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “But to whom shall I have respect, but to him that is poor and little, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my words?” ¶ Proper temples will be built by the pure in heart who love the Lord. Joseph Smith was the first prophet of this dispensation and truly a man who trembled at the word of the Lord. Every one of the Presidents of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have been humble men, easily entreated by God.

3 He that killeth an ox [is as if] he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, ✓ [as if] he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, [as if he offered] swine's blood; he that burneth incense, ✓ ✓ [as if] he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.

✓ or, kid

✓ ✓ maketh a memorial of

He that killeth an ox [is as if] he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, [as if] he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, [as if he offered] swine's blood. Compare to ISAIAH 29:1. The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “As for the wicked man, who sacrificeth to me a young bull: he is one who slayeth a dog: and though lie offereth me fine flour: it will be as the blood of swine.” Instead of *dog's neck*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *dog*; instead of *oblation*, the Peshitta (Ⲫ) has *meal offering*⁴ (Lamsa) / *cereal* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “He that sacrificeth an ox, is as if he slew a man: he that killeth a sheep in sacrifice, as if he should brain a dog: he that offereth an oblation, as if he should offer swine's blood.” ¶ These words again point us towards the desecration of temples, and return us to ISAIAH 1: “To what purpose *is* the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the

³ Joseph Smith (with notes by B.H. Roberts), *History of the Church*, 5:423–24.

⁴ A general term for sacrifices arising from vegetable matter (Jewish Encyclopedia). ISBE specifies that they were not just any vegetable matter, but such things as cereal or its derivative flour, which required man's toil. In the AV, or KJV, *meal offerings* were called *meat offerings*.

blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats” (ISAIAH 1:11). So also Lowth who has: “These are instances of extreme wickedness joined with hypocrisy, of the most flagitious crimes, committed by those who at the same time affected great strictness in the performance of all the external services of religion. God, by the Prophet Ezekiel, upbraids the Jews with the same practices: ‘When they had slain their children to their idols, then they came the same day into my sanctuary to profane it;’ Ezekiel 23:39. Of the same kind was the hypocrisy of the Pharisees in our Saviour’s time; ‘who devoured widows’ houses, and for a pretence made long prayers;’ Matthew 23:14.” Jenour additionally points us to Jeremiah: “Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations? Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen *it*, saith the LORD” (Jeremiah 7:9–11). ¶ Lowth, Horsley, Alexander and various others, feel that the elliptical expression *as if* (which is *not* in the original Hebrew text) constitutes a false ellipsis. Rather, they suggest that the very same individuals who killed a man (such as in human sacrifices to idols), blessed an idol, drank swine’s blood and so forth, where hypocritical enough to enter the Temple and carry out their priesthood duties, or otherwise bring sacrifices to the Lord, despite their unclean, unworthy and bloody hands. Each one of us has to remember to take the Sacrament worthily and enter the House of the Lord worthily, and recall the warning: “Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean *thing*; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD” (ISAIAH 52:11). Leaser translates this verse: “He that slaughtereth the ox, slayeth a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, breaketh the neck of a dog; he that offereth a meat-offering, offereth swine’s blood; he that burneth incense, blesseth an idol: yea, they have made choice of their own ways, and in their abominations doth their soul delight.” Alexander explains: “The first clause consists of four similar members, in each of which are coupled a form of sacrifice under the Mosaic Law and an offering which according to that law was inadmissible and even revolting. The ox and the sheep represent the animal sacrifices, the מִנְחָה or meat-offering and the incense those of an unbloody nature. The verbs connected with these nouns are likewise all selected from the technical vocabulary of the law. שָׁחַט and זָבַח both originally signify to slay or slaughter, but are especially applied to sacrificial slaughter in the Pentateuch. מַעֲלֶה is the participle of a verb which means to cause to ascend, and

in the language of the ritual, upon the altar. מִזְבִּיחַ is another, of obscurer origin and strict signification, though its use and application are as clear as any of the rest.” *The Biblical Illustrator* has: “Four legitimate sacrificial acts being bracketed with four detestable idolatrous rites.”⁵ Dummelow suggests: “They who offer the due sacrifices, yet without a proper spirit, are no better than they who perform unclean or idolatrous acts.”⁶ Wesley likewise notes, “The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord.”⁷ ¶ Kay explains: “*cut off a dog’s neck*] seeking to procure expiation by means of an utterly unclean animal.” Gesenius clarifies that we find עָרַךְ in Exodus 13:13; 34:20; Deuteronomy 21:4, 6, that is found in connection to *breaking the neck* of sacrificial animals. Fausset writes: “*dog’s neck*] an abomination according to the Jewish law (Deuteronomy 23:18); perhaps made so, because dogs were venerated in Egypt ... Dogs as unclean are associated with swine (Matthew 7:6; 2 Peter 2:22).” ¶ A great number of exegetes speak of the end of animal sacrifices, and cite these verses as the horror that the Lord will experience from such sacrifices from Judah. This argument has little force because: (1) Where has Judah or Levi carried out sacrifices since the destruction of the Second Temple? Nowhere! (2) Will not Levi carry out sacrifices in a future temple in Jerusalem as shown in Ezekiel’s vision? Yes, we know from the Scriptures (Ezekiel 43:18–27) and the words of the Brethren (*History of the Church* 4:210–212; *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3:94] that animal sacrifices will be instituted again at the beginning of the Millennium, for a period. This will be part of the restitution of all things. (Also see notes under ISAIAH 60:7.) ¶ *He that burneth incense, [as if] he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.* The Targum (ܬ) has, “The offering of their gifts is the gift of violence. Yea, they delight in their paths &c.” The LXX (Ϯ) reads, “Though he offereth incense for a memorial, he is as a blasphemer. As they have chosen their own ways: and their soul hath delighted in their abominations:” Instead of *abominations*, the Peshitta (ܫ) has *idols*. The Douay-Rheims (Ϯ) has, “He that remembereth incense, as if he should bless an idol. All these things have they chosen in their ways, and their soul is delighted in their abominations.” ¶ We hear the Lord’s rejection of unrighteous sacrifice in ISAIAH 1: “When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and

⁵ *The Biblical Illustrator*.

⁶ *A Commentary on the Holy Bible* edited by J.R. Dummelow.

⁷ *John Wesley’s Explanatory Notes*.

sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; *it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting*" (ISAIAH 1:12–13).

4 I also will choose their delusions,[✓] and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose [that] in which I delighted not.

✓ or, devices

I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them. The Targum (ⲧ) has, "desire their destruction" instead of *choose their delusions*. The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "I also will chuse their delusions, and pay them back their sins." The Peshitta (Ⲫ) reads something like, "I will also please myself in their delusions and recompense them according to their works." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, "Wherefore I also will choose their mockeries, and will bring upon them the things they feared." ¶ This is a hint to the coming punishment to those who reject the Lord and His invitation to turn to Him (see D&C 19:15 ff.). Jenour suggests: "I also will choose punishments] Or in other words, 'As they have chosen to follow their own perverse inclinations rather than to obey my will, I also will act towards them as if they were not my people, and will punish them with peculiar severity. I will choose punishments for them greater than those which I ordinarily inflict.' So our Lord declared, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, 'Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world' Matthew 24:21." ¶ *Because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear:* The Targum (ⲧ) has, "Because, when I sent my prophets, yea, they did not repent; they prophesied, but they obeyed not." The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "Because I called them and they did not answer—I spake, but they did not listen." The Peshitta (Ⲫ) reads something like, "Because when I called, none did answer; I spoke yet they heeded not." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, "Because I called, and there was none that would answer; I have spoken, and they heard not." ¶ One man told me, "I don't need God, and if I ever do I will worry about that then." See D&C 101:6 ff. ¶ *But they did evil before mine eyes, and chose [that] in which I delighted not.* The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "But did that which is evil in my sight, and chose the things in which I did not delight." The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, for the second clause, "And have chosen the things that displease me." ¶ Mankind has been given moral agency to choose between the words of life or a rejection of the same. In ISAIAH 41 we read of the consequences of these decisions. In Doctrine and

Covenants we read: "And unto him that repenteth and sanctifieth himself before the Lord shall be given eternal life. And upon them that hearken not to the voice of the Lord shall be fulfilled that which was written by the prophet Moses, that they should be cut off from among the people. And also that which was written by the prophet Malachi: For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. Wherefore, this shall be the answer of the Lord unto them: In that day when I came unto mine own, no man among you received me, and you were driven out. *When I called again there was none of you to answer; yet my arm was not shortened at all that I could not redeem, neither my power to deliver.* Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea. I make the rivers a wilderness; their fish stink, and die for thirst. I clothe the heavens with blackness, and make sackcloth their covering. And this shall ye have of my hand—ye shall lie down in sorrow. Behold, and lo, there are none to deliver you; for ye obeyed not my voice when I called to you out of the heavens; ye believed not my servants, and when they were sent unto you ye received them not" (D&C 133:62–71, emphasis added).

vv. 5–14. Here we read of the glorious gathering of Judah and Ephraim unto the Lord—from the remnant. In Doctrine and Covenants we read, "Behold, this is the blessing of the everlasting God upon the tribes of Israel, and the richer blessing upon the head of Ephraim and his fellows. And they also of the tribe of Judah, after their pain, shall be sanctified in holiness before the Lord, to dwell in his presence day and night, forever and ever" (D&C 133:34–35). Once again, we see the joy to be experienced by those who love the Lord and tremble at His word, in contrast to those who reject Him, or are *contrary* to Him. Judah shall join the fold when the Lord appears in Jerusalem and stands on the Mount of Olives. A nation shall be born in a day. All those who love Judah and Jerusalem shall rejoice and be filled with peace. Judah shall be comforted.

5 ¶ Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.

Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word. The Targum (ⲧ) has, beginning with second clause, "O ye righteous! who tremble on account of the words of

His will.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “Hear the decisions of the Lord — ye who tremble at his word.” ¶ Birks notes: “The faithful remnant, the poor and contrite, in whom God takes delight, now receive words of encouragement.” Alexander explains that the act of trembling is associated with “reverently waiting for it.” That is, those who love the word of the Lord and are ready to follow it. ¶ *Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified:* The Targum (⚡) has, for the last clause, “Let the glory of the Lord be magnified, that we may see your joy.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “Say, ‘O our brethren—to them who hate you and are abominable, that the name of the Lord may be glorified.’” The Peshitta (⚡) has, “Say to your brethren who hate you and who despise you for my name’s sake, Let the LORD be glorified.” ¶ Regarding the faithful remnant, Birks has: “They are to expect persecution for a little season from their unbelieving countrymen; but a speedy judgment on the persecutors will follow, while the sufferers shall receive a marvellous deliverance.” And not just countrymen, but from those who ought to show brotherly love but instead will persecute them in their false notions of religion. These are after the same type who thought they were doing God a favor when they crucified His Son. Horsley has: “Your unbelieving countrymen pretend that their persecution of you proceeds from a zeal for my honour, and they challenge you to obtain a display of my powers in your behalf, if you are indeed my servants. ‘Let him deliver him now if he would have him,’ was their language when our Saviour hung upon the cross.” The prophets were also subject to oppression. The Prophet Joseph Smith lamented: “During the space of time which intervened between the time I had the vision and the year eighteen hundred and twenty-three—having been forbidden to join any of the religious sects of the day, and being of very tender years, and persecuted by those who ought to have been my friends and to have treated me kindly, and if they supposed me to be deluded to have endeavored in a proper and affectionate manner to have reclaimed me ...” (JS—History 1:28). ¶ *But he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.* The Targum (⚡) has, “But they shall be confounded.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “And appear to their joy, when they shall be ashamed.” The Peshitta (⚡) has, “And rejoice in your joy, and they shall be ashamed.” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, “And we shall see in your joy: but they shall be confounded.” ¶ In the Book of Mormon we further read regarding the sign that would be given before the first coming in the American continent—to the joy of the believers and the shame of the detractors: “But there were some who began to say that the time was past for the words to be fulfilled, which were spoken by Samuel, the Lamanite. And they began to rejoice over their brethren, saying: Behold the time is

past, and the words of Samuel are not fulfilled; therefore, your joy and your faith concerning this thing hath been vain. And it came to pass that they did make a great uproar throughout the land; and the people who believed began to be very sorrowful, lest by any means those things which had been spoken might not come to pass. But behold, they did watch steadfastly for that day and that night and that day which should be as one day as if there were no night, that they might know that their faith had not been vain. Now it came to pass that there was a day set apart by the unbelievers, that all those who believed in those traditions should be put to death except the sign should come to pass, which had been given by Samuel the prophet. Now it came to pass that when Nephi, the son of Nephi, saw this wickedness of his people, his heart was exceedingly sorrowful. And it came to pass that he went out and bowed himself down upon the earth, and cried mightily to his God in behalf of his people, yea, those who were about to be destroyed because of their faith in the tradition of their fathers. And it came to pass that he cried mightily unto the Lord all that day; and behold, the voice of the Lord came unto him, saying: Lift up your head and be of good cheer; for behold, the time is at hand, and on this night shall the sign be given, and on the morrow come I into the world, to show unto the world that I will fulfil all that which I have caused to be spoken by the mouth of my holy prophets” (3 Nephi 1:5–13, also see 2 Peter 3:3–4a). There are a number of like signs that will be to the derision and shame of those who oppose the work—but a joy to those who wait with trembling and joyful expectation for the same. These signs include the establishment of an *ensign* to the world, the sending forth of the Book of Mormon as predicted in 3 Nephi 21; and the appearance of the Son of God when He stands on the Mount of Olives (Zechariah 14:4).

6 A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the LORD that rendereth recompence to his enemies.

A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple. The Targum (⚡) has, for the first clause, “A voice of a tumult from the city of Jerusalem.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “A sound of screaming from the city! a sound from the temple!” The Peshitta (⚡) has *tumult* instead of *noise*. ¶ Birks explains: “This verse answers closely to Zechariah 12:3–6; 14:3, announcing an appearance of the Lord in a time of Gentile apostasy, and of sore distress to Israel already in part restored, to accomplish the long delayed redemption of Zion. The ‘voice of noise’ is the war cry, used here, as in ISAIAH 42:14, for the terrible display of Divine anger. A type of it may be seen in 2 Kings 7:6.” What is the voice from the temple? It is the voice of the Lord, the Holy One of

Israel. We read in the words of John the beloved: “And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps” (Revelation 14:1–2). Perhaps, in part, the torrents of water spoken of below, in ISAIAH 66:12, will also be heard. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “Judah must return, Jerusalem must be rebuilt, and the temple, and water come out from under the temple, and the waters of the Dead Sea be healed. It will take some time to rebuild the walls of the city and the temple ... and all this must be done before the Son of Man will make His appearance.”⁸ See Zechariah 14:8 and Ezekiel 47. In Ezekiel we read: “And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory” (Ezekiel 43:2). Also, from the Book of Revelation we have: “And in the midst of the seven candlesticks *one* like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and *his* hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I *am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death” (Revelation 1:13–18). And in Doctrine and Covenants we have: “Hearken and hear, O ye inhabitants of the earth. Listen, ye elders of my church together, and hear the voice of the Lord; for he calleth upon all men, and he commandeth all men everywhere to repent. For behold, the Lord God hath sent forth the angel crying through the midst of heaven, saying: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight, for the hour of his coming is nigh—When the Lamb shall stand upon Mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having his Father’s name written on their foreheads. Wherefore, prepare ye for the coming of the Bridegroom; go ye, go ye out to meet him. For behold, he shall stand upon the mount of Olivet, and upon the mighty ocean, even the great deep, and upon the islands of the sea, and upon the land of Zion. And he shall utter his voice out of Zion, and he shall speak from Jerusalem, and his voice shall be heard among all people; And it shall be a voice as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great

thunder, which shall break down the mountains, and the valleys shall not be found. He shall command the great deep, and it shall be driven back into the north countries, and the islands shall become one land; And the land of Jerusalem and the land of Zion shall be turned back into their own place, and the earth shall be like as it was in the days before it was divided. And the Lord, even the Savior, shall stand in the midst of his people, and shall reign over all flesh” (D&C 133:16–25). ¶ *A voice of the LORD that rendereth recompence to his enemies.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, for the first half, “A voice of the Word of the Lord.” The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “The voice of the Lord rendering a recompense to his adversaries!” ¶ These words here refer back to ISAIAH 66:5, to those who would not answer when the Lord called after them. But now Israel will walk in the light of the Gospel and those who walk contrary will receive the corresponding punishment. ¶ This is the theme of ISAIAH 66: *joy to the faithful and recompense of punishment* to those who are *contrary*. In *Rain in Due Season* we read: “And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me; Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins” (Leviticus 26:23–24).

7 Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.

She brought forth means that she gave birth, while *travail* means to have pain related to the birthing process. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “Before distress cometh upon her, she shall be redeemed; and before trembling cometh upon her, like the pains of a woman in child-bearing, her King shall be revealed.” ¶ Pauli notes regarding this passage in the Ⲯ, “Notice this remarkable passage: Before Jerusalem was destroyed her King, Christ, was revealed.” This has reference to the siege of Jerusalem that will take place in the last days, and the Son of God will appear in glory will be revealed as He stands upon the Mount of Olives. The LXX (Ⲯ) reads, “That a woman hath brought forth before she travailed; that before her pangs came on, they are over and a male child born.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲯ) has, “Before she was in labour, she brought forth; before her time came to be delivered, she brought forth a man child.” ¶ Redak, in Rabbi Rosenberg, points to Scriptures related to the day when Jerusalem will be surrounded on all sides by her enemies: “The intention is that the commencement of the salvation will be sudden and painless. Before it is complete and before all the exiles are restored to their land, however, there will be a short time of trouble, which can be likened to birth pangs. Comp. supra ISAIAH 26:20: ‘Hide but for a moment until the wrath passes.’ This alludes to the war of Gog

⁸ Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 286.

and Magog. Zechariah, too, depicts ... tribulations, (14:2–7) ‘And the city shall be captured, and the houses shall be plundered ... and the Lord shall come out and wage war with those nations ... at the time of evening there shall be light.’ This is the birth after the birth pangs mentioned in the preceding verses.” Birks likewise refers to the time when Christ will gloriously appear and stand upon the Mount of Olives, which shall be split in two (as mentioned right after in Zechariah): “Zion is here compared to a woman, whose travail is scarcely begun when her child is born. In other passages the severity of the trial is taught, here its exceeding shortness, so as scarcely to deserve the name of travail ... The wonder is that a whole land shall bring forth, and a whole nation be brought forth, in one such brief hour of suffering. The man-child here is the ‘righteous nation, keeping the truth,’ ISAIAH 26:2, redeemed Israel, born to a new and manly faith in the true Messiah through bitterest sorrow for their own and their fathers’ unbelief, ISAIAH 62:12; Zechariah 12: 9–14.” We have encountered a theme about Judah being surprised she is not alone, but that the Lord has gathered of the other tribes, e.g., ISAIAH 49:21 (Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where *had they been?*); ISAIAH 54:1 (Sing, O barren, thou *that* didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou *that* didst not travail with child: for more *are* the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD); and ISAIAH 55:5 (Behold, thou shalt call a nation *that* thou knowest not, and nations *that* knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee). Here, in ISAIAH 66:7, we seem to have a dual meaning. They may allude to the relatively fast conversion of the Lamanite nation, but the main significance maybe another. This verse seems to point to the conversion of Judah. While a large portion of those in Jerusalem will perish, the rest will be rescued by the Savior to whom they will turn.

8 Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? [or] shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, beginning with the third clause, “Is it possible that a country be made in one day, and a nation be created at once? But Zion shall be comforted, and shall be filled with the people of her captivity.” The

LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “Who hath heard such a thing, or who hath seen the like? Did ever the earth bring forth in a day, or was ever a nation born at once? That Sion should travail and bring forth her children.” Instead of *born at once*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *born in an hour*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “Who hath ever heard such a thing? and who hath seen the like to this? shall the earth bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be brought forth at once, because Sion hath been in labour, and hath brought forth her children?” ¶ Elder Charles A. Callis, of the Twelve, shared these thoughts about Judah which bring tears of joy to my eyes: “Orson Pratt and Charles W. Penrose declared that prior to the glorious coming of the Son of God, the Jews are going to be beleaguered by the nations who threaten the very existence of the Jewish race. Then, according to Zechariah, down through the gates of heaven shall come the Lord Jesus Christ, the Captain and King for whom the Jews have wept and prayed so long, and he shall set his feet upon the Mount of Olives, and the Mount shall cleave asunder, and the Jews shall escape destruction. The God of heaven shall then, with the armies of heaven, have judgment upon the wicked, and the wicked shall be destroyed. When Jesus stands before the Jews, they will see the wounds in his hands and, recognizing their Lord and God, they shall say: ‘... What are these wounds in thine hands?’ And then Jesus shall break the hearts of the Jews by saying: ‘Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.’ *And that nation then, and not until then, shall be born in a day. By the authorized servants of God they shall receive the baptism of repentance; they shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and become the children of God their Father and the servants of the great Jehovah. At that time a fountain shall be opened up unto the Jews and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a fountain for the cleansing of sin and iniquity, and that fountain shall be as it always has been, the Lord Jesus Christ.*”⁹ ¶ Then Elder Spencer W. Kimball shared some writings in which Elder Wilford Woodruff in 1873 disclosed his testimony that “the Lamanites will blossom as the rose” but admitted that “the fulfillment of that prophecy is perhaps harder for me to believe than any other revelation of God that I have ever read ... [and given the reduction and oppression of the Lamanites] It looks as though there would not be enough left to receive the gospel; but notwithstanding this dark picture, every word that God has ever said of them will have its fulfillment, and they, by and by, will receive the gospel. It will be a day of God’s power among them and a nation will be born in a day” (JD 15:282). Elder Kimball also quoted the Prophet Joseph Smith and President Brigham Young—both speaking about the lack of coincidence in the

⁹ Elder Charles A. Callis, “Our Glorious Destiny,” *Conference Report*, October 1945, pp. 80–83, emphasis added.

Saints moving west and the need to preach the Gospel to the Lamanites.¹⁰ Finally, Elder Kimball quoted an experience of Elder Wilford Woodruff among the sons of Lehi: “The Isletas are one of the Pueblo groups down in New Mexico. I view my visit among the Nephites one of the most interesting missions of my life ... I say Nephites, because if there are any Nephites on this continent, we have found them among the Zunis, the Lagunas, and the Isletas, for they are a different race of people, altogether, from the Lamanites. I class the Navajo, Moquis (Hopis) and Apaches with the Lamanites, although they are in advance of many Indian tribes of America. I class the Zunis, Lagunas, and Isletas among the Nephites. [And after concluding a meeting with them, one of the Isletas Nephites arose] ... full of the spirit of the Lord and said, ‘Friends, why do you dismiss us and leave us this way? This is the first time we have heard of our forefathers and the gospel and the things we have looked for from the traditions of our fathers. If our wives and children are weary, let them go home. We want to hear more. We want you to talk all night. Do not leave us so.’”¹¹ Today, the Church among the Lamanite nations is very strong. Present-day members give this little thought, but the early Saints did not know how the Lord would fulfill such a promise. And the gathering is not just for the Lamanites, but for all the children of Israel wherever they may be scattered—even in the Spirit World.

9 Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut [the womb]? saith thy God.

✓ or, beget?

Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: The Targum (ⲧ) has, “I am God; I have created the world from the beginning, saith the Lord.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “I myself gave this expectation; yet thou didst not remember me, saith the Lord.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “Shall not I that make others to bring forth children, myself bring forth, saith the Lord?” ¶ Alexander puts it: “The sense now put upon the figure by the general consent of interpreters is, that he who begins the work may be expected to accomplish it, to be both its author and its finisher.” Birks has: “This is God’s answer to the whispers of unbelief. The event, even to those who witness it, will be so strange, as to seem almost past belief, Psalm 126:1. But still the

power, wisdom, and truth of God are engaged for its fulfilment. The whole history of the Jewish people, through long ages, has been like a slow and tedious gestation for this joyful birth at the last.” ¶ Elder Erastus Snow quoted this verse to show God’s ability to accomplish what He wishes to accomplish:

“‘Mormonism’ does not coerce, but all the time persuades, teaches, enlightens, instructs, and invites by the beauty, excellence, and virtue of those holy principles which God has revealed to us, gradually drawing the people together, cementing their feelings, and bringing them, by common consent, to act upon the principles of truth and righteousness. There is but one alternative for this people: it is our religion, our God, our liberty, or slavery, the Devil, and death. There is no drawing back. The wedge has been entered. Our God has led us forth and directed our course from the beginning to the present hour. ‘Shall I cause to come to the birth,’ saith the Lord, ‘and not bring forth?’ No.

Although the woman in travail and in pain to be delivered suffers anxiety, mingled with fear, yet soon her sorrow is forgotten, for joy that a man child is born into the world. So it will be with this people, and our enemies cannot hinder it. The Devil and all the hosts of hell cannot prevent the consummation of the desired object that God has in view. The kingdom of God is established, no more to be thrown down; and in it we shall live and reign, and every righteous man and woman who love God and his truth more than their own lives and the treasures of this world shall be exalted in the kingdom of God: they shall see the triumph of truth and righteousness, and the kingdom of God shining on the earth as the sun in the firmament.”¹² ¶ *Shall I cause to bring forth, and shut [the womb]? saith thy God.* The Targum (ⲧ) has, “I, even I have created all men; I, even I have scattered them among all the nations, also I will gather thy captivity, saith the Lord.” The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, “Behold did I not make her who beareth; and her who is barren? Said thy God.” The BPE (Ⲥ) has, “Is it not I who causes to bring forth &c.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲱ) has, “Shall I, that give generation to others, be barren, saith the Lord thy God?” ¶ Rawlinson says: “... should I, having done so much, interpose at the last moment, to shut the womb?” Leeser has: “... shall I who cause to bring forth, now prevent it? saith thy God.” That would be completely illogical. So, we can count on the Lord bringing forth these wonderful promises, of the birth of Judah at the end of days. We can rejoice as if it was an accomplished matter.

¹⁰ Kimball, Elder Spencer W., “The Work Among the Lamanites,” *Conference Report*, Oct. 1950, pp. 64–69. This is a very moving address by then Elder Kimball.

¹¹ Kimball, Elder Spencer W., “The Work Among the Lamanites,” *Conference Report*, Oct. 1950, pp. 64–69.

¹² Elder Erastus Snow, “Opposition of State Governments to the Saints,” *Tabernacle*, Great Salt Lake City, 29 November 1857. JD 6:92.

10 Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her:

Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: The LXX (⚡) reads, “Rejoice Jerusalem! and sing praises therein, all ye who love her!” ¶ Birks suggests that these verses pertain to the return of the natural olive branches. See Romans 11:15–26a. In Romans Paul is warning the Gentile nations against pride and self-righteousness. In the Book of Mormon the Lord has made it clear that it matters not if we are Jew or Gentile, but if we will hearken unto the voice of the Lord: “Wherefore, he that fighteth against Zion, both Jew and Gentile, both bond and free, both male and female, shall perish” (2 Nephi 10:16). Also see 2 Nephi 26:33. The prophecies we are considering, then, are not those of predestination. Yet, the Lord can see what is going to happen in regard to the wild and the natural branches. Angel Moroni¹³ taught the Prophet Joseph Smith: “And he further stated that the fulness of the Gentiles was soon to come in” (JS–History 1:41b). One of the best ways to understand these words in Romans is to study the allegory of the olive tree in Jacob 5. ¶ Who are they who love Jerusalem? All those who love the Jews and realize that in due time the natural branches will be grafted back into the vine. ¶ *Rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her:* The LXX (⚡) reads, “Be exceedingly joyful with her, all ye who mourn for her!” The Lamsa Peshitta (⚡) has, “Rejoice in joy with her, all you who mourn over her.” ¶ And who are they who mourn for Jerusalem? All those who are filled with the pure love of Christ for Judah and are not imbued with feelings of superiority. Judah will be gathered and received into the bosom of the Lord. In ISAIAH 66:13 the Lord makes it clear that He is comparing the figure of a mother’s love to His own love for Judah.

11 That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance[✓] of her glory.

✓ or, brightness

¹³ In Doctrine and Covenants we read: “And now, verily saith the Lord, that these things might be known among you, O inhabitants of the earth, I have sent forth mine angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel, who hath appeared unto some and hath committed it unto man, who shall appear unto many that dwell on the earth. And this gospel shall be preached unto every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people” (D&C 133:36–37). Angel Moroni brought forth the Gospel and the Book of Mormon.

That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations. The Targum (⚡) has, “In order that ye may delight yourselves and be satisfied with the food (or, ‘spoil’) of her consolations.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “That you may suck and be satisfied from the breast of her consolation.” The Lamsa Peshitta (⚡) has, “That you may suck and be satisfied with the comfort of her breast.” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has *filled* instead of *satisfied*. ¶ Alexander has: “Those who have sympathized with Zion in her joys and sorrows shall partake of her abundance and her glory. ¶ The figure of a mother is continued, but beautifully varied.” ¶ *That ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.* The Targum (⚡) has, “In order that ye may drink and overflow with the wine of her glory.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “That you may suck and be fed deliciously, at the commencement of her glory.” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, “And flow with delights, from the abundance of her glory.” ¶ Leeser has: “In order that ye may sip, and find pleasure from the abundance of her glory.” The general idea is that those who rejoice with Judah shall at the end also rejoice because they will be blessed. The scripture has: “And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:3).

12 For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon [her] sides, and be dandled upon [her] knees.

For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: The Targum (⚡) has, in the second half, “peace, as the floods of the river Euphrates, and the glory of the nations, as an overwhelming stream.” The LXX (⚡) reads, “For thus saith the Lord, Behold I will glide to them like a peaceful stream, and like a torrent deluging the glory of nations.” The Peshitta (⚡) has something like, “For thus says Yahweh: Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, like an overflowing torrent; and they shall suck the glory of the Gentiles.” The Douay-Rheims (⚡) has, “For thus saith the Lord: Behold I will bring upon her as it were a river of peace, and as an overflowing torrent the glory of the Gentiles.” ¶ Rawlinson has: “*I will extend peace to her like a river*] literally, *I will direct peace to her, like a river.* The waters of streams are in the East directed hither and thither by the agriculturist. God would have given his people ‘peace, as a river,’ long previously, had they permitted him (ISAIAH 48:18) ... *Like a flowing stream*]

literally, *as an overflowing torrent*. There is perhaps a contrast intended between the former and the latter times. In the former times Assyria had swept over Israel like an overwhelming flood to destroy her (ISAIAH 8:7–8); now the glory of the whole Gentile world [or rather, *Gentile nations*—GB] should similarly overflow and overwhelm, but only to enrich and exalt.” ¶ Judah is promised here that many of her blessings will come through the efforts of the Gentiles. All who love Judah will be comforted. This is an allusion to what was already taught: “Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the LORD *am* thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob” (ISAIAH 60:16). ¶ *Then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon [her] sides, and be dandled upon [her] knees*. The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And ye shall delight yourselves: ye shall be borne [i.e., carried] upon the sides, and ye shall be nourished upon the knees.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “Their children shall be carried on shoulders, and shall be dandled on knees.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has something like, “And you shall be carried on the litters and be dandled upon the knees.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “Which you shall suck; you shall be carried at the breasts, and upon the knees they shall caress you.” ¶ Once again, this verse speaks of the blessings that will be brought upon Israel by the Gentiles—also an important theme in the Book of Mormon. Nägelsbach writes: “And because the Prophet has here before his mind the image of maternal love and solicitude on the one hand, and on the other that of a child’s wants, he adds here, and ye shall suck. Herewith he points back to ISAIAH 66:11, where he had designated Jerusalem as the source of consolations. Here he tells us that the spring of that spring will be the LORD. But that maternal care is not restricted to the affording of nourishment. The children shall also be faithfully carried (על-צד) *on the hip*, after the common oriental custom, ISAIAH 60:4). They will also be lovingly played with, caressed, and rocked on the knees. The LORD here again ascribes to Himself maternal love and maternal conduct.”

13 As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you. The Targum (Ⓢ) has, for the second clause, “So my Word shall comfort you.” The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, for the first clause, “As one whom the mother caresseth.” ¶ See also ISAIAH 40 regarding Judah and her companions: “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye

comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD’S hand double for all her sins” (Isaiah 40:1–2). Regarding אֶחָד, Rawlinson has: “*As one*] literally, *as a man*. Israel is now looked upon as grown up, and receiving comfort from God himself in Jerusalem.” Rabbi Ibn Ezra has: “‘*So I will comfort you*’—Note the positioning of the pronoun ‘I’ (אֶחָד) first for emphasis. Compare ISAIAH 51:12: ‘I, I am He who comforts you.’” Once again, *it is the Lord Himself who will comfort Judah*. Jenour notes: “St. Paul employs the same figure, 1 Thessalonians 2:7, ‘We were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children.’” Oswald says: “This is one of the few places in the Bible where God is directly compared to a mother, and most commentators agree that the comparison has been used to reinforce the depth of God’s concern and care for his children. When he gives them courage, strength, hope, and will (*comforts* them), these are not merely arm’s-length transactions. They are an expression of the intimate, personal involvement of a loving, personal God with his people.” ¶ *And ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem*. The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “And in Jerusalem you shall find consolation.” For it is in Jerusalem that the tribe of Judah will see their Lord and Savior appear to them *after* the tragic hour when she is surrounded on every side. It is Christ who is Jerusalem’s true comfort and the comfort of the whole earth.

14 And when ye see [this], your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb: and the hand of the LORD shall be known toward his servants, and [his] indignation toward his enemies.

And when ye see [this], your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb. The LXX (Ⓟ) reads, “And you shall see it, and your heart shall rejoice; and your bones shall flourish like a green herb.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has “And when you shall see this, your heart shall rejoice and your bones shall flourish like *tender grass* (Lamsa) / *green herb* (BPE).” ¶ Rawlinson has: “In the time of calamity, Israel’s ‘bones’ have been ‘consumed’ (Psalm 31:10), and ‘waxed old’ (Psalm 32:3), and ‘burned with heat’ (Job 30:30). Now they shall enjoy a time of refreshing from the Lord. New life shall enter them, and health and growth shall follow. The nation shall be rejuvenated, and ‘flourish’ in more than its pristine strength.” Alexander has: “*And ye shall see, and your heart shall leap (with joy)* etc.] The object of address still continues to be those who had loved Zion, and had mourned for her, and whom God had promised to comfort in Jerusalem.” After Judah’s

‘warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned’ the time of great rejoicing in her Lord and King, even the Holy One of Israel, will become manifest. ¶ *And the hand of the LORD shall be known toward his servants, and [his] indignation toward his enemies.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “And the power of the Lord shall be revealed to do good to His righteous servants; but a curse shall come upon His enemies.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And the hand of the Lord will be made known to them who fear him. And it will terrify them who are disobedient.” The Peshitta (Ⲫ) has “And the hand of the LORD shall be stretched out toward his servants, and he shall destroy his *enemies* (Lamsa) / *adversaries* (BPE).” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲕ) has, for the second clause, “And he shall be angry with his enemies.” ¶ While man seeks vengeance regarding his enemies, the Lord’s punishment is directed towards our reformation: “How oft have I called upon you by the mouth of my servants, and by the ministering of angels, and by mine own voice, and by the voice of thunders, and by the voice of lightnings, and by the voice of tempests, and by the voice of earthquakes, and great hailstorms, and by the voice of famines and pestilences of every kind, and by the great sound of a trumpet, and by the voice of judgment, and by the voice of mercy all the day long, and by the voice of glory and honor and the riches of eternal life, and would have saved you with an everlasting salvation, but ye would not!” (D&C 43:25).

vv. 15–24. The Lord shall send His messengers to gather all the nations unto Christ and His temples. Judah shall see the Glory of God in Jerusalem. The Book of Mormon shall be the sign used to gather Israel (see Ezekiel 37:15 ff.). Judah’s priests and Levites will be restituted. The millennial day is coming and each individual’s life will be judged according to their moral agency. Elder Orson Pratt taught: “We, as Gentiles,” explains Elder Pratt, “have cause to rejoice; that is, we who are numbered with the Gentile nations (for there may be many of the blood of Israel among us) ... In order to show still more clearly that the Gentiles are to be the characters that are to carry this ensign to the nations, we will refer you to the last chapter of Isaiah—‘For I know their works and their thoughts: and it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory.’ How is He going to do this work? He says, ‘I will set a sign among them.’ The same thing as spoken of in the passages already referred to—‘And I will send those that escape of them unto the nations’ (here go the missionaries)—‘to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame.’ They will go among the idolatrous nations, to Hindostan, Siam, China, to the Sandwich Islands, etc. ‘And they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles’ (ISAIAH 66:18–19) ... The children of Israel will be gathered just as

literally as they formerly brought an offering into the house of the Lord ... and we will have missionaries in every part of the nations of the earth afar off, and we will declare His glory among every nation, people, kindred, and tongue; and as fast as we get the people to believe in the standard the Lord has raised up, we will introduce them into the kingdom, baptize them for the remission of sins, and lay our hands upon them in the name of Jesus Christ, as he has commanded us, and they will receive the Holy Ghost, and be filled with mighty faith, and they will be armed with the power of God, in great glory ... and nothing will be able to compete with the work of the Lord; but it will progress and continue to roll on, until every nation hears, and every heart is penetrated, and the heavens and the earth shall come together.”¹⁴ ¶ About twenty years later, Elder Orson Pratt further taught regarding ISAIAH 66:18–20: “... *Do this people desire to know what the sign predicted by the mouth of Isaiah means? Do you wish to know the nature of that sign? Let me refer you to the words of the everlasting God that have been uttered from the heavens, declared in this record brought forth in the last days, the Book of Mormon ... [As] uttered by the mouth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, when he appeared personally upon this great western continent, and taught the ancient nations of America ... —that is, when this book, called the Book of Mormon, should be made known unto the Gentiles—‘that they may know concerning this people who are a remnant of the house of Jacob, and concerning this my people who shall be scattered by them in the latter days. Verily, I say unto you, when these things shall be made known unto them of the Father, and shall come forth of the Father, from them unto you. (3 Nephi 21)’*”¹⁵

15 ¶ For, behold, the LORD will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire.

For, behold, the LORD will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, “revealed” for *come*. The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For behold! the Lord will come as a fire, and his chariots as a whirlwind.” ¶ Rawlinson has: “*Behold, the Lord will come with fire*” ‘Fire’ is a usual accompaniment of a ‘theophany.’ God descended on Sinai ‘in fire’ (Exodus 19:18), and led the Israelites through the wilderness by the pillar of the cloud and of fire (Exodus 13:21, 22), and filled the tabernacle with a glory as of fire (Exodus

¹⁴ Elder Orson Pratt, “The Ancient Prophecies.” Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 7 January 1855. JD 2:295–296.

¹⁵ Elder Orson Pratt, “Gathering of Israel.” New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 11 April 1875. JD 18:16–17. Emphasis added.

40:34), and ‘answered David from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offering’ (1 Chronicles 21:26), and in the same way answered Solomon (2 Chronicles 7:1) and Elijah (1 Kings 18:38). Isaiah almost always describes a theophany as a ‘coming with fire’ (see ISAIAH 10:16–18; 27:4; 29:6; 30:27, 30; 33:12, 14, etc.). The agency of fire in the judgment that will overtake the wicked simultaneously with Christ’s second coming, appears in 2 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Peter 3:7–10.” ¶ In Joseph Smith’s own theophany he reports: “I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me ... When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*” (JS—History 1:16–17). In another account of the Prophet’s vision, from the hand of Elder William Smith, Joseph’s brother, we are told that “While engaged in prayer a light appeared in the heavens, and descended until it rested upon the trees where he was. It appeared like fire. But to his great astonishment, did not burn the trees.”¹⁶ Furthermore, when the Lord comes we know that the earth will burn with consuming fire: “And every corruptible thing, both of man, or of the beasts of the field, or of the fowls of the heavens, or of the fish of the sea, that dwells upon all the face of the earth, shall be consumed; And also that of element shall melt with fervent heat; and all things shall become new, that my knowledge and glory may dwell upon all the earth” (D&C 101:24–25). ¶ Rawlinson suggests: “*Like a whirlwind*] The whirring of the wheels of chariots, their noise, the swiftness of their pace, and the destruction that they cause, make this simile most appropriate.” Shalom Paul has: “*His chariots are like a whirlwind*] Cf. Nahum 1:3: ‘He travels in whirlwind and storm.’ The Lord’s chariot is alluded to in other biblical verses, e.g., Habakkuk 3:8; Psalm 77:19. For a similar image connected to an enemy invasion of Judah, see ISAIAH 5:28: “‘Their horses’ hooves are like flint; their chariot wheels *like* the *whirlwind*”; see also Jeremiah 4:13. 1QIsa^a (¶) **וכסופה**, instead of **וכסופה**, corresponds with the preceding **באש**.” ¶ *To render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire.* The LXX (¶) reads, “To execute his vengeance with wrath and his rebuke with flaming fire.” Instead of *render*, the Peshitta (¶) has *pour out* (Lamsa) / *discharge the heat* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (¶) has, “To render his wrath in indignation, and his rebuke with flames of fire.” ¶ Birks points out that we read of similar judgments in ISAIAH 42:25; 17:13; and 11:4. The fire will burn all of the wood that has been separated from

the true Vine. ¶ In Doctrine and Covenants we read: “Behold, it is my will, that all they who call on my name, and worship me according to mine everlasting gospel, should gather together, and stand in holy places; And prepare for the revelation which is to come, when the veil of the covering of my temple, in my tabernacle, which hideth the earth, shall be taken off, and all flesh shall see me together. And every corruptible thing, both of man, or of the beasts of the field, or of the fowls of the heavens, or of the fish of the sea, that dwells upon all the face of the earth, shall be consumed; And also that of element shall melt with fervent heat; and all things shall become new, that my knowledge and glory may dwell upon all the earth” (D&C 101:22–25). Also see Malachi 3:2; and ISAIAH 33:14b–15.

16 For by fire and by his sword will the LORD plead with all flesh: and the slain of the LORD shall be many.

For by fire and by his sword will the LORD plead with all flesh: The Targum (¶) has, “judge” for *plead*. The LXX (¶) reads, “For with the fire of the Lord all this land shall be tried, and all flesh with his sword.” The Lamsa Peshitta (¶) has, “For by fire will the LORD judge, and by it will he test all flesh.” The Douay-Rheims (¶) has, “For the Lord shall judge by fire, and by his sword unto all flesh.” The Talmud tradition (Seder Kodoshim, Zevachim 116a) well has: “The Lord sitteth as King for ever, he replied: the Holy One, blessed be He, has already sworn that He will not bring [another] flood upon the world. Perhaps, they ventured, He will not bring a flood of water, yet He will bring a flood of fire, as it is said, For by fire will the Lord contend?” (Talmud, Soncino). ¶ In Doctrine and Covenants we read that the time will come when the Lord will continue to plead with mankind through natural and other disasters. See D&C 88:88–91. ¶ Elder Wilford Woodruff taught: “With fire and sword the Lord will plead with all flesh, and as the prophet has said respecting this event, ‘the slain of the Lord will be many;’ and these things will overtake the world in an hour when they expect them not, when they will be crying peace, but alas, peace will have departed from them ... I want to say to the Latter-day Saints: exercise faith in God, and exercise faith in his revelations, and read them and ponder over them, and pray earnestly that you may have a correct understanding of all that God has revealed, that you may grow in the light and knowledge of God, and see the importance of living your religion and of living uprightly before him.”¹⁷ ¶ *And the slain of the LORD shall be many.* The Targum

¹⁶ Elder William Smith (1883), *William Smith on Mormonism*, p. 8.

¹⁷ Elder Wilford Woodruff, “Fulfillment of Prophecy,” Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 30 June 1878. JD 19:360–361.

(**ⲧ**) has, “And the slain shall be many before the Lord.” The LXX (**Ⲅ**) reads, “Many shall be the slain of the Lord!” The Lamsa Peshitta (**Ⲥ**) has, “And the slain of the LORD shall be many.” ¶ Elder Orson Pratt taught of the transition from the calamities associated with the Second Coming to the transformation of the earth during the Millennium, “But the earth is to undergo a change in which it will be sanctified and made glorious ... and all the armies of the wicked slaughtered. And when the prediction of Isaiah is fulfilled, that the slain will be from one end of the earth to the other, and the earth changed in its position, and a beautiful climate introduced, and all the dry ground made habitable, and the rough places made smooth, the valleys raised, and the mountains leveled down ...”¹⁸ Wordsworth points out: “*the slain of the Lord shall be many*” As Christ Himself says, ‘Those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay *them* before Me’ (Luke 19:27); and as is said in the Apocalypse, describing their future destruction: they ‘were slain *with* the sword of Him that sat upon the horse,’ —Christ (Revelation 19:21). Cp. Joel 3:2, 12–15.” Oswalt proposes: “One must remember that the slain here are those who fall as a result of the final effects of the world’s choice of sin over righteousness. Corpses fill the streets of the city not because God in some arbitrary and tyrannical fashion decides to obliterate his enemies, but because to live in defiance of God’s creation ordinances is to fill the world with cruelty and violence. God’s work is to remove the restraining forces and let the evil that the world has chosen run its terrible course. Finally, sin carries with it its own judgment, and virtue carries with it its own reward.”

17 They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one ✓ [tree] in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the LORD.

✓ or, one after another

They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one [tree] in the midst. The Targum (**ⲧ**) has, “They who prepare and purify themselves in the gardens of idols, multitude after multitude.” The LXX (**Ⲅ**) reads, “They who consecrate and purify themselves for the gardens.” The Peshitta (**Ⲥ**) has something like, “Those who consecrate and purify

themselves in the gardens, one after the other in the midst.” The Douay-Rheims (**ⲡ**) has, “They that were sanctified, and thought themselves clean in the gardens behind the gate within.” ¶ Isaiah seems to be speaking of idolatry as it was prevalent in his day. In the latter-day this would be replaced by intellectual idolatry. So also Birks who suggests: “A comparison with ISAIAH 65:3 seems to shew that the historical groundwork of the rebuke is taken from actual forms of idolatry under Manasseh. But the context implies that these represent certain marked features of ungodliness in the last days.” ¶ *Eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the LORD.* The LXX (**Ⲅ**) reads, “And they who, in the outer courts, eat swine’s flesh, and the abominations and the mouse, shall for this be consumed together, said the Lord.” The Peshitta (**Ⲥ**) has something like, “Eating swine’s flesh, and reptiles and mice, shall together be extinguished, says the LORD.” ¶ Kay explains that perhaps this is in relation to: “idolatrous ceremonies, like those portrayed [i.e., engraven, see Leeser] in Ezekiel 8:10–11, where the ‘elders’ stood with incense before ‘every from of *creeping things*’ (among which the ‘mouse’ is placed in Leviticus 11:29) ‘and *abominable* beasts’ (s.w.a. Leviticus 11:41) ...”

18 For I [know] their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory.

The Targum (**ⲧ**) has, for the first clause, “Their works and their thoughts are revealed before me,” and also adds people to *nations and tongues*. The LXX (**Ⲅ**) reads, “As I know their works and their reasoning I am coming to gather together all the nations and the tongues, and they shall come and see my glory.” The Peshitta (**Ⲥ**) does not have the clause, “it shall come.” The Douay-Rheims (**ⲡ**) has, “Beginning with the second clause it renders it, “I come that I may gather them together &c.” ¶ Alexander explains: “*To see the glory* of Jehovah is a phrase repeatedly used elsewhere to denote the special manifestation of his presence and his power.” The phrase “I know thy works,” is also used in Revelation 3:15a of those who walk contrary to the Lord. Here it is *their works and their thoughts*. Once again we sense intellectual idolatry. David pleads with the Lord to strengthen him and help him improve: “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if *there be any* wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Psalm 139:23–24). ¶ I sense at least two meanings to this transitional verse, ISAIAH 66:18. Sometimes, when I inspect a movie I am editing, there are transitional

¹⁸ Elder Orson Pratt, “Changes in the Configuration of the Globe.” Twentieth Ward Meetinghouse, Salt Lake City, 3 December 1876. JD 18:318b.

moments in which we see two scenes superimposed together. We see the ending scene overlaid on the beginning one that follows. Both images appear together. ¶ When I look at this verse as the culmination of what has been said, it is possible to see a world that has turned against Israel and Jerusalem, but now they would be in for a surprise: the Lord had permitted the world to come against Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:2–4) but He would now show His glory before the world as He comes to her rescue. He will come to the rescue; He will stand on the Mount of Olives. He will do so in glory. So also Rabbi Ibn Ezra: “This passage refers to the war of Gog and Magog.” The Savior could anticipate the wicked thoughts and intents of the world regarding His people Israel. As we shall see, this concluding scene is picked up again in ISAIAH 66:21. Birks has: “Messiah’s answer to the scoffers of the last days—when they say, ‘Where is the promise of his coming?’ They shall see His glory in judgment on the profane, and long-delayed mercy to Zion.” These comments from Birks are interesting to us as Latter-Day Saints because in the Book of Mormon we could see similar attitudes from the scoffers towards the believers, as it related to the first advent of our Savior (see the above quoted 3 Nephi 1:5–13). ¶ In the next superimposed scene we see the Savior’s appearance associated with Mount Zion and the New Jerusalem. In the *Messenger and Advocate* we read, “ ‘A revelation of Jesus Christ unto his servant Joseph Smith, Jr. and six elders, as they united their hearts and lifted their voices on high; yea, the word of the Lord concerning his church established in the last days for the gathering of his saints to stand upon mount Zion, which shall be built, beginning at the Temple Lot, which is appointed by the finger of the Lord, in the western boundaries of the State of Missouri, and dedicated by the hand of Joseph Smith, Jr. and others, with whom the Lord was well pleased. Verily, this is the word of the Lord, that the city New Jerusalem shall be built by the gathering of the saints, beginning at this place, even the place of the temple, which temple shall be reared in this generation; for verily this generation shall not all pass away until an house shall be built unto the Lord and a cloud shall rest upon it, which cloud shall be even the glory of the Lord, which shall fill the house’ [D&C 84:1–5]. ‘For I know their works, and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory.’ According to this quotation the glory of the Lord shall appear; but they must come to a certain place in order that they can see it. Our former quotation determines the place, and who dare dispute it? The Lord has said by the mouth of Isaiah; that he would perform his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.”¹⁹

¹⁹ September 1835, Cowdery, Oliver, et al., eds. *Messenger and*

19 And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, [to] Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, [to] Tubal, and Javan, [to] the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.

And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations. The Targum (Ⓣ) adds, “To the province of the sea.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And I will leave among them a sign, and those of them who escape I will send to the nations.” Instead of *of them unto the nations*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *I will send among the nations* (Lamsa) / *I will send to the nations* (BPE). The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, beginning with the second clause, “And I will send of them that shall be saved, to the Gentiles.” ¶ Kay says: “*set a sign*”²⁰ the words used in Exodus 10:2,²¹ Psalm 78:43; 105:27, of the miracles which accompanied the redemption out of Egypt ... It has been held probable by some, that the final ingathering may be preceded by a miraculous manifestation of Christ, which shall be to Israel nationally what the vision near Damascus was to Saul.” If so, and it fits well with the reading, the appearance of Christ in Jerusalem, when He stands on the Mount of Olives seems to fit perfectly. But the gathering of her sister Ephraim (speaking of the ten tribes) will be preceded by another sign, that of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. Alexander writes: “By a sign Grotius understands a *signal*, making אֹת equivalent to נֶאֱמַר in ISAIAH 5:26, 11:12, 18:3, 62:10.” In other words, the *ensign* to the nations. While such *ensign* to the nations is without a doubt part of it, the Book of Mormon is what is meant here, as taught by Elder Orson Pratt.^{22 23} As I read this scripture I also felt a confirming spirit testify that the Book of Mormon is the promised sign. The Book of Mormon will be used, as taught in Ezekiel

Advocate: The Latter Day Saints’ Messenger and Advocate. 3 vols. Kirtland, Ohio: F. G. Williams & Co., et al., October 1834 to August 1837. Electronic text prepared by the Department of Church History and Doctrine, Brigham Young University, 1991, p. 189.

²⁰ In this case it is in the singular, *sign*, אֹת.

²¹ “And that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son’s son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs [אֹתַי] which I have done among them; that ye may know how that I am the LORD” (Exodus 10:2).

²² Pratt, Elder Orson. “Gathering of Israel, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses* 18:4, 11 April 1875, pp. 16–29.

²³ Elder Orson Pratt, “Gathering of Israel.” *New Tabernacle*, Salt Lake City, 11 April 1875. JD 18:19.

37, to gather Israel back to the Lord. ¶ [To] *Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, [to] Tubal, and Javan.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Pul and Lud, that draw the bow, and smite *with it*, to the province of Tubal, and Javan.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “To Tharsis and Phud and Lud and Mosach and to Thobel and Greece.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “Into the sea, into Africa, and Lydia them that draw the bow: into Italy, and Greece.” ¶ Rawlinson has: “These shall be sent (as missionaries) to the *distant* nations ... Of these nations, Tarshish (Tartessus) was at the furthest limit westward, Pul and Lud, or rather Phut and Lud, at the furthest limit southward, Tubal and Javan at the furthest limit northward. Pul, which occurs nowhere else in Scripture as a geographic name, is almost certainly a wrong reading for Phut, which occurs in Genesis 10:6, and also three times (Jeremiah 46:9; Ezekiel 27:10; 30:5) in connection with Lud. Phut designates an African nation, probably the Nubians, whom the Egyptians called Pet, and who were noted as bowmen.” ¶ [To] *the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.* The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “and to the far distant isles. They who have not heard my name nor seen my glory—even they shall proclaim my glory among the nations.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “To them that have not heard of me,” instead of *that have not heard my fame*. ¶ Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: “To read Isaiah (with understanding!) is to know that the Messianic gospel was for all men; that none were to be denied its blessings ...”²⁴ The ends of the earth would hear the Gospel of Christ preached. Furthermore, the work for our departed in the temples of the Lord is one of the most glorious principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, along with missionary work for the living. As a youth I knew that someday I would belong to a missionary oriented church.

20 And they shall bring all your brethren [for] an offering unto the LORD out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, ✓ and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the LORD, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD.

✓ or, coaches

And they shall bring all your brethren [for] an offering unto the LORD out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And they shall bring

²⁴ McConkie, Bruce R. *The Promised Messiah*, Utah: Deseret Book Company, pp. 503–505.

your brethren from all the nations, as a gift for the Lord with horses and chariots.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has *gift* rather than *offering*. ¶ Alexander observes: “The survivors [i.e., remnant—GB] sent forth to the nations are then described as bringing back the converts to the true religion as an offering to Jehovah. Their return for this purpose is described as easy, swift, and even splendid, all the choicest methods of conveyance used in ancient times being here combined to express that idea.” ISAIAH 66:20 is intimately related to the gift brought to the Lord’s temples by the missionaries, which is mentioned in ISAIAH 18:7. ¶ The Lord further admonished: “Let us, therefore, as a church and a people, and as Latter-day Saints, offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness; and let us present in his holy temple, when it is finished, a book containing the records of our dead, which shall be worthy of all acceptance” (D&C 128:24). ¶ Rawlinson has: “*They shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord*” When the distant Gentiles [see ISAIAH 18, better, Gentile nations—GB] have been converted, they shall bring to Christ the Jews of the dispersion, who dwell with them in the remote parts of the earth (comp. Zephaniah 3:10²⁵).” Kay has: “The Hebrew order is: *They shall bring all your brethren* out of all the nations *for an offering*. By the analogy of the language in Numbers 18:28–29, this may mean, ‘Your brethren *from among* all the nations.’” ¶ *And in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Yea, with songs,” for *swift beasts*. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “In litters borne by mules with umbrellas over them.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “and in coaches” instead of “and upon swift beasts.” ¶ We have noted the similarity of these verses with those of ISAIAH 18. Birks interestingly comments: “The word, כִּרְכֻרִית, ‘*swift beasts*,’ AV, by others, ‘dromedaries,’ may be from the same root as *curru, currus, circulo* [*circulo* in Spanish, i.e., circumference—GB], and denote thus ‘rolling carriages.’ One striking characteristic of modern times consists in the rapidity of distant journeys, and the new inventions by which men ‘run to and fro’ through the earth.” See similar notes in ISAIAH 18:2, about speedy vessels to be used in preaching the Gospel to scattered Israel. Lowth suggests regarding *and in litters* [כִּרְכֻרִית]: “There is a sort of vehicle, much used in the East, consisting of a pair of hampers, or cradles, thrown

²⁵ Much like ISAIAH 18 we there have: “Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, *even* all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, *even* the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering” (Zephaniah 3:8–10).

across a camel's back, one on each side; in each of which a person is carried. They have a covering to defend them from the rain and the sun." Then Elder Wilford Woodruff also applied these Scriptures to the gathering of the Saints to Zion: "And when that first handcart company came into the city [Salt Lake City], I, indeed, thought of the old prophet, for if they did not come with litters it was as near as possible to it, and I now believe that from this time forth handcarts will be used more than horses, mules, and oxen."²⁶ ¶ *To my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the LORD, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, "Into the house of the sanctuary of the Lord" for the last clause. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, "To the holy city Jerusalem, said the Lord; as the children of Israel brought up their sacrifices for me with songs of praise to the house of the Lord." ¶ Once again, this is very similar to the last clause of ISAIAH 18:7, "the mount Zion" (ISAIAH 18:7). Both *mount Zion* and *my holy mountain Jerusalem* have reference to the *House of the Lord*. ¶ Moroni taught: "Now I would that ye should remember that God has said that the inward vessel shall be cleansed first, and then shall the outer vessel be cleansed also" (Alma 60:23). Those who will come to the Lord will have cleansed their inner vessel and be ready to be a proper and acceptable offering before the Lord. This involves a lifelong effort.

21 And I will also take of them for priests [and] for Levites, saith the LORD.

The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, "And of them I will take priests and Levites, said the Lord." With this verse we seem to again return to the ending scenes before the beginning of the Millennium. After Judah is converted, she will once again have of her own peoples who will be ordained to operate in that sacred temple to be constructed in Jerusalem as described by Ezekiel. Levi will be among the tribes who are now mingled with Judah. At that time the sons of Levi will again offer such sacrifices: "*Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; and this shall never be taken again from the earth until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness*" (JS—History 1:69, also see D&C 128:24). Brother Oliver Cowdery explains it similarly: "Upon you my fellow-servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer this

Priesthood and this authority, which shall remain upon earth, that the Sons of Levi may yet offer an offering unto the Lord in righteousness!" (JS—History Note: 6). ¶ During the Millennium, animal sacrifice will be reinstituted for a period. This may well be necessary to help Judah, and her allied tribes, come to a better understanding of the original purposes associated with these sacrifices—that is, to point to the expiatory offering of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Elder Orson Pratt said: "... I will take of them for priests and Levites, saith the Lord." Indeed! Is the Lord going to have priests and Levites after gathering Israel from all nations? Yes. 'I will take of them for priests and Levites, saith the Lord.'"²⁷

22 For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain.

For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD. The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, "For as the new heaven and the new earth, which I make, shall remain in my presence, saith the Lord." The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, for the middle clause, "Which I will make to stand before me." ¶ Once again, there shall be two separate new heavens and new earths. The first, associated with the Millennium, and the second with the final state of the Celestialized earth. The latter will last forever and the idea is that just as it will everlasting, so is the following promise. ¶ *So shall your seed and your name remain.* The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, "So shall your seed and your name be established." The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, "So shall your seed stand, and your name." ¶ Elder Orson Pratt explained: "Here, then, is a restitution or restoration predicted in the last chapter of Isaiah that the Lord will gather the House of Israel from all lands to His holy mountain Jerusalem, and that He will then take of them for priests and Levites. Furthermore let us see what the following passage says concerning the continuation of this lesser Priesthood of Levi: 'For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I shall make, shall remain before me, so shall your seed and your name remain;' or in other words your priesthood, the priesthood which I have conferred upon the seed of Levi, shall remain just as eternal as the new heavens and the new earth."²⁸

²⁶ Elder Wilford Woodruff, "The Facilities Afforded by the Handcart Movement for the Gathering of Israel." Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, 6 October 1856. JD 4:100.

²⁷ Elder Orson Pratt, "Mormonism." Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 24 February 1869. JD 12:360.

²⁸ Elder Orson Pratt, "Mormonism." Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, 24 February 1869. JD 12:361–362.

23 And it shall come to pass, [that] from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, [✓] shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD.

✓ from new moon to his new moon, and from sabbath to his sabbath

And it shall come to pass, [that] from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another. The Targum (Ⲯ) has, from the second clause, “at the time of the beginning of each month, and at the time of each Sabbath.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And it shall be, that month after month and sabbath after Sabbath.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “And there shall be month after month, and sabbath after Sabbath.” ¶ These words seem to speak of the perpetuity in which Judah and Ephraim shall worship before the Lamb. In Doctrine and Covenants we read: “Behold, this is the blessing of the everlasting God upon the tribes of Israel, and the richer blessing upon the head of Ephraim and his fellows. And they also of the tribe of Judah, after their pain, shall be sanctified in holiness before the Lord, *to dwell in his presence day and night, forever and ever.* And now, verily saith the Lord, that these things might be known among you, O inhabitants of the earth, I have sent forth mine angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel, who hath appeared unto some and hath committed it unto man, who shall appear unto many that dwell on the earth. And this gospel shall be preached unto every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. And the servants of God shall go forth, saying with a loud voice: Fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come; And worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters—” (D&C 133:34–39, emphasis added). Note, also, how the Lord is anxious for those who have *been converted to strengthen their brethren.* ¶ *Shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD.* The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “All flesh shall come to worship before me, in Jerusalem, said the Lord.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, “And all flesh shall come to adore before my face, saith the Lord.” ¶ The children of Israel were commanded to so worship: “And thou shalt set it before the LORD thy God, and worship before the LORD thy God” (Deuteronomy 26:10b). That all flesh that remain upon the earth would worship the Son is also prophesied in the book of Psalms: “The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever. All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee” (Psalm 22:26–27).

24 And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: The Targum (Ⲯ) has, for the second half, “The sinners, who have rebelled against my Word.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “And they shall go forth, and see the carcases of those men, who have transgressed against me.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⲳ) has, for the first half, “And they shall go out, and see the carcases.” ¶ **הַפְּשָׁעִים בִּי**, “transgressed against me.” Gesenius explains: “פָּשַׁע—(1) TO FALL AWAY, BREAK AWAY from any one ... properly TO BREAK a covenant entered into *with him* ... Specially *to turn away* from God.” In other words, to become apostate. Birks has (emphasis added): “The whole prophecy closes with a solemn contrast between the blessings to the righteous, and the shame and misery of the rebellious and profane. Earth, redeemed from the curse, will become the scene of holy and perpetual worship ... Israel is to be restored, the earth is to be redeemed, and earthly blessings, most rich and various, are to be enjoyed, in the *promised restitution of all things.* But these earthly blessings of Israel, when the wilderness of Zion becomes as Eden, and her desert as the garden of the Lord, though glorious in the extreme, point onward and upward to the higher glories ...” ¶ *For their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, for the first clause, “For their souls shall not die.” The LXX (Ⲅ) reads, “For their worm shall not die and their fire shall not be quenched.” President Brigham Young explained: “Let the Elders of this Church go forth and preach that every person who does not become as they are will have to suffer the wrath of God ...”²⁹ The *worm* that *shall not die* is a reference to the spiritual pain that the departed spirits who turned against the Lord will feel. The Lord explains: “And surely every man must repent or suffer, for I, God, am endless. Wherefore, I revoke not the judgments which I shall pass, but woes shall go forth, weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth, yea, to those who are found on my left hand. Nevertheless, it is not written that there shall be no end to this torment, but it is written *endless torment.* Again, it is written *eternal damnation*; wherefore it is more express than other

²⁹ President Brigham Young, “The Three Glories.” Bowery, Great Salt City, 26 August 1860. JD 8:155a.

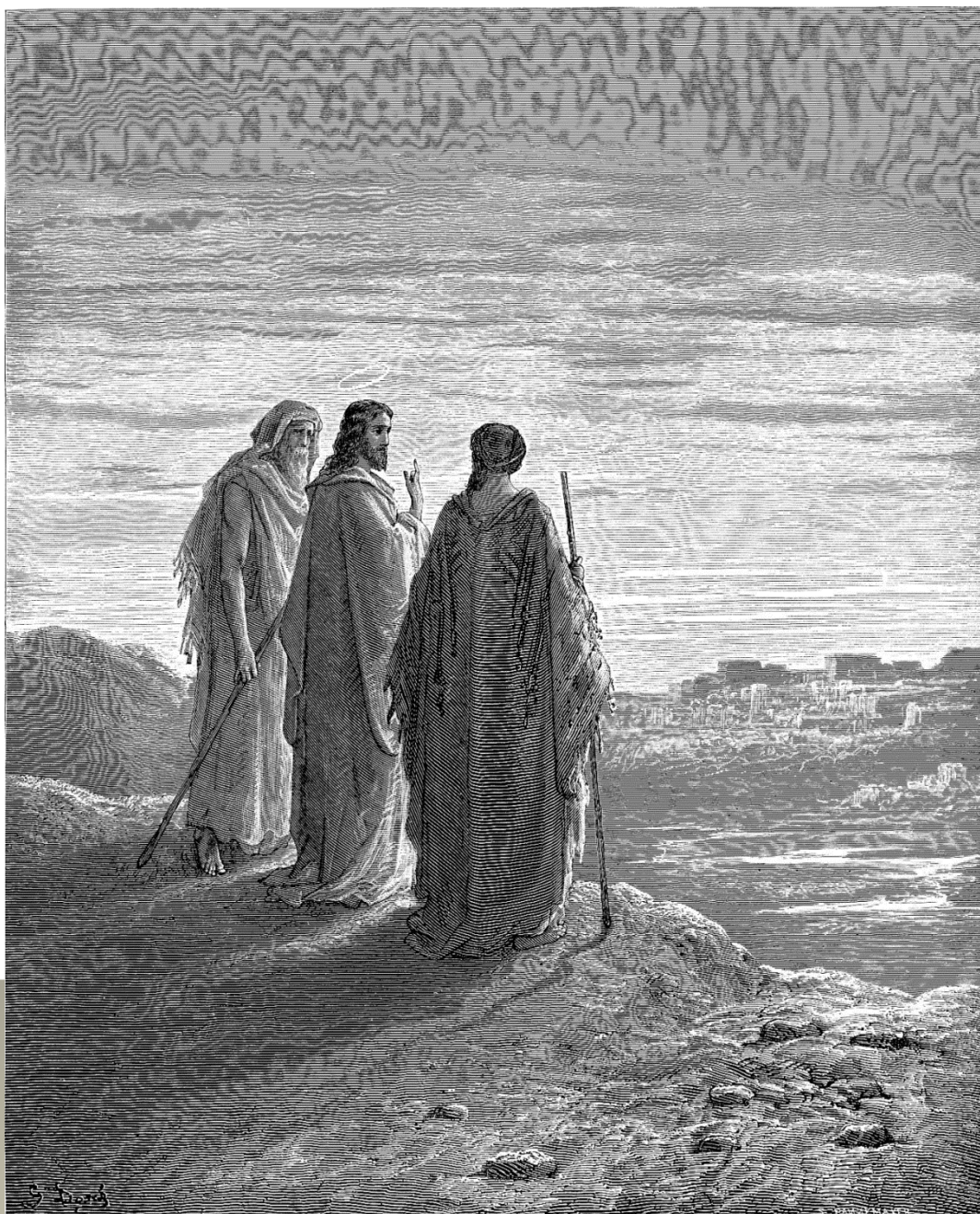
Scriptures, that it might work upon the hearts of the children of men, altogether for my name's glory. Wherefore, I will explain unto you this mystery, for it is meet unto you to know even as mine apostles. I speak unto you that are chosen in this thing, even as one, that you may enter into my rest. For, behold, the mystery of godliness, how great is it! For, behold, I am endless, and the punishment which is given from my hand is endless punishment, for Endless is my name. Wherefore—Eternal punishment is God's punishment. Endless punishment is God's punishment. Wherefore, I command you to repent, and keep the commandments ..." (D&C 19:4–13a). ¶ Lowth has: "These words of the Prophet are applied by our blessed Saviour, Mark 9:44. to express the everlasting punishment of the wicked in Gehenna, or in Hell ... Our Saviour expressed the state of the blessed by sensible images; such as Paradise, Abraham's bosom, or, which is the same thing, a place to recline next to Abraham at table in the kingdom of heaven: see Matthew 8:11 ... for we could not possibly have any conception of it, but by analogy from worldly objects. In like manner, he expressed the place of torment under the image of Gehenna; and the punishment of the wicked, by the worm which there preyed on the carcasses, and the fire which consumed the wretched victims:—marking however, in the strongest manner, the difference between Gehenna and the invisible place of torment; namely, that in the former the suffering is transient—the worm itself, that preys on the body, dies; and the fire, which totally consumes it, is soon extinguished;—whereas in the figurative Gehenna the instruments of punishment shall be everlasting, and the suffering without end; for there 'the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.'" ¶ *And they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.* The Targum (Ⲯ) has, "And the wicked shall be judged in hell, till the righteous shall say concerning them, we have seen enough." The Targum (Ⲯ) has some interesting notions in this verse about the truthfulness regarding the resurrection and perpetuity of the soul for both righteous and wicked. Also, about the judgment role to be played by the *judges in Israel*, especially the Twelve Apostles. The LXX (Ⲭ) reads, "And they shall be a spectacle to all flesh." The Douay-Rheims (ⲩ) has, "And they shall be a loathsome sight to all flesh." ¶ This clause reminds us of how people will look upon Satan when they pass onto the spirit world: "They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, *and* consider thee, *saying*, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms" (ISAIAH 14:16). Rawlinson says: "The Jewish rabbis regarded it as anomalous that any portion of Scripture should conclude with words of ill omen. When, therefore, this chapter was read in the synagogue, or the last of Ecclesiastes, or Lamentations, or Malachi, they directed that after the reading of the last verse, the last verse but

one should be repeated, to correct the sad impression that would otherwise have been left upon the mind. But Isaiah thought it salutary to leave this sad impression (comp. ISAIAH 48:22; 57:21)." I suppose I am much like these Jewish rabbis and would have loved the book to finish on a more cheerful note. One of the most powerful chapters from the Book of Mormon, for me, is Alma 41. It too, ends in a similar way: "For that which ye do send out shall return unto you again, and be restored; therefore, the word restoration more fully condemneth the sinner, and justifieth him not at all" (Alma 41:15). Our Lord says: "Say nothing but repentance unto this generation; keep my commandments, and assist to bring forth my work, according to my commandments, and you shall be blessed" (D&C 6:9). As a prophet of God, it was Isaiah's charge to invite us to turn unto Christ and live. We read that Isaiah was found "among the great and mighty ones who were assembled in this vast congregation of the righteous ..." (D&C 138:38, 42). Of Isaiah's mission we also read: "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but they understood not; and see ye indeed, but they perceived not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and convert, and be healed. Then said I, Lord, how long? And he said, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate. And the Lord have removed men far away, for there shall be a great forsaking in the midst of the land. But yet in it there shall be a tenth, and they shall return, and shall be eaten; as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves; so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof" (ISAIAH 6:8–13, JST). So, like my Jewish Rabbi ancestors, I will also end on a happy note. For how can we not rejoice as we dwell on all that the Lord has done for us? "Brethren, shall we not go on in so great a cause? Go forward and not backward. Courage, brethren; and on, on to the victory! Let your hearts rejoice, and be exceedingly glad. Let the earth break forth into singing. Let the dead speak forth anthems of eternal praise to the King Immanuel, who hath ordained, before the world was, that which would enable us to redeem them out of their prison; for the prisoners shall go free. Let the mountains shout for joy, and all ye valleys cry aloud; and all ye seas and dry lands tell the wonders of your Eternal King! And ye rivers, and brooks, and rills, flow down with gladness. Let the woods and all the trees of the field praise the Lord; and ye solid rocks weep for joy! And let the sun, moon, and the morning stars sing together, and let all the sons of God shout for joy! And let the eternal

creations declare his name forever and ever! And again I say, how glorious is the voice we hear from heaven, proclaiming in our ears, glory, and salvation, and honor, and immortality, and eternal life; kingdoms,

principalities, and powers!” (D&C 128:22–23). Amen, amen and amen!

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וְהִתְהַלַּכְתִּי בְּתוֹכְכֶם וְהָיִיתִי לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים
וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ-לִי לְעָם

—Leviticus 26:12